

REPORT

Coal Combustion Residuals Landfill Annual Inspection

Nucla Station Ash Disposal Facility

Submitted to:

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc.

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Submitted by:

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Table of Contents

1.0							
	1.1	Background	1				
	1.2	Facility Description	1				
2.0	REVI	EW OF AVAILABLE INFORMATION	2				
	2.1	Information Reviewed	2				
	2.2	Changes in Facility Geometry	2				
	2.3	Ash Volume Contained in the Facility	2				
	2.4	Changes Affecting Stability or Operation	3				
3.0	VISU	AL OBSERVATION	3				
	3.1	Overview	3				
	3.2	Visual Observation Terminology	3				
	3.3	Findings	3				
	3.3.1	Deposition Area	4				
	3.3.2	Embankment Crest	4				
	3.3.3	Embankment Slopes	5				
	3.3.4	Embankment Toe	7				
	3.3.5	Storm Water Control Features	8				
4.0		CLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS					
5.0	REFE	RENCES	13				

FIGURES

Photograph 1: Typical Deposition Area Condition	4
Photograph 2: Typical Embankment Crest Condition	5
Photograph 3: Typical Embankment Slope Condition (South Embankment Slopes)	6
Photograph 4: Typical Embankment Slope Condition (West, North, and East Embankment Slopes)	7
Photograph 5: Typical Embankment Toe Condition	8
Photograph 6: Typical Downchute Channel Condition	9
Photograph 7: Typical Terrace Channel Condition	10
Photograph 8: Typical Perimeter Channel Condition	11
Photograph 9: Sediment Buildup in the East Perimeter Channel at the Downstream Ends of the Culverts	12

APPENDICES

Appendix A Annual Inspection Form



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Golder Associates USA Inc. (Golder) has prepared this annual inspection report for Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State) to summarize our review of available information and visual observation of the Nucla Station Ash Disposal Facility (the facility). Since 1987, the facility has served as the location for final deposition of coal combustion residuals (CCRs) generated at Tri-State's Nucla Station, a retired coal-fired electric generation plant that was located near Nucla, Colorado. Nucla Station was retired from service in September 2019 and is currently undergoing demolition.

The facility classifies as an existing CCR landfill under 40 CFR 257. The purpose of Golder's review of available information and visual observation was to satisfy the requirements of 40 CFR 257.84(b)(1), which prescribes periodic completion of these activities by a qualified professional engineer to verify that the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the facility are consistent with recognized and generally accepted good engineering practice. Golder's visual observation took place on October 28, 2021.

This report presents a description of the facility (Section 1.0), a summary of Golder's review of available information about the facility (Section 2.0), the findings from Golder's visual observation of the facility (Section 3.0), and Golder's conclusions and recommendations (Section 4.0).

1.2 Facility Description

The facility is located in Montrose County, approximately 5.5 miles southeast of Nucla, Colorado. Tri-State historically disposed fly ash and bottom ash at the facility and continues to accept permitted non-hazardous utility-related wastes¹. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and the Montrose County Board of Commissioners originally approved construction of the facility on a 40-acre parcel in October of 1987. Pursuant to a March 2002 application submittal, Tri-State expanded the facility laterally onto an adjacent 40-acre parcel under a Certificate of Designation granted by Montrose County in April 2004 and a Special Use Permit via Notice of Decision dated July 2005. Filling began in the expansion area in 2006, and the current disposal footprint encompasses approximately 61 acres. The facility is regulated by CDPHE under 6 CCR 1007-2, Part 1, "Regulations Pertaining to Solid Waste Sites and Facilities."

