

Coal Ash Film FAQs

Why did the film not assess removal options other than trucking?

Barge transport of coal ash would be uniquely dangerous to the environment and would still require trucking, since any appropriate upland lined landfill will necessarily be located away from waterways. Coal ash would have to be loaded along the river at Plant Barry and unloaded as nearly as possible to the destination landfill to be offloaded and transported by truck to the landfill.

Train transport would also require equipment to load railcars at Plant Barry and unload railcars at the rail terminus, and trucks to move the from the rail terminus to the landfill itself. Because a primary environmental and human health concern in closure is minimization of the number of times the coal ash is handled, train transport was not considered.

What about bioaccumulation of arsenic and cobalt?

According to a comprehensive review of arsenic hazards to fish, wildlife, and invertebrates (Eisler, 1988), there is no evidence of magnification along the aquatic food chain. And while cobalt can bioaccumulate, no studies have demonstrated bioaccumulation in fish near Plant Barry. No known or established effects of arsenic or cobalt on fish consumed by local fishermen have been documented.

https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/eisler/CHR_12_Arsenic.pdf

Why not consider use of zero emission heavy vehicles?

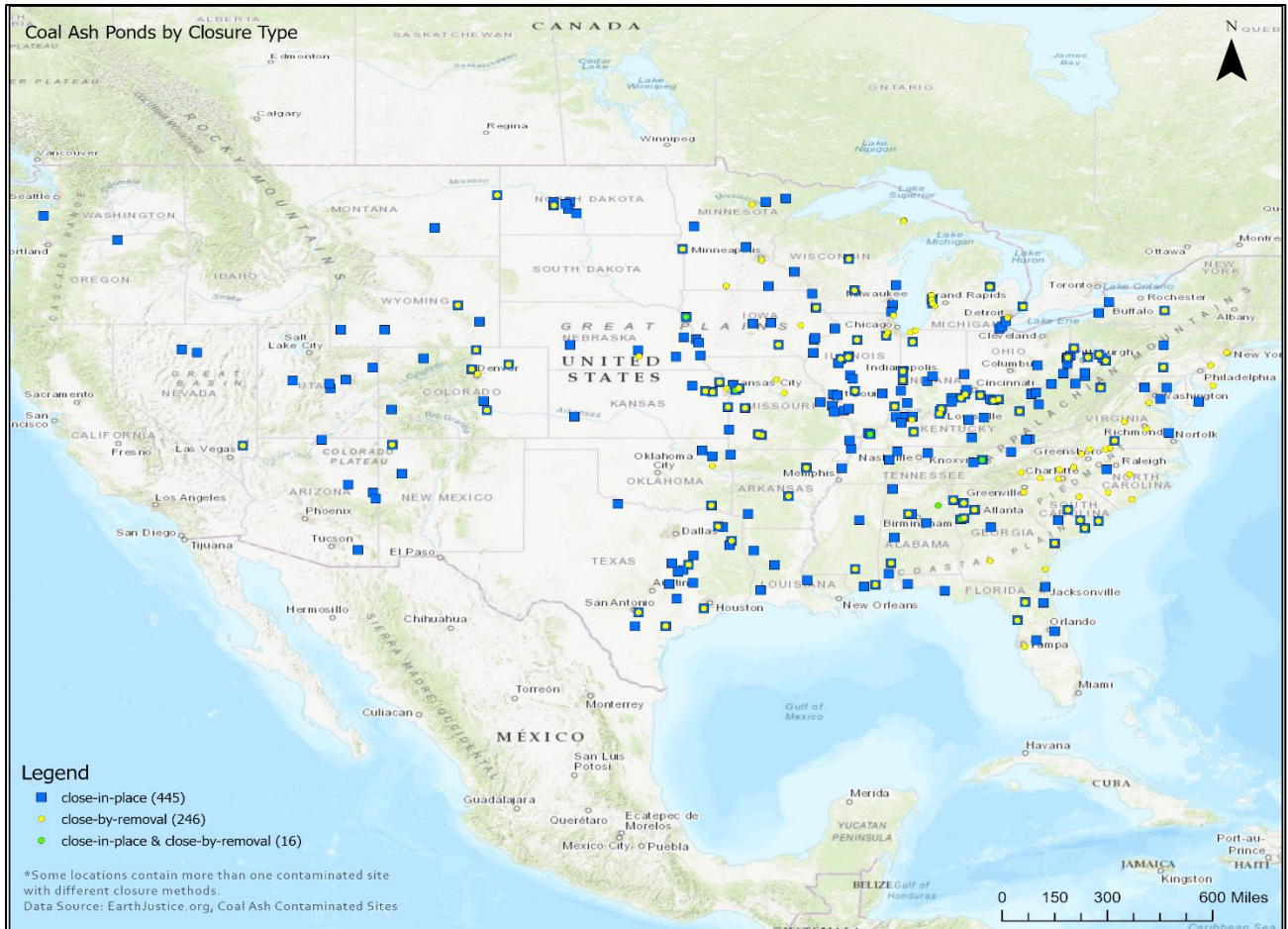
Though progress is being made by Tesla and other electric vehicle companies, currently no practical commercial options for zero emission heavy vehicles exist in the marketplace.

<https://afdc.energy.gov/laws/11528>

<https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2020-06-25/new-california-truck-mandate-100-000-zero-emission-commercial-haulers-sold-annually-by-2030>

Why are they only closing-in-place here in Alabama?

According to Earth Justice (<https://earthjustice.org/features/map-coal-ash-contaminated-sites>), the breakdown of closures (proposed or actual) by type is as follows: 445 ponds (65%)- close-in-place; 224 (32%) close-by-removal; and 17 (2%) ponds are a combination of the two.



Map of CCR-Rule closures of coal ash ponds by type, including close-in-place, close-by-removal, and close-in-place AND close-by removal. Source: earthjustice.org.

What about the cost of removal? Would closure-by-removal cost customers more?

Currently, Alabama Power customers pay a rate increase of an additional three percent to their bills to finance Alabama Power’s plan to close its ponds in place. By all accounts, closure by removal would be significantly more expensive. Whether those additional costs would be passed along to customers as well would be up to Alabama state regulators.

What about Alabama Power’s profit allowance?

Mobile Bay National Estuary Program has no relationship to the financial regulation of Alabama Power.