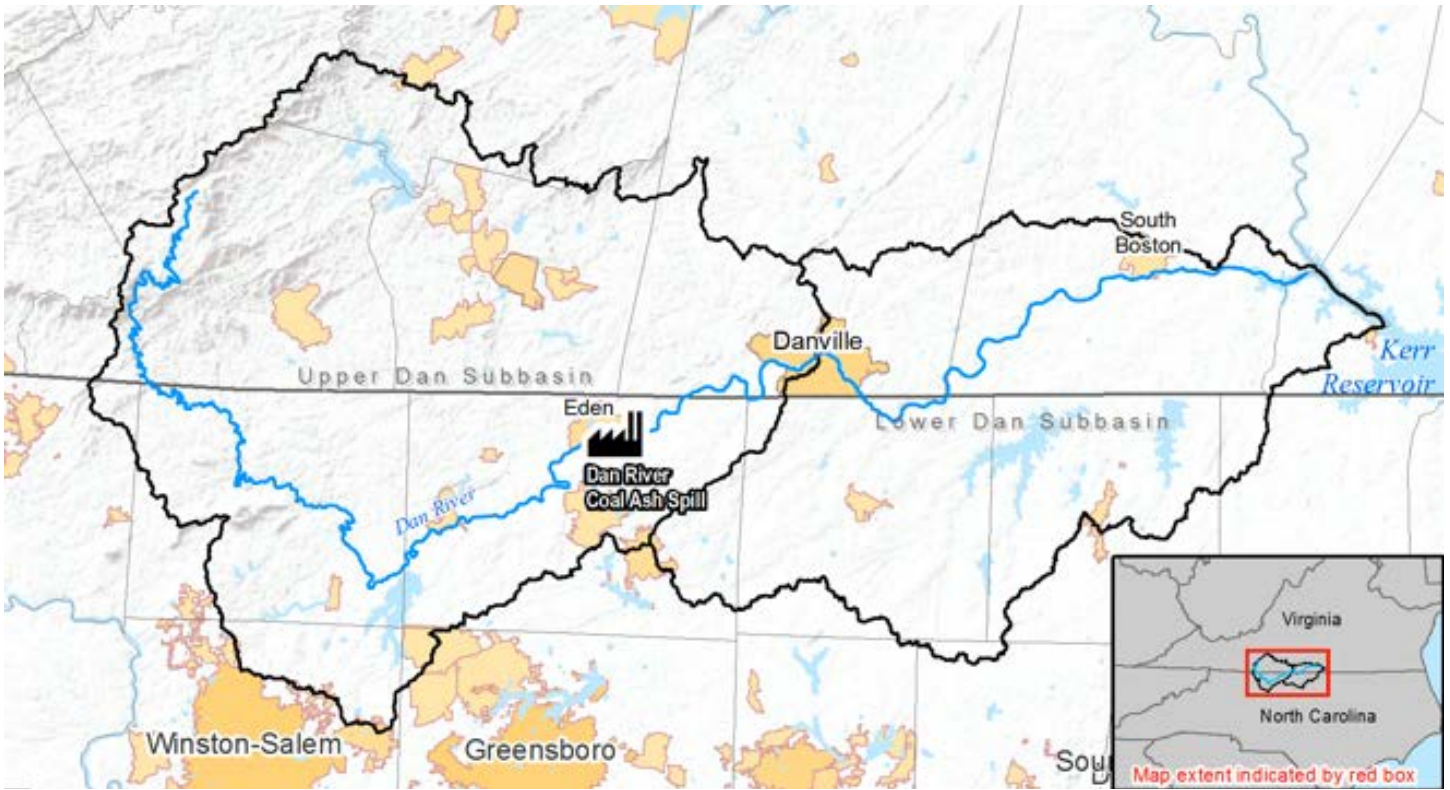




Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration for the Dan River Coal Ash Spill



To restore fish and wildlife resources affected by the Feb. 2, 2014, Dan River coal ash spill, the natural resource trustees have initiated the natural resource damage assessment and restoration (NRDAR) cooperatively with Duke Energy, the party responsible for the spill.

The trustees—the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and Virginia Department of Environmental Quality—have also been an integral part of the response and cleanup of the Dan River coal ash spill (<http://epa.gov/region4/duke-energy/index.html>). As technical support to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and others, we have helped evaluate and reduce risks to the environment.

The trustees are now continuing their work by conducting a NRDAR to evaluate the impact of the spill on

natural resources and to ultimately restore the injured resources.

The Dan River Watershed:

The Dan River flows through the Piedmont of North Carolina and Virginia. The river snakes through Eden, N.C. (the site of the spill), Danville, Va.; and South Boston, Va. The river eventually joins the impounded section of the Roanoke River at Buggs Island Lake (John H. Kerr Reservoir). The Dan River basin is a multiple-use recreation area that provides fishing, boating and wildlife-viewing opportunities.

The river also provides a vital habitat area for fish and wildlife, including the endangered Roanoke logperch (*Percina rex*) and the James spinymussel (*Pleurobema collina*). Another freshwater mussel species, the green floater (*Lasmigona subviridis*), can also be found in the river and is under



The endangered Roanoke logperch

North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission



The endangered James spinymussel

Brian Watson, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

USFWS



The breached impoundment that released coal ash and coal ash wastewater.

review by the Service to determine if the species warrants protection under the federal Endangered Species Act.

The Dan River Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration:

Fish, wildlife, and other natural resources can be injured when hazardous substances enter the environment. Those natural resources are managed for the public's benefit. As such, the trustees are working on the public's behalf to determine the extent of the coal ash spill's injury to the Dan River's natural resources and the public's use of those resources.

Based on the damage assessment, the trustees will work with Duke Energy to restore or replace natural resources and/or seek compensation from Duke Energy to carry out restoration activities. A benefit of the NRDAR program is that natural resources are restored at no cost to the taxpayers.

By working cooperatively with Duke Energy on the NRDAR, the trustees hope to expedite restoration efficiently and effectively. The trustees will focus on restoration early in the process while also integrating natural resource injury assessments with ongoing remedial assessment and cleanup work.

The NRDAR provides opportunities for public engagement during restoration planning. The trustees will develop a proposed restoration plan that will be made available to the public for their review and comment. Our ultimate goal is to restore the Dan River's natural resources and the public's enjoyment of them. To that end, public participation will be an essential component moving forward with natural resource damage assessment and restoration.

More information:

NRDAR: <http://www.fws.gov/northeast/ecologicalservices/nrdarprocess.html>

FAQs: <http://www.fws.gov/contaminants/Info/FAQsNRDA.cfm>

For questions related to the Dan River Spill NRDAR, please contact:

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A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist collects sediment samples in the Dan River following the coal ash release.