Disposal of ash at the facility initially occurred behind starter dikes that encompassed the deposition area. Over time, the height of the facility was increased gradually as needed to contain the ash being generated. The height was increased with containment berms that were periodically constructed around the perimeter of the facility. Each individual containment berm was constructed atop and slightly inside of the previous containment berm to form the embankment slopes. At approximate 20-foot vertical intervals, the containment berms were inwardly offset an additional 10 feet to establish benches with terrace channels for storm water management. The resulting composite slope is approximately 3 horizontal to 1 vertical, with a slope between benches of approximately 2.5 horizontal to 1 vertical. The design intent was that the containment berms were constructed with sufficient thickness of suitable material and appropriately vegetated so that they also serve as the final cover system on the embankment slopes. The final cover system has been constructed over approximately 22 acres of embankment slope area and approximately 17 acres of top surface area.

¹ For simplicity, the term "ash," where used in this document, encompasses all permitted wastes.



2.0 REVIEW OF AVAILABLE INFORMATION

2.1 Information Reviewed

40 CFR 257.84(b)(1)(i) requires the annual inspection to include a review of information pertaining to the status and condition of the facility, including files that are available in the operating record. Golder has reviewed information provided by Tri-State as part of our duty to verify that the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the facility are consistent with recognized and generally accepted good engineering practice. The information Golder has reviewed includes the following:

- The engineering design and operations report for ash disposal on the initial 40-acre parcel (Colorado-Ute Electric Association, Inc. 1987)
- The hydrogeologic investigation report for ash disposal on the initial 40-acre parcel (Western Colorado Testing, Inc. and J.F.T. Agapito & Associates, Inc. 1987)
- The design and operations report for ash disposal on the 40-acre lateral expansion parcel (Geo-Trans Inc. 2002)
- The fugitive dust control plan for the facility (Golder 2015)
- Previous annual inspection reports for the facility (Golder 2016a, 2017, 2018a, 2018b, 2019, and 2020)
- The run-on and run-off control system plan for the facility (Golder 2021)
- The closure plan for the facility (Golder 2016b)
- Weekly inspection forms documenting weekly inspections conducted by qualified persons employed by Tri-State between December 9, 2020, and November 24, 2021

The weekly inspection forms provided valuable information regarding the status and condition of the facility during the last year, as well as the repair and maintenance activities that were completed.

2.2 Changes in Facility Geometry

40 CFR 257.84(b)(2)(i) requires the annual inspection report to include a summary of changes in facility geometry since the previous annual inspection. The geometric design criteria, ash placement limits, and construction methodology for the facility did not change in the last year. No CCRs were produced from power generation in the last year, but some waste that was encountered or generated at the power plant site during demolition was relocated to the facility. Waste placement resulted in increased surface elevations within a relatively small area in the southern half of the facility.

2.3 Ash Volume Contained in the Facility

40 CFR 257.84(b)(2)(ii) requires the annual inspection report to include an estimate of the volume of CCRs contained within the facility at the time of the inspection. The volume of ash contained in the facility at the time of the previous annual inspection was estimated as 4,745,000 cubic yards (Golder 2020). Tri-State's estimate of the volume of ash placed in the facility from that time to October 28, 2021,was 3,000 cubic yards, based on an inplace dry density of 66 pounds per cubic foot. Golder calculates that the volume of ash contained within the facility was approximately 4,748,000 cubic yards as of October 28, 2021.

2.4 Changes Affecting Stability or Operation

40 CFR 257.84(b)(2)(iv) requires the annual inspection report to include a summary of changes that may have affected the stability or operation of the facility since the previous annual inspection. Our review of the weekly inspection forms completed between December 9, 2020, and November 24, 2021, indicates that changes affecting the stability or operation of the facility have not been identified during the weekly inspections. The weekly inspection forms indicate that minor issues, such as erosion rills, are being addressed proactively. Indications of changes that affect stability or operation of the facility were not identified during Golder's visual observation on October 28, 2021 (refer to Section 3.0).

3.0 VISUAL OBSERVATION

3.1 Overview

40 CFR 257.84(b)(1)(ii) requires the annual inspection to include visual observation of the facility that is intended to identify signs of distress or malfunction. 40 CFR 257.84(b)(2)(iii) requires the annual inspection report to include a description of appearances of structural weakness at the facility, in addition to existing conditions that are disrupting or have the potential to disrupt the operation and safety of the facility. These requirements are addressed in this section.

3.2 Visual Observation Terminology

Terms used in this section are defined as follows:

Condition of Facility Component

	Good:	A condition that is generally better than the minimum expected condition based on the design criteria and maintenance performed at the facility.						
	Fair:	A condition that is generally consistent with the minimum expected condition based on the design criteria and maintenance performed at the facility.						
	Poor:	A condition that is generally worse than the minimum expected condition based on the design criteria and maintenance performed at the facility.						
<u>Severit</u>	<u>y of Deficiency</u>							
	Minor: An observed deficiency where the current condition is worse than the expected condition but does not currently pose a threat to structural stability							
	Significant: An observed deficiency where the current condition is worse than the expected condition and could pose a threat to structural stability if it is not ad							
	Excessive:	An observed deficiency where the current condition is worse than the minimum expected condition and either hinders the ability of an inspector to evaluate the facility component						

3.3 Findings

Golder conducted a visual observation of the facility on October 28, 2021. Golder observed the condition of the deposition area, embankment slopes, embankment crest, embankment toe, and storm water control features. The annual inspection form is included in Appendix A. The locations and orientations of photographs presented in this section are shown on the annual inspection form.

or poses a threat to structural stability.

3.3.1 Deposition Area

The deposition area was observed to be in good condition (Appendix A indicates the location of the deposition area at the time of the visual observation on October 28, 2021). Signs of ground movement, such as sloughing or sliding, cracking, subsidence, or bulging, were not observed in the deposition area. No deposition was occurring at the time of the visual observation. The deposition area was appropriately graded so that ash contact water would collect and be contained within the deposition area. A small amount of ponded water resulting from a recent rain event was observed within the deposition area (Appendix A indicates the location of the ponded water at the time of the visual observation). A berm that was several feet in height was in place around the perimeter of the deposition area to prevent migration of ash contact water out of the deposition area. Fugitive dust was not observed in the deposition area. The typical condition of the deposition area is depicted in Photograph 1.



Photograph 1: Typical Deposition Area Condition

3.3.2 Embankment Crest

The embankment crest was observed to be in good condition. Cracking that would be indicative of ground movement was not observed along the embankment crest. Low areas that would be indicative of differential

settlement were not observed along the embankment crest. The typical condition of the embankment crest is depicted in Photograph 2.



Photograph 2: Typical Embankment Crest Condition

3.3.3 Embankment Slopes

The embankment slopes were observed to be in fair condition. Signs of ground movement, such as sloughing or sliding, cracking, subsidence, or bulging, were not observed on the embankment slopes. Evidence of excessive erosion or slope deterioration was not observed on the embankment slopes. At the time of the visual observation on October 28, 2021, work was being performed on the south embankment slopes to address erosion rills. The weekly inspection forms indicate that work was also performed in other locations to address erosion rills and unwanted vegetation over the last year. Native vegetation has been established on the embankment slopes. The west, north, and east embankment slopes had adequate vegetative coverage at the time of the visual observation. Vegetation on the south embankment slopes had been impacted by the ongoing work, and these slopes will need to be reseeded. Reestablishment of vegetation in areas where work has been performed to address erosion rills should be monitored. Unusually poor or thriving vegetative growth was not observed on the embankment slopes. A few small trees were observed near the crest of an embankment slope near the northeastern corner of the

facility (Appendix A indicates the location of the small trees). During the visual observation on October 28, 2021, Golder recommended that Tri-State remove the small trees. However, the trees do not pose a threat to structural stability and did not impact Golder's ability to inspect the facility. One animal burrow was observed on an embankment slope, but there was no evidence of recent animal burrowing (Appendix A indicates the animal burrow location). The animal burrow does not pose a threat to structural stability. The typical condition of the south embankment slopes is depicted in Photograph 3. The typical condition of the west, north, and east embankment slopes is depicted in Photograph 4.



Photograph 3: Typical Embankment Slope Condition (South Embankment Slopes)



Photograph 4: Typical Embankment Slope Condition (West, North, and East Embankment Slopes)

3.3.4 Embankment Toe

The embankment toe was observed to be in good condition. Signs of seepage, such as springs or boggy areas, were not observed along the embankment toe. The typical condition of the embankment toe is depicted in Photograph 5.





Photograph 5: Typical Embankment Toe Condition

3.3.5 Storm Water Control Features

The storm water control features at the facility were observed to be in good condition. Downchute channels and energy dissipation basins at the facility are constructed with riprap. Some of the downchute channels had small shrubs growing in the flow path at the time of the visual observation on October 28, 2021, and Golder recommended that Tri-State remove the shrubs periodically if they become large enough to impede flow or cause riprap to shift. However, the shrubs do not pose a threat to structural stability and did not impact Golder's ability to inspect the facility. The typical condition of the downchute channels is depicted in Photograph 6. Terrace channels at the facility are provided at approximate 20-foot vertical intervals. Erosion control wattles have been installed to control erosion and capture sediment in the terrace channels at appropriate intervals. The typical condition of the terrace channels are in place around the facility where they are needed to control storm water. Perimeter channels at the facility are generally constructed with soil and rock. Erosion control wattles have been installed at appropriate intervals in the perimeter channels to control erosion and capture sediment. The typical condition of the perimeter channels is depicted in Photograph 8. During the visual observation on October 28, 2021, Golder observed that sediment has built up in the perimeter channel along the east side of the facility, at the downstream ends of the culverts that pass beneath the site entrance road,

as shown in Photograph 9 (Appendix A indicates the location of the sediment buildup). Debris buildup was observed at the same location during the annual inspection in 2020 and was removed in May 2021, according to Tri-State's records. During the visual observation on October 28, 2021, Golder recommended that Tri-State remove the recently accumulated sediment and consider improvements to the perimeter channel downstream of the culverts to ensure that the elevations and slope of the channel invert are adequate to maintain positive drainage and limit sedimentation. The sediment does not pose a threat to structural stability and did not impact Golder's ability to inspect the facility.



Photograph 6: Typical Downchute Channel Condition



Photograph 7: Typical Terrace Channel Condition





Photograph 8: Typical Perimeter Channel Condition





Photograph 9: Sediment Buildup in the East Perimeter Channel at the Downstream Ends of the Culverts

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Golder completed an annual inspection of the Nucla Station Ash Disposal Facility to address the requirements of 40 CFR 257.84. The facility is in good condition overall. Signs of distress or malfunction of the facility were not observed, and appearances of actual or potential structural weakness of the facility were not identified. Current facility maintenance practices such as control of burrowing animals, monitoring and maintenance of embankment slopes, establishment of suitable vegetation on embankment slopes, control and containment of ash contact water, fugitive dust control, and establishment of positive storm water drainage away from the facility should continue, with repairs or improvements made as the need is indicated by weekly inspections conducted in accordance with 40 CFR 257.84(a).

5.0 **REFERENCES**

- Colorado-Ute Electric Association, Inc. 1987. Nucla Station Fly Ash, Bottom Ash, Slag and Flue Gas Emission Control Waste Disposal Facility Engineering Design and Operations Report. Report prepared for the Colorado Department of Health. February 6.
- Geo-Trans Inc. 2002. Design and Operations Report, Nucla, Colorado, Ash Disposal Facility. Report prepared on behalf of Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc., for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. March 21.
- Golder (Golder Associates Inc.). 2015. Nucla Generating Station Coal Combustion Residuals Fugitive Dust Control Plan. Plan prepared for Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. October.
- Golder. 2016a. Coal Combustion Residuals Landfill Annual Inspection Report, Nucla Station Ash Disposal Site. Report prepared for Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. January.
- Golder. 2016b. Nucla Station Ash Disposal Facility Closure Plan. Plan prepared for Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. October.
- Golder. 2017. Coal Combustion Residuals Landfill Annual Inspection Report, Nucla Station Ash Disposal Site. Report prepared for Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. January.
- Golder. 2018a. Coal Combustion Residuals Landfill Annual Inspection Report, Nucla Station Ash Disposal Site. Report prepared for Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. January.
- Golder. 2018b. Coal Combustion Residuals Landfill Annual Inspection, Nucla Station Ash Disposal Site. Report prepared for Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. December.
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- Golder. 2021. Run-On and Runoff Control System Plan, Nucla Station Ash Disposal Facility. Plan prepared for Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. October.
- Western Colorado Testing, Inc., and J.F.T. Agapito & Associates, Inc. 1987. Geological and Geohydrological Evaluation of Dry Storage Site, Nucla CFB Demonstration Project. Report prepared on behalf of Colorado-Ute Electric Association, Inc., for the Colorado Department of Health. July

