



**REPORT**

**GRAND HAVEN BOARD OF LIGHT AND POWER  
J.B. SIMS GENERATING STATION**

*Surface Impoundments Annual Visual Inspection*

Submitted to:

**Grand Haven Board of Light and Power**

17000 Easton Drive  
Grand Haven, Michigan 49417

Submitted by:

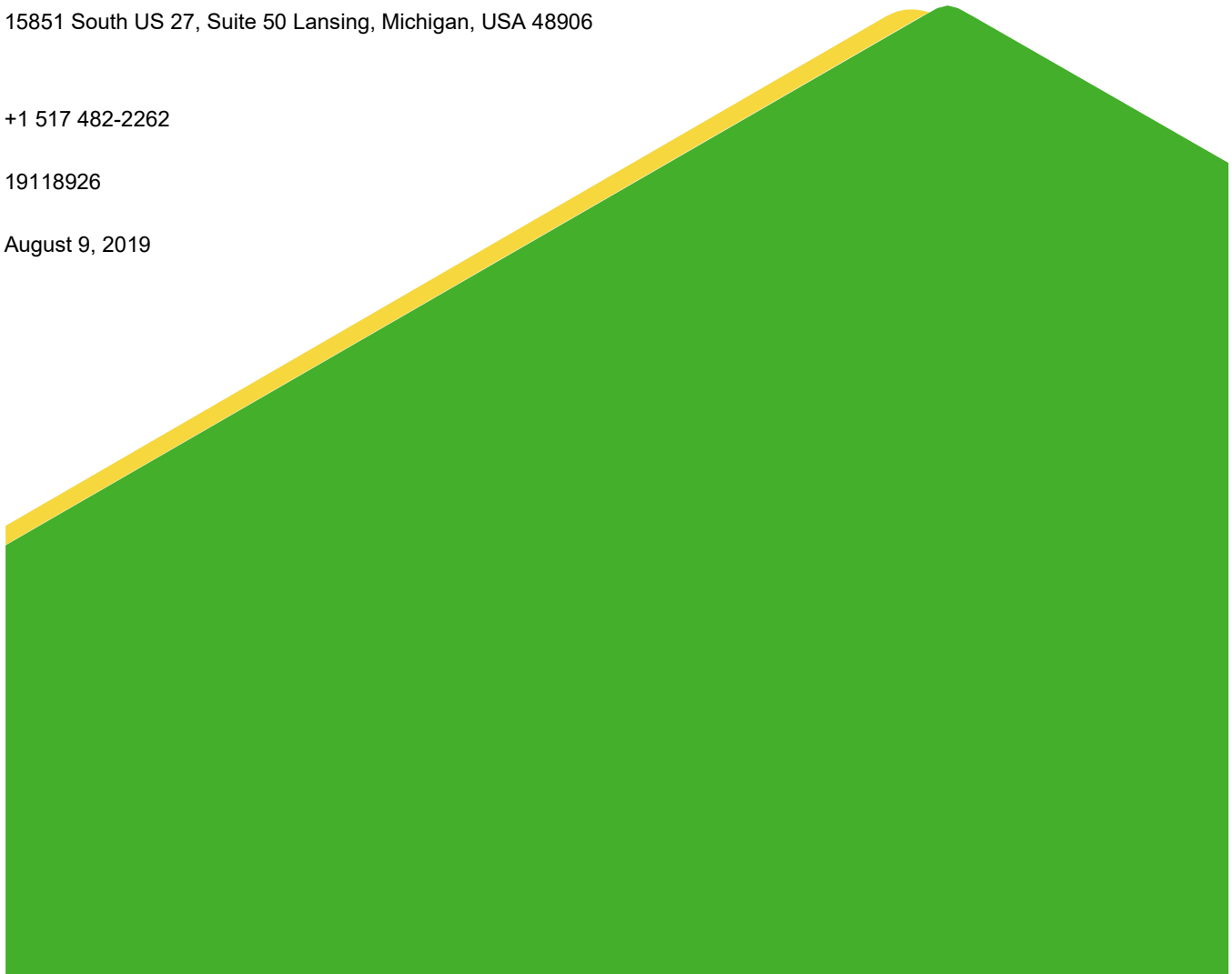
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August 9, 2019




## CERTIFICATION

### Professional Engineer Certification Statement [40 CFR 257.83]

I hereby certify that, having reviewed the attached documentation and being familiar with the provisions of Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations Section 257.83 (40 CFR Part 257.83), I attest that this Annual Inspection Report is accurate and has been prepared in accordance with good engineering practices, including the consideration of applicable industry standards, and with the requirements of 40 CFR Part 257.83.

Golder Associates Inc.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

August 9, 2019  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Report Certification

Tiffany D. Johnson, P.E.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

6201049160  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Michigan P.E. #



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) promulgated the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Coal Combustion Residuals (CCR) Rule (Rule) on April 17, 2015, with an effective date of October 19, 2015. The Rule requires owners or operators of existing CCR surface impoundments to have those units inspected on an annual basis by a qualified professional engineer in accordance with 40 CFR 257.83(b)(1). The annual qualified professional engineer inspections are required to be completed and the results documented in inspection reports (per 40 CFR 257.83(b)(2)) for CCR surface impoundments. Golder Associates Inc. (Golder) was retained by Grand Haven Board of Light and Power (GHBLP) J.B. Sims Generating Station (JBSGS) to perform the annual inspection of the Unit 3 East and West Bottom Ash Ponds, the CCR surface impoundments located at the JBSGS (Site). It should be noted that the inactive CCR units also at the JBSGS, the Units 1 and 2 Ash Ponds, are not subject to 40 CFR 257.83 because they are incised.

