



Recreational Advisories in Response to Pollution Events

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Project Overview

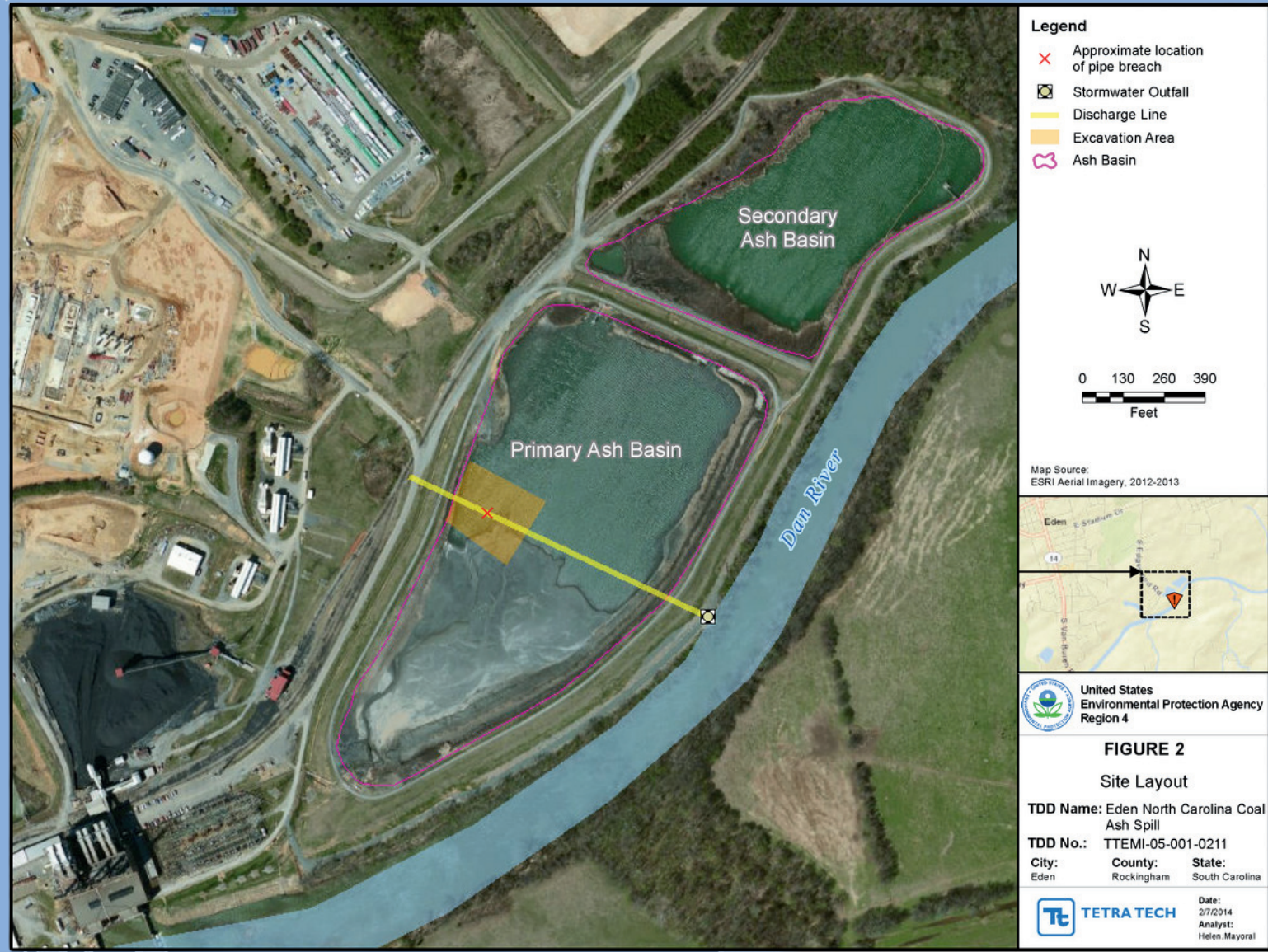
- Interviewed internal and external stakeholders
- Identified decision points, roles, and communication pathways
- Conducted a gap analysis
- Proposed improvements for current workflow
- Translated technical procedures into accessible guidance
- Developed an enhanced Emergency Response Toolkit



Raw Wastewater Spill in Norfolk

Issue/Gap Identified

Effective pollution response is a critical component of public health. When a pollution event occurs in public waterways and poses a potential threat to community health, rapid awareness and communication are essential. However, the communication channels currently outlined in the Pollution Response Program Toolkit are insufficient, hindering timely and effective pollution response efforts.



