Ash storage: 15 million tons of coal ash is stored in two unlined basins, the Lower and Upper Ash Ponds. Both ponds are surrounded by recreational waters and sit right next to Dutch Gap Conservation Area, a popular park for fishing, kayaking, and hiking. In fact, the Lower Ash Pond sits directly in the original channel of the James River. Dominion Energy is planning to leave the ash sitting in these unlined lagoons with a thin cover installed on top.

- **Coal ash is full of heavy metals and carcinogens.** At the Chesterfield Power Station, high levels of arsenic, radium, beryllium, cobalt, and lead have been detected in the groundwater. Dominion has disclosed formal exceedances of groundwater protection standards for arsenic, cobalt, lead, radium, and other pollutants.

- **The pollution isn’t contained.** Hydrogeologists have found that groundwater is flowing through the stored coal ash waste, confirmed through Dominion’s own regulatory filings, and carrying pollutants to adjacent surface waters. This flow of pollutants is documented in sampling collected at the Dutch Gap Conservation Area, where the James River Association and Southern Environmental Law Center found arsenic levels in the riverbed at 400 times above the level considered acceptable by the Environmental Protection Agency for residential uses.

- **Health threats in a public park.** An outside human health expert evaluated the Dutch Gap Conservation Area sampling data and concluded that Dominion Energy’s coal ash is posing risks to human health and the environment. According to the report, people in Dutch Gap Conservation Area who interact with these contaminated areas face an increased cancer risk—7 to 9.6 times above what the Environmental Protection Agency considers the cutoff for acceptable cancer risk at Superfund sites.

- **Communities, drinking water supplies, and the James River at risk.** Expert analysis shows that leaving the coal ash in place, even with a cover on top, will not stop the ongoing contamination as groundwater continues to flow through the unlined base of the ponds and into nearby waterways.

- **Vulnerable to storms and flooding.** Chesterfield’s low-lying ash ponds are within an active and changing river system, separated only by thin strips of land. A major rainfall, hurricane, or tidal surge could put the river back on its original course, causing severe erosion and a direct release of arsenic-laced pollution into the James River.

Leaving coal ash in unlined lagoons is not acceptable. To deal effectively with this toxic legacy, the ash must be dug up. It then must be placed in a modern, lined landfill away from waterways or sold for use in concrete and cement. This approach has already proven to be environmentally beneficial and cost-effective in other Southeastern states and can work in Virginia with additional benefits such as creating local jobs, generating tax revenue, and improving property values.

For more information, visit: vcnva.org/coalash/