

# **Coal Combustion Residual Selection of Remedy Semiannual Report**

**Basin Electric Power Cooperative  
Laramie River Station**

**September 2023**

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## Introduction

Basin Electric Power Cooperative (**Basin Electric**) is a not-for-profit regional wholesale electric generation and transmission cooperative owned by over 130 member cooperatives. Basin Electric has a diverse energy portfolio comprised of coal, gas, oil, and renewable energy, including the coal-fired Laramie River Station (**LRS**), located near Wheatland, Wyoming. Basin Electric is part owner, manager, and operator of LRS on behalf of the five owners of the Missouri Basin Power Project.

Three ash ponds and the landfill are located west of the generating units and office complex, near the western edge of the site. Due to the presence of Coal Combustion Residuals (**CCRs**), the LRS ash ponds and landfill are regulated under Chapter 40 Code of Federal Regulations (**CFR**) Part 257, Subtitle D (**CCR Rule**) of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (**RCRA**). The CCR Rule was promulgated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (**EPA**) in 2015.

## Background

The CCR Rule requires initiating a corrective action process if any constituents listed in Appendix IV of 40 CFR Part 257 are detected at statistically significant levels (**SSLs**) above the groundwater protection standards (**GWPSs**). Groundwater assessment monitoring in 2018 identified lithium and molybdenum at SSLs above GWPSs downgradient of Bottom Ash Pond 1. Accordingly, additional groundwater characterization activities were conducted per 40 CFR § 257.95(g)(1).

Additional characterization activities were completed by Basin Electric's consultant, AECOM, in 2019 and are documented in the Assessment of Corrective Measures report (**ACM**). The ACM also identifies potentially applicable groundwater corrective measures for Bottom Ash Pond 1 to remediate lithium and molybdenum to concentrations below their respective GWPSs. The identified corrective measures were subjected to a screening process to evaluate their capability of achieving the corrective measures objectives specified in 40 CFR § 257.97(b). The ACM describing these alternatives was posted to the LRS operating record on August 30, 2019.

## Purpose

Basin Electric is required to prepare semiannual reports describing the progress made toward the selection and design of the remedy. This semiannual report, prepared in accordance with 40 CFR § 257.97(a), is the eighth report since completion of the ACM in August 2019 and documents Basin Electric's progress in selecting, designing, and implementing the remedy for the groundwater impacts associated with Bottom Ash Pond 1 at LRS.

## Progress

During 2019, Basin Electric completed an Assessment of Corrective Measures (ACM) in accordance with the CCR Rule. Potentially applicable corrective measures were identified based on the nature and extent of groundwater impacts and site-specific geological and hydrogeological characteristics. The following corrective measures, to be used singly or in combination, were identified for screening to achieve the corrective action objectives:

- Natural attenuation
- Groundwater extraction (e.g., using pumping wells), followed by:
  - Surface discharge of extracted groundwater with prior treatment if necessary,
  - Underground injection of extracted groundwater, or
  - On-site reuse or disposal of extracted groundwater
- In-situ treatment
- Long-term monitoring.

Applying the screening criteria of performance, reliability, ease of implementation, potential impacts (of the remedy), time to begin and complete, and institutional requirements to the corrective measures described above eliminated in-situ treatment from further consideration. The effectiveness of in-situ treatment for the target constituents is currently unknown and would have to be verified; the technology may be impractical to construct and maintain. Accordingly, in-situ treatment has been removed from further consideration as a potential corrective action technology.

Natural attenuation, groundwater extraction, and long-term monitoring are proven effective, easily implementable, and often appropriate corrective measures, and were retained and

assembled into the following two corrective measures alternatives for further detailed evaluation:

- Natural Attenuation and Long-Term Monitoring
- Groundwater Extraction, Onsite Reuse or Disposal and Long-Term Monitoring

The two remaining corrective measures alternatives were presented at a public meeting held on January 30, 2020, in Wheatland Wyoming. A 30-day public comment period started on January 30, 2020, and ended on February 29, 2020. No comments were received during the 30-day period following the public meeting.

In July 2020, Basin Electric selected Groundwater Extraction, Onsite Reuse or Disposal, and Long-Term Monitoring to meet the remedy requirements of the CCR Rule. This alternative is expected to restore the underlying aquifer faster than relying on natural attenuation to reduce lithium and molybdenum concentrations. Basin Electric procured consulting/engineering services for the design of the groundwater extraction system during 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2020.

Basin Electric began retrofitting Bottom Ash Pond 1 in accordance with § 257.102 (criteria for conducting the closure or retrofit of CCR units) during 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2020, with completion in early 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2021. AECOM prepared a certification upon the completion of construction verifying that the retrofit activities had been completed in accordance with the retrofit plan; the AECOM certification was subsequently posted to Basin Electric's CCR Rule compliance website in March 2021. AECOM provided detailed plans and specifications for the groundwater extraction system and supporting infrastructure for Basin Electric's review and comment. Basin Electric completed its review in late August 2021.

During the period covered by the previous (sixth and seventh) semiannual reports, Basin Electric provided a brief summary detailing the installation, testing, and hydrogeologic analysis of the recovery wells. The two extraction wells (RW-1 and RW-2) have depths of 80 and 85 feet below ground surface and are expected to exert hydraulic control over the aquifer area affected by lithium and molybdenum. AECOM completed the final detailed design in late December 2022 and Basin Electric subsequently issued the contract for the construction of the extraction system on March 6, 2023.

During the period covered by this (eighth) semiannual report, efforts by Basin Electric and

AECOM have been focused on construction of the extraction system. The following activities have occurred: contractor has completed the installation of well pumps, piping, primary electrical services, and other supporting infrastructure has been installed. The pump controls are not yet operational, and parts are on backorder. The supplier delays have forced completing equipment installation to the end of 2023 (assuming no further delays).

### Planned Work

Basin Electric anticipates only limited commissioning activities to occur after the controls are installed at the end of 2023. If conditions allow the groundwater extraction system should be ready for full system startup in early 2024 after severe winter weather conditions have subsided. This schedule assumes all system components function as designed.

### Recordkeeping and Reporting

This report has been placed in Basin Electric's operating record to satisfy the requirements under § 257.105(h)(12), and posted to Basin Electric's CCR Website in accordance with § 257.107(h)(9).