Signature Page

Golder Associates USA Inc.

Jason

Jason Obermeyer, PE Associate and Senior Consultant

JEO/TJS/mb

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https://golderassociates.sharepoint.com/sites/141312/project files/6 deliverables/reports/4-r-ccrl_annual_inspection/4-r-0/21453425-4-r-0-2021_nucla_lf_annual_insp_17dec21.docx

Toda Stong

Associate and Senior Consultant

Todd Stong, PE



APPENDIX A

Annual Inspection Form



	TRI-STATE GENERATION AN NUCLA STATION AS ANNUAL INS	SH DI	SPO S	SAL I	FACI						
GOLDER MEMBER OF WSP	Inspection Date: October 28, 2021 Inspector(s): Jason Obermeyer, PE	Inspection Time: 10:00 am – 1:15 pm Title(s): Senior Consultant							N NI	Yes No Not inspected Not applicable	
	Title:	Senior (Consulta	ant			RA	Requires action			
-	n part of the annual inspection form. Indicate areas of concern on	the pla	n view o	on page	3. Elabo	orate or	ı deficier	ncies in Sec	ction J.		
A. Previous Open Items											
1. List open items from the p	previous year's annual inspection form (Section I.) and indicate who	ther or	not the c	pen iter	ns have	been ad	ldressed:				
a. Debris at downstream e	nds of culverts under site entrance road	Y	N	NI	NA	RA	If N ar	nd/or RA, p	lease e	laborate.	
b.		Y	Ν	NI	NA	RA	If N and/or RA, please elaborate.				
с.		Y	Ν	NI	NA	RA	If N ar	nd/or RA, p	lease e	laborate.	
B. Atmospheric Condition	ns										
1. Briefly describe precipitat	ion conditions (rainy, dry, snowy) or notable precipitation events o	ver the l	ast five	days: Ra	ain even	t on Oc	tober 26,	, 2021			
2. Briefly describe wind (cal	m, breezy, windy, gusty) and weather (cold, warm, cloudy, sunny)	conditio	ns durin	g the in	spection	: Clear,	cool, ca	lm			
C. Facility Access											
1. Are facility access roads (including the turn from FF31 Road) in good condition?	Y	Ν	NI	NA	RA	If N ar	nd/or RA, p	lease e	laborate.	
2. Are facility access control	s (signage, fencing, gates) in good condition?	Y	Ν	NI	NA	RA	If N and/or RA, please elaborate.			laborate.	
3. Do you observe signs of u	Y	Ν	NI	NA	RA	If Y and/or RA, please elaborate.			laborate.		
D. Deposition Area											
1. Where are ash and/or othe	r materials currently being deposited (indicate on the plan view on	page 3 c	or write]	N/A)? N	lone dur	ring insp	pection; o	current area	ı showr	n on page 3	
2. Do you observe signs of g	round movement in the deposition area?	Y	Ν	NI	NA	RA	If Y ar	nd/or RA, p	lease e	laborate.	
If Y, circle those that appl	y: Slough or Slide Cracking Subsidence Bulging										
3. Do you observe ponding i	n the deposition area (if Y, sketch on the plan view on page 3)?	Y	Ν	NI	NA	RA	If RA,	please elab	orate.		
4. Does it appear that fugitiv	e dust (deposition area and roads) is being adequately controlled?	Y	Ν	NI	NA	RA	If N ar	nd/or RA, p	lease e	laborate.	
5. Are controls in place to ke	Y	N	NI	NA	RA	If N ar	nd/or RA, p	lease e	laborate.		
E. Embankment Crest											
1. Do you observe cracks alo	ong the embankment crest?	Y	N	NI	NA	RA	If Y ar	nd/or RA, p	lease e	laborate.	
2. Do you observe differenti	al settlement (low areas) along the embankment crest?	Y	N	NI	NA	RA	If Y ar	nd/or RA, p	lease e	laborate.	
3. Are the roads around and	on the facility in good condition?	Y	N	NI	NA	RA	If N ar	nd/or RA, p	lease e	laborate.	

