



## N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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### State environmental agency to host public hearings on coal ash reuse projects

**RALEIGH** – State officials will host public hearings next week to obtain feedback on multiple environmental permits that are required for projects that would use coal ash as structural fill in two clay mines in central North Carolina.

The N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources is holding the public hearings as part of the public comment period for draft permits that Green Meadow, LLC and Charah, Inc. will need to carry out coal ash reuse projects at the Colon Mine Site in Lee County and the Brickhaven No. 2 Mine Tract “A” in Chatham County. The two companies applied last fall for coal ash reuse permits, modifications to existing mining permits and 401 water quality certifications.

Drafts of the coal ash reuse permits were made public March 23. The permits would allow mine reclamation at the two locations. The companies plan to install engineered, protective liners in the pits before depositing coal ash as structural fill. The protective liners are designed to create a barrier between the coal ash and groundwater and capture leachate for disposal. The liner systems for these structural fills are equivalent to those used in municipal solid waste landfills. Under the plan, the companies would install a cap over the coal ash, cover it with layers of soil and establish permanent vegetation. The permit requirements for these structural fills are more stringent than those for previously constructed structural fills.

Another set of required permits that were drafted and made public March 23 include requests by Green Meadow LLC to modify the existing mining permits at both sites to allow the construction of engineered structural fills within the existing mining permit boundaries. The two projects must also obtain a 401 water quality certification from the state. The company’s 401 certification application was made available for public comment on March 12. The certification is required when a project will impact streams or wetlands.

The timeline for moving ash from the storage facilities to the mines in Lee and Chatham counties is dependent on required approvals from the Environmental Protection Agency. The projects also require a permit approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The public hearings scheduled for next week will be used to gather comments on the state-required approvals – the structural fill permits, mining permit modifications and a water quality certification. People are welcome to comment on permit activities related to both sites during either hearing. The hearings will be from 6-9 p.m. with sign-up for speakers beginning at 5 p.m. Hearing dates and locations are:

- April 13 at the Dennis A. Wicker Civic Center, 1801 Nash St., Sanford.
- April 16 at the Chatham County Historic Courthouse, 9 Hillsboro St., Pittsboro.

The public comment period for all the permits will end at 5 p.m. May 16. Public comments on the structural fill permits should be mailed to: Solid Waste Permitting, N.C. Division of Waste Management, 1646 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, N.C., 27699-1646. Public comments on the modified mining permits should be mailed to: Mining Program, N.C. Division of Energy, Mineral and Land Resources, 1612 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, N.C., 27699-1612. Public comments on the water quality certifications should be mailed to: 401 Permitting, 1617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, N.C., 27699-1617. Written comments may also be submitted by email to: [PublicComments@ncdenr.gov](mailto:PublicComments@ncdenr.gov). In the email’s subject line, please be sure to include “DWM” for comments on the structural fill permits, “DEMLR” for comments on the modified mine reclamation permits, or “401” for comments on the water quality certification. Copies of the permit applications, draft structural fill permits and draft modified mine reclamation permits are available on the DENR website at: <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/guest/coal-ash-disposal>. The water quality certification application is online at: <http://its.enr.state.nc.us/Weblink8/0/fol/257726/Row1.aspx>.

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