

Coal Ash Management Commission Hires First Staff Members

By Administrator

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RALEIGH, (SGRToday.com) - The agency charge with handling coal ash residuals in the wake of the Dan River spill earlier this year has hired two staff members.

Natalie Birdwell has been tapped to be Executive Director of the Coal Ash Management Commission (CAMC). She will provide senior-level management of staff and is responsible for business operations of the Commission. Birdwell has extensive experience in the energy industry and in government operations.

Most recently she served as Special Assistant for Natural Resources at the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, where she oversaw operations of the state zoo, aquariums, marine fisheries, parks and recreation and the Museum of Natural Sciences.

Attorney Lisa Schneider, partner with Schneider Boerema, PLLC, is the Commission's legal counsel and will serve under an annual contract. Ms. Schneider currently practices corporate law and previously served in the Environmental Division of the N.C. Attorney General's office and as General Counsel to the State Treasurer.

Plans are in place to hire or contract with additional people in the fields of engineering, community and public relations, and administration.

The law creating the Commission went into effect in late September.

The nine-member Commission is tasked with reviewing and approving coal combustion residuals surface impoundment classifications and closure plans, and making recommendations on rules related to managing coal ash.

Duke Energy maintains 32 coal ash impoundments at 14 sites across the state which store residual material left from burning coal to generate electricity.

Funding for the Coal Ash Management Commission and additional positions in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources tasked with monitoring coal ash, is paid for by a levy on public utilities which operate coal combustion residuals surface impoundments.