



N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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DENR Secretary Skvarla heading to Eden, as agency staff members work with Duke Energy to control coal ash spill

RALEIGH – N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources Secretary John Skvarla will travel to the site of a coal ash spill in Eden today, as staff in the state environmental agency work with the EPA and Duke Energy officials to control the spill in Rockingham County.

Duke Energy reports that a temporary plug periodically mitigated the leakage into the Dan River throughout the day Monday, and a team of experts continued to work on a solution to completely stop the release. The utility company estimated late Monday that between 50,000 and 82,000 tons of ash has been released to the river as a result of a break in a 48-inch stormwater pipe at the power plant.

“Our chief concerns are that we do everything we can to assist in controlling this spill and assessing its damage,” Skvarla said Tuesday. “Staff in my agency were on the ground from Monday morning until well beyond sundown helping Duke Energy and taking our own samples of the water upstream and downstream to determine any affects this spill may be having on water quality in the area.”

DENR staff from the agency’s Winston-Salem regional office conducted visual inspections on-site of the coal ash lagoon Monday evening and say it appears the ash basin dam along the Dan River was not affected and remains secure and that most of the ash remained in the lagoon.

Some erosion has occurred on the interior side of the berm farthest from the river, and engineers are continuing to work on a plan to stabilize that area, officials with Duke Energy reported.

Corey Basinger, a regional supervisor in DENR’s Winston-Salem office, said he and his staff conducted testing upstream and downstream of the spill Monday night and sent water quality samples to a state laboratory for testing Tuesday morning. DENR staff members were meeting Tuesday with officials from the EPA, which dispatched crews to the site Monday.

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