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TVA Kingston Fly Ash Release: Environmental Studies in Progress

Abstract Title:

Regulatory Framework – TVA Kingston Ash Recovery Effort

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Abstract:

On May 11, 2009, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) entered into an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) with the Region 4 Office of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), under the regulatory authority of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), to address the approximate 5.4 million cubic yards (CY) of coal ash released to the environment on December 22, 2008. The Superfund program was selected as the preferred regulatory framework due to its comprehensive human health and ecological risk assessment process and its proven ability to actively engage and involve multiple stakeholders in large, complex environmental cleanup projects. A series of phased Time Critical and Non-Time Critical Superfund Removal Actions are underway to address coal ash that was released to area waters, including the Emory River, tributaries, embayments, and sloughs. Time Critical Removal Actions involve wet excavation, mechanical and hydraulic dredging, rapid materials handling and disposal of an estimated 3 million cubic yards of ash from the Emory River to mitigate further downstream transport. Ash removed from the river is dewatered on-site and loaded onto rail cars for disposal at an approved landfill in Perry County, Alabama. Under the direction of the Superfund Removal Program, river removal production has increased from an average of 2500 CY/day to nearly 15,000 CY/day with the potential of 20,000 CY/day. River removal is expected to be complete by May of 2010. Non-Time Critical Removal Actions will be utilized to address the 2.5 million CY of ash in the embayments and sloughs, and to assess the environmental risks posed to ecological receptors by residual ash in the river system. This poster will provide an overview of the regulatory framework, and short- and long-term removal actions employed by EPA to protect human health and the environment.