The CCR Rule establishes national minimum criteria and new CCR management obligations for existing, new, and lateral expansions of CCR disposal units. One of the new obligations pertains to inspections, specifically; CCR unit owners/operators must initiate the following activities:

- weekly inspections and monthly instrument monitoring of CCR Units by October 19, 2015; and
- annual inspections of CCR units starting January 18, 2016.

This report presents the results of the 2019 annual inspection of the Unit 3 East and West Bottom Ash Ponds CCR surface impoundment units at the JBSGS, located on Harbor Island, Grand Haven, Michigan. The inspection was conducted to comply with 40 CFR 257.83 of the CCR Rule.

Per 40 CFR 257.83(b)(1), Golder reviewed available information regarding the status and condition of the CCR units and performed an onsite visual inspection on July 16, 2019. The inspection objectives included the following:

- Review of Operational Records (as applicable, see Section 3):
  - Design and construction information.
  - Results of previous structural stability assessments.
  - Results of previous annual inspections.
- A visual inspection to identify signs of distress or malfunction in the CCR units and appurtenant structures.
- A visual inspection of the hydraulic structures underlying the CCR units, or passing through the dike of the CCR units, for structural integrity and continued safe and reliable operation.

In accordance with §257.83(b)(2), this inspection report has been prepared by a qualified professional engineer documenting the operational records review, visual inspection, and identifying the following since the previous annual inspection:

- Any changes in geometry of the CCR surface impoundment since the previous annual inspection.
- The location and type of existing instrumentation and the maximum recorded readings for each instrument since the previous annual inspection.

- The approximate minimum, maximum, and present depth and elevation of the impounded water and CCR since the previous annual inspection.
- The storage capacity of the impounding structure at the time of inspection.
- The approximate volume of the impounded water and CCR at the time of inspection.
- Any appearances of an actual or potential structural weakness of the CCR units, in addition to any existing conditions that are disrupting or have the potential to disrupt the operation and safety of the CCR units and appurtenant structures.
- Any other change(s) which may have affected the stability or operation of the impounding structure since the previous annual inspection.

## 2.0 FACILITY DESCRIPTION

The Unit 3 East and West Bottom Ash Ponds are located adjacent to each other and are formed by compacted clay earthen embankments with a common embankment between them. The impoundment areas range from 175 to 190 feet long by 71 to 80 feet wide with an approximate surface area of 0.2 and 0.3 acres for the east and west ponds, respectively. The ponds were designed by Black & Veatch in 1981 and are constructed with compacted clay embankments with 3 horizontal to 1 vertical (3H:1V) exterior slopes and 2H:1V interior slopes with an approximately 10 foot wide crest. The embankments are not regulated as dams by the Michigan Dam Safety office.

Both ponds were constructed with a minimum 3 feet of  $3 \times 10^{-7}$  centimeters per second (cm/sec) (Golder, January 2018) clay over the floor and are approximately 9 feet deep. The design bottom elevation of the ponds is Elevation (El) 585 feet above mean sea level (ft-msl) and the current crest elevation ranges from 591.2 to 592.7 ft-msl. Based on discussions with GHBLP personnel, normal operating conditions maintain a pond elevation of approximately El 588 to 590 ft-msl (1.2 to 4.7 feet of freeboard). The estimated storage capacity of each pond (with two feet of freeboard) is approximately 68,000 and 77,000 cubic feet for the East and West ponds, respectively.

A concrete overflow structure and sluice gate conduit between the east and west ponds allow for water level regulation between the two ponds and prevents overtopping of the embankment. These ponds do not have an outlet structure that discharges from the ponds. Water from the ponds is pumped back to the plant for reuse in plant operations after the bottom ash has settled out. A side stream from the recycled water is discharged to control the quantity of recycled water and is regulated by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) Permit number MI 0000728. Bottom ash is excavated from these ponds via crane or excavator and transported off-site. Periodically, GHBLP relines the ash ponds with clay to replace the clay liner that is removed during pond cleaning.

## 3.0 BACKGROUND AND DOCUMENT REVIEW SUMMARY

Golder performed a review of the following historic documentation relative to the Unit 3 East and West Bottom Ash Pond surface impoundments:

- City of Grand Haven, Michigan Board of Light and Power J.B. Sims Station, Unit 3 Ash Pond Construction Report (Black & Veatch, 1983)

- DRAFT - Coal Combustion Residue Impoundment, Round 12 - Dam Assessment Report, JB Sims Power Plant (Site 04), East and West Bottom Ash Ponds, Grand Haven Board of Power and Light, Grand Haven, Michigan, Prepared for: United States Environmental Protection Agency Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery, Prepared by: Dewberry & Davis, LLC Fairfax, Virginia, Dated October 2012 (EPA, 2012)
- Final Report of Evaluation for Grand Haven Power Plant Ash Impoundