



US ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
KENTUCKY/WEST VIRGINIA COAL SLURRY SPILL  
MARTIN COUNTY COAL CORPORATION  
INEZ, KENTUCKY  
POLLUTION REPORT (POLREP) NUMBER 23

**DATE:** DECEMBER 21, 2000  
**TO:** DOUG LAIR, EPA REGION IV  
CHARLIE KLEEMAN, EPA REGION III  
**FROM:** ART SMITH, OSC

**I. BACKGROUND**

See prior POLREPs.

**II. CURRENT ACTIVITIES**

**(FROM 1700 HOURS, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2000, TO 1200 HOURS, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2000)**

**Weather:** The weather has been cold and cloudy with highs in the 30's and lows in the teens. Scattered rain and snow showers fell throughout this reporting period, resulting in continued water quality impacts at downstream locations. No flooding was observed as a result of these precipitation events. The below freezing temperatures has slowed work considerably and completely shut down bank washing operations from the 17<sup>th</sup> on.

**Personnel:** EPA OSC (Art Smith), USCG Strike Team(Wayne Chapman), START (Pat Zimmerman), KYDNREPC, Martin County Coal Corporation (and contracted personnel and equipment).

**Coldwater Fork:** **Gross slurry removal approximately 95% complete in this watershed as of the date of this POLREP.**

Overflow of "black water" at the Cain Property weir occurred as a result of the precipitation between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. As of the afternoon on the 18<sup>th</sup> the water level had receded below the top of the weir.

The gabion weir located at the gate 4 bridge has been completely removed to return water flow to normal.

Work crews are backfilling and grading excavated areas in preparation of seeding and/or other restoration activities. Selected areas are being hydroseeded. Reclamation of the Cornfield cells is approximately 70% complete. Mechanical removal of slurry deposits remaining is limited to a small section continues in the Old Road Fork. (see attached tables for volumes removed). All

major removal and restoration operations in the Coldwater Fork watershed are expected to be completed by Dec. 22.

**Wolf Creek:**

Overflow at all control points occurred as a result of the precipitation during December 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. Black water continues to discharge into the Tug Fork as of the date of this report.

Liming and mechanical removal operations continue at the Meathouse area. Approximately 2600 feet of bank were washed on December 16<sup>th</sup>, since than bank washing activities have been suspended due to freezing. Slurry removal from the Prep Plant to the Pegasus railroad crossing continues and is projected to be completed by Dec. 22 (see attached tables for volumes removed).

**Tug Fork and Big Sandy River:**

Recent weather events have caused elevated turbidity levels at the following locations.:

Location	Dec. 16	Dec. 17	Dec. 18	Dec. 19
Mouth of Wolf Creek at Tug Fork	655	7050	308	240
Fort Gay Lock and Dam	555	7450	1700	200
Mouth of Big Sandy River at Ohio River	180	1250	663	334

Turbidity values recorded in NTUs.

**There have been no reports thus far indicating any problems with potable or industrial water intakes during the continued black water release.**

**General:**

The Unified Command met on December 17<sup>th</sup>. The EPA OSC stated that conditions no longer represented an emergency as cleanup operations are routine and predictable in nature. As a result, EPA will no longer maintain a daily presence on the site, but will continue to monitor remediation efforts on infrequent basis. The EPA Region 4 OSC, START and the USCG Gulf Strike Team will be demobilized from the site by December 22.

Recommendations by KY and WV Fish and Wildlife agencies for immediate dredging of slurry deposits in the Tug Fork have been submitted for consideration. However, there is insufficient information available at this time regarding the effects of the coal slurry in the Tug Fork and Big Sandy River. Additional study of ecological impacts and the mechanisms by which slurry is mobilized and re-deposited in the river is needed to determine if any such removal/remedial actions are warranted.

ERTV was on site December 18<sup>th</sup> thru 20<sup>th</sup> conducting video documentation of site activities.

### III. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Continue remediation efforts include pumping and solidifying slurry from both watersheds. Solidification efforts will continue using lime and mechanical methods to excavate the sludge. Hydroseeders will continue seeding banks when weather permits.

**REMOVAL TOTALS**  
**Table 1**

<b>Date **</b>	<b>Volume Removed Wolf Creek</b>	<b>Volume Removed Coldwater Creek</b>
December 16	1341	1590
December 17	1311	425
December 18	1530	2614
December 19	803	1411

Estimated Total Removed = 472,000 CY

- \* Cubic yards includes pumping
- \*\* 24 hour period ending 0600 hours