Aerial View of the Dan River Steam Station Spill



Post-spill coal ash deposits along the Dan River

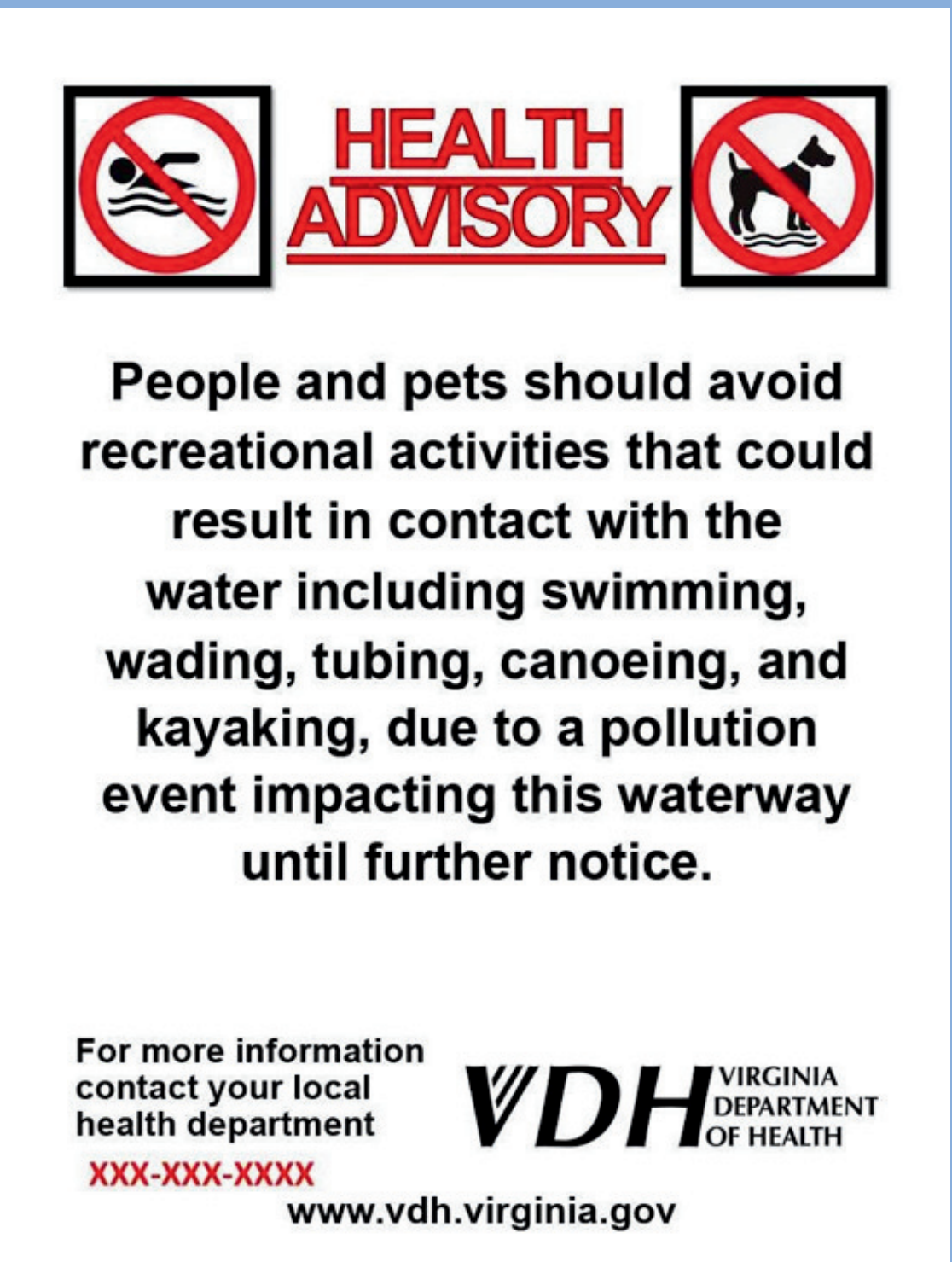
Challenges and Outcomes

Challenges

- Complex Events
- Multiple Stakeholders
- Time and Institutional Knowledge
- Audience Needs

Outcomes

- Increased communication on pollution events between Central Office and LHDs
- Easier and faster to alert the public about pollution events via social media



Example of signage used for recreational advisories.



Recreational water advisory issued after firefighting chemicals entered local waterways during the South Hill Fertilizer Warehouse fire.

Deliverables

- Assess: Regulations, stakeholders, and current procedures
- Document: Existing response processes and workflows
- Analyze: Gaps, inefficiencies, and stakeholder needs
- Develop: Educational materials and response tools
- Finalize: Emergency Response Toolkit, Process Documentation Report, and Recommendations Presentation



The Potomac River Interceptor sewage spill was one of the largest sewage spills in United States history, resulting in a 75-mile recreational advisory being instituted by VDH

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