F. Embankment Slopes								
1. Briefly describe ground conditions (wet, dry, soft, firm). North: Moist, soft East: Set			So	uth: Dry	, firm	West: Moist, soft		
2. Do you observe signs of movement or instability on the embankment slopes?			NI	NA	RA	If Y and/or RA, please elaborate.		
If Y, circle those that apply: Slough or Slide Cracking Subsidence Bulging								
3. Do you observe signs of excessive erosion or slope deterioration?	Y	N	NI	NA	RA	If Y and/or RA, please elaborate.		
4. Do you observe unwanted or unusual (thriving or poor) vegetative growth?	Y	Ν	NI	NA	RA	If Y and/or RA, please elaborate.		
5. Do you observe animal burrows on the embankment slopes?	Y	Ν	NI	NA	RA	If Y and/or RA, please elaborate.		
G. Embankment Toe								
1. Do you observe signs of seepage (springs or boggy areas) at the embankment toe?	Y	N	NI	NA	RA	If Y and/or RA, please elaborate.		
2. Do you observe ash outside of the disposal footprint?			NI	NA	RA	If Y and/or RA, please elaborate.		
H. Storm Water Control Features								
1. Are rundowns (downchute channels) and energy dissipation features in good condition?	Y	Ν	NI	NA	RA	If N and/or RA, please elaborate.		
2. Are terrace channels in good condition and providing positive drainage toward rundowns?	Y	Ν	NI	NA	RA	If N and/or RA, please elaborate.		
3. Are perimeter channels and discharge outfalls in good condition?	Y	Ν	NI	NA	RA	If N and/or RA, please elaborate.		
I. Open Items								
1. List unresolved items from previous annual inspections (RA in Section A.) and new items ide	entified of	during th	ne annua	ıl inspec	tion (R.	A in Sections B. through H.):		
a. Sediment buildup at downstream ends of culverts under site entrance road								
b.								
c.								
d.								
е.								
I Flaboration								

Identify the specific item number (for instance, F.2.) and elaborate on each deficiency or issue identified during the annual inspection. Attach documentation (photographs or sketches) if practical.

H.3. Sediment has accumulated again at the downstream ends of the culverts in the location shown on page 3. The sediment does not pose a stability concern but could reduce the hydraulic capacity of the culverts. Golder recommended removing the sediment and considering improvements to the perimeter channel downstream of the culverts to ensure that the elevations and slope of the channel invert are adequate to maintain positive drainage and limit sedimentation.

F.4. A few small trees were observed at the location shown on page 3. Golder recommended removing the trees. The trees do not currently pose a stability concern.

F.5. One animal burrow was observed at the location shown on page 3. There was no evidence of recent burrowing activity. The burrow does not currently pose a stability concern and does not require action at this time.



ANNUAL INSPECTION FORM TRI-STATE GENERATION AND TRANSMISSION ASSOCIATION NUCLA STATION ASH DISPOSAL FACILITY

2 PHOTOGRAPH LOCATION AND DIRECTION

LEGEND

Inspection Date: October 28, 2021



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