



Wednesday May 23, 2018

To: NC Department of Environmental Quality  
217 W Jones St, Raleigh, NC 27603  
From: Alliance of Carolinians Together Against Coal Ash (ACT)

Dear North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality Leadership and Commissions,

The ACT Coalition is writing in response to the Special Order by Consent (SOC) scheduled public meetings for Belews Creek and Buck Steam Station on Wednesday, May 23, 2018 and for Mayo and Roxboro Steam Stations on Thursday, May 24, 2018. We appreciate your attempt to hear from impacted community members in those aforementioned communities. We agree that hearing voices from our impacted communities is necessary for DEQ to determine the proper handling of Duke Energy's toxic coal ash waste. However, it is unacceptable that the agency failed to ensure that community members were fully aware of these important meetings. Additionally, choosing a meeting place for the Belews Creek and Buck Steam Station meeting that's 45 minutes outside of both communities — an hour after community members get off work — is likewise unacceptable. We believe that, as neighbors of Duke's coal ash, we best understand the dangers to health, property, and the environment that the toxic waste poses and that we should be consulted during every step of the coal ash cleanup process in North Carolina.

Dukeville community member (Buck Plant), Deborah Graham reminds us all that, "The people who are truly affected are older - they don't have internet, they don't get notices, there's nothing in our local paper or on local TV about this hearing. [We] don't have time to get directions or arrange childcare. It feels like they don't want public input. They truly don't want to hear from the people who are affected."

The Alliance of Carolinians Together Against Coal Ash is a coalition of North Carolinians impacted by Duke Energy's coal ash. We formed in July 2015 in response to the tragic coal ash situation that plagues our state. ACT Against Coal Ash includes representatives from communities next to the massive coal ash pits at the following Duke Energy power plants:

- Belews Creek (Walnut Cove, Stokes County)
- G.G. Allen (Belmont, Gaston County)
- H.F. Lee (Goldsboro, Wayne County)
- Asheville (Arden, Buncombe County)
- Buck (Salisbury, Rowan County)
- Cliffside (Cleveland & Rutherford Counties)
- Roxboro (Person County)

Roxboro community member (Roxboro Plant), Lisa Hughes, agrees that, "Our community only found out about these meeting in the last couple of days, which isn't proper notice. And we deserve better from DEQ."



We are aware that Duke Energy is removing its coal ash from the leaking, unlined lagoons at Buck, but the Walnut Tree community at Belews Creek, the Roxboro community at Mayo, and the Semora community at Roxboro deserve the same protection. Duke Energy must stop the leaks of coal ash pollution into our streams, rivers, and lakes. Rather than requiring Duke to stop all illegal flows into our waterways, this agreement legalizes the seeps Duke built, which is unacceptable. Duke should not be allowed to pump out millions of gallons of polluted wastewater from its coal ash lagoons into rivers and lakes without first removing toxic pollutants like arsenic, lead, and mercury. Duke must be required to stop ongoing leaks of coal ash pollution after it pumps wastewater out of the leaking, unlined lagoons. And finally, Duke must stop the ongoing pollution of tributary streams, treating these waterways as parts of Duke's private wastewater system.

As stated by our partner, Xavier Boatright, Community Organizer with Clean Water for North Carolina, "Notice for this public meeting was issued with extremely inadequate communication, placing impacted communities at a disadvantage for submitting substantial comments on a historic event where massive accelerated wastewater discharge is going to be released into nearby waterways."

**We ask you to fix these problems and require Duke Energy to get its coal ash out of the leaking, unlined lagoons and into dry, lined landfill storage or recycling at Belews Creek, Buck Steam Station, Mayo Steam Station, and Roxboro Steam Station.**

In advocacy for our community,

Alliance of Carolinians Together Against Coal Ash