

**DOMINION ENERGY VIRGINIA CRYSTAL CITY SUBSTATION OIL SPILL**

History

On January 24, 2016 a transformer tank rupture at the Crystal City Substation (CCS), owned and operated by Dominion Energy Virginia (DEV), discharged approximately 13,500 gallons of mineral oil dielectric fluid. Most of the oil (11,120 gallons) was recovered on the CCS property, but an undetermined quantity was observed off site in the Roaches Run Waterfowl Sanctuary (RRWS) within the George Washington Memorial Parkway and sheen was observed in the Potomac River up to 7.4 miles from CCS. Oil from the DEV CCS Spill injured migratory birds and their habitats. Additionally, the presence of DEV CCS Spill response activities in the Gravelly Point Parking area in George Washington Memorial Parkway resulted in lost visitor use.

DEV and the Trustees conducted a cooperative restoration-based assessment.

Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration

Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) is the process used by federal, state, and tribal governments, with trusteeship over public and tribal natural resources, to restore or replace natural resources and their services to compensate the public for the loss of, destruction of, or injury to natural resources and resource services due to contamination from the release of hazardous substances or an oil spill.

The Trustees for this case are the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), acting through the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; the Commonwealth of Virginia (the Commonwealth), acting through the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality; and District of Columbia, acting through the Department of Energy and Environment.

Settlement

The Trustees reached a settlement with DEV for \$390,385.00 to resolve natural resource damages liabilities. The proposed settlement agreement and draft Damage Assessment Restoration Plan/Environmental Compliance Analysis (DARP/ECA) were published in the Federal Register for public review and comment on February 6, 2018 and no comments were received after the 30-day public comment period. The DARP/ECA informed the public about the natural resource injuries caused by the DEV CCS Spill and selected a preferred restoration alternative that compensates for those injuries. The Trustees will use \$327,178.00 to fund the preferred restoration alternative. The remaining funds will be used by the Trustees for administrative costs associated with restoration planning, implementation, and monitoring. As part of the cooperative assessment process for the DEV CCS Oil Spill NRDAR, DEV previously reimbursed incurred assessment costs of DOI in the amount of \$76,090.64 and the Commonwealth in the amount of \$12,271.11.

Restoration

The preferred restoration project is enhancement of freshwater wetland habitat at RRWS. The additional vegetation will enhance existing waterfowl, wading bird, and shorebird habitat within the sanctuary, as well as providing benefits to other wetland resources, such as benthic invertebrates and fish. The project will improve overall water quality within RRWS and the Potomac River. Plant establishment will occur at a site north of Runway 15-33 associated with Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. The enhancement site and vegetation species selection are designed to discourage any potential aircraft-bird strikes that may occur as a result of the project. Narrowleaf cattail (*Typha augustifolia*) and arrow arum (*Peltantra virginica*) have the ability to form thick continuous stands that are undesirable to the 4 bird species (Canada Geese, Gulls, Hawks, and Vultures) most commonly involved in aircraft strikes (MOU 2003). Use of these plant species is intended to reduce the occurrence of these bird species at the area of RRWS associated with the north end of Runway 15-33. Further efforts involve the use of temporary

## NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT AND RESTORATION

enclosures with netting to prohibit use of the enhancement area by birds, mammals, and reptiles until plants are fully established and mature. The expectation is that at a mature stage of plant establishment the restoration area will not be desirable to bird species most commonly involved in aircraft strikes.

The project also includes installation of two educational signs in the parking area of RRWS that highlight the unique habitat at RRWS and the bird and wildlife species that are present. Another sign will be installed at Gravelly Point to discourage public from feeding and attracting wildlife.



### Links:

[National Park Service – Dominion Energy Virginia Crystal City Substation Oil Spill Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan \(DARP\) Project Home](#) (website)

[Document List](#) (website)

[Settlement Agreement](#) (PDF)

[Final Damage Assessment Restoration Plan/Environmental Compliance Analysis \(DARP/ECA\)](#) (PDF)

### *Press:*

[National Park Service News Release: Public Comment Invited on Restoring Roaches Run Waterfowl Sanctuary after Oil Spill](#)