

December 2, 2005

Biological Assessment of River Shows No Short-term Effects from Fly Ash

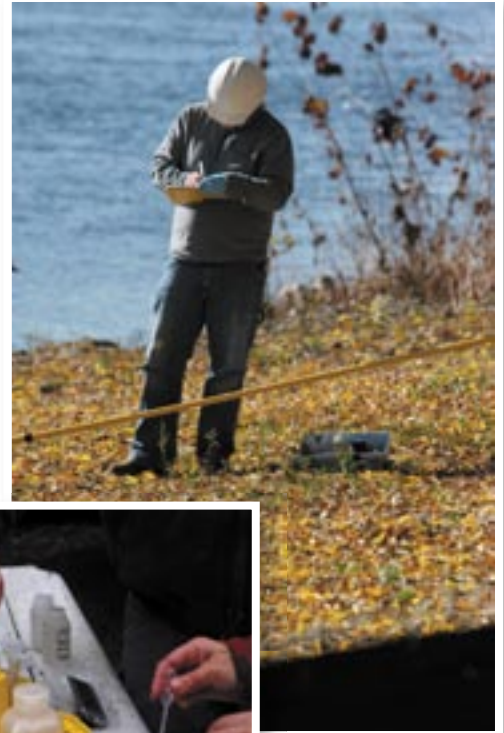
A biological assessment of the Delaware River conducted by Normandeu Associates, a firm with national experience in assessing river habitats, has found no detectable short-term effects on fish or on the small organisms that fish eat – called benthic macroinvertebrates – including mussels, snails, and stonefly and mayfly nymphs.

Normandeu took its samples for the study from the river Aug. 29 through Sept. 5. Samples of both fish and macroinvertebrates were gathered at locations within four miles downriver from the PPL boat launch area where the water and fly ash that leaked from Ash Basin #4 at the Martins Creek power plant entered the river. Samples of macroinvertebrates also were taken at locations up to 30 miles downriver

wherever there were visible ash deposits. Two control points upriver from where the ash entered also were sampled.

After analyzing all the samples, Normandeu did not find any detectable short-term impacts attributable to the fly ash.

The complete report can be viewed on the Internet at www.martinscreekcleanup.com. Copies of the report also are available for review at the Lower Mount Bethel and Harmony township buildings.



From the Cleanup Director



Immediately following the ash spill, we asked Normandeu Associates to do an assessment of the biological effects on the Delaware River. It's good news that the study, which was conducted according to the federal Environmental Protection Agency's Rapid Bioassessment Protocols, has found that the ash spill had no immediate effect on fish and small organisms that inhabit the Delaware River.

The study also showed that the river has an abundant population of the small organisms, called benthic macroinvertebrates, that are one of the key indicators of healthy aquatic habitat. Normandeu Associates found

comparable distribution between upstream and downstream samples of well-diversified populations of these tiny organisms, which provide food supply for fish. This included a good variety of the species that are especially sensitive to pollution of any kind. That's a significant preliminary indicator that the Delaware River in this area has been – and remains – a very healthy biological environment.

But, the intent of the Normandeu study was only to do an assessment of the immediate effect of the ash spill on the river. It leads to the thorough long-term study that Normandeu now will do under the oversight of the Academy of Natural Sciences. When we have the results of that study, we will share them with you.

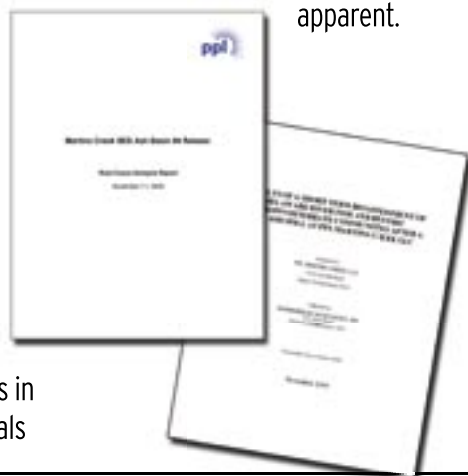

Bob Barkanic

Highlights of the Short-Term Biological Assessment Report

- Although a visible coating of fly ash remained on exposed substrates in habitats sampled within four miles of the spill, as well as thinner coatings further downriver, the fish and benthic macroinvertebrate communities did not exhibit detectable short-term impacts attributable to the fly ash.
- A more balanced riffle-run fish community existed at the sampling station below the spill site than at the upriver control point. Sixteen fish species, including white sucker, American eel, fallfish and spotfin shiner, were found.
- In the pool-edge fish communities sampled, 17 species were found, with spottail shiner and smallmouth bass dominating.
- For fish tissue analysis, smallmouth bass and white sucker were sampled Sept. 3-5 above and below the fly ash spill. There were no systemic differences in concentrations of constituent metals

in fish caught upstream versus fish caught downstream. Qualitatively, the sampling data did not show any significant effect of the fly ash on concentrations of metals in the fish.

- Data from all 11 control and downstream riffle-run sample locations showed taxonomically rich, diverse and evenly distributed macroinvertebrate communities. Each of the communities was well-represented by pollution-sensitive insects such as stoneflies, mayflies and caddis flies. No short-term effects attributable to the fly ash spill were apparent.



Progress Being Made on Ash Cleanup

Divers are making progress vacuuming ash from the Delaware River within about a mile of the PPL boat launch area. During a reassessment of the river following the recent high river flows, divers found several places in that area where ash had settled, especially in backwaters and eddies a few feet from the shoreline.

You may notice brightly colored pink and green buoys that have been placed in the river to mark the areas to be vacuumed. To vacuum the ash, the divers are using pumps mounted on two dive platforms custom-built at the Martins Creek site specifically for this project. The ash that is removed is being pumped to Basin #4, with Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection approval, through a newly constructed 7,800-foot pipeline.

Water sampling continues to show that river water and drinking water meets all applicable federal and state quality standards.

Residential Wells in New Jersey Tested for Second Time

New Jersey residents who had their well water tested following the ash spill received a letter recently from PPL offering a follow-up test. These tests will be offered quarterly through August 2007.

Of the 98 residents whose wells were tested initially, 51 requested the second test. Samples for that test were collected Nov. 18-20.

Residents also were offered the opportunity to authorize PPL to

release the results of the well tests to the Warren County Department of Health for an independent evaluation or to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for review. There were 38 residents who authorized release of the results to the county, and 31 to the DEP. In most cases, residents allowed release of the data to both agencies. However, two residents allowed release of the data only to the DEP, and nine only to the county.

Results of the well tests are expected to be mailed to residents in mid-December. Following that, the results will be made available on the Internet at www.martinscreekcleanup.com.

Pennsylvania residents will have an opportunity to have their wells tested again in January.

If you have not yet had your well tested and would like to do so, call 1-866-364-2800.

From the desk of Bob Barkanic, cleanup director.

Contact him at cleanupdirector@pplweb.com, or toll-free at 1-866-364-2800.

