

The Dan River Now

The Dan River stretches over 200 miles from its headwaters in Meadows of Dan, VA and drains to its terminus in Kerr Reservoir near Clarksville, VA. It meanders back and forth across the Virginia-North Carolina state line eight times. In 2015, DRBA will focus its monitoring and assessment efforts related to the coal ash spill on the 20-mile stretch of the Dan River between the Duke Energy Dan River Station and Danville.

What we know now:

- There was an immediate negative impact to the ecosystem after the spill.
- Less than 10% of the coal ash was removed, leaving over 30,000 tons in the river.
- Coal ash contains a concentrated mix of toxic heavy metals.
- Duke Energy announced that it will remove the coal ash lagoons at the Dan River Station and contain the ash in lined landfills away from waterways.
- Surface water samples from the Dan are within EPA limits for use in municipal drinking water systems. Benthic macro-invertebrate studies indicate healthy populations per EPA consultants.
- The EPA will stop monitoring the Dan River downstream from the coal ash spill by July, 2015.
- Long-term impact to the ecosystem cannot yet be determined and may not be known for years. Studies on coal ash ponds and other spills have shown negative effects on the ecosystem.



DRBA monitoring of the river includes benthic, water, and sediment sampling along with bio-assessment surveys.

A few of DRBA's Partners...

Virginia Tech - Studying chemical hydrology using elemental analysis to determine tracers in coal ash and where they show up in the environment and possible effects.

University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science - Working on sediment deposits to determine cycling of mercury.

University of North Carolina at Greensboro - Macro-invertebrate toxicology and mercury contamination in the development of microbial communities.

Ferrum College - Macro-invertebrate monitoring with leaf packs.

Salem College - Determining the effects of selenium and other heavy metals on the microbial communities exposed to coal ash contamination.

Preliminary research has found contaminants associated with coal ash showing up in the Dan River's smallest organisms just one year after the spill.



What's happening now:

- DRBA is working with dozens of consultants and researchers to monitor and assess the impact of coal ash on the Dan River.
- DRBA and several environmental partners continue to work in partnership with the SELC to ensure coal ash lagoons are moved away from waterways and safely contained.
- DRBA is seeking funding to support future sediment, benthic and surface water quality testing and monitoring.
- DRBA will continue to recruit citizen water quality monitors to help with water quality testing.
- DRBA will continue to advocate for strict coal ash regulations and protection of our waterways in Richmond, Raleigh and Washington.
- DRBA will continue to inspire partners, find supporters and develop initiatives that ensure our rivers and streams stay healthy now and for future generations.



DRBA Headquarters

413 Church Street, Suite 401,
Eden, NC 27288
(336) 627-6270
drba.nc@danriver.org

DRBA in Virginia

3300 Kings Mountain Road, P.O. Box 7
Collinsville, VA 24078
(276) 634-2545

www.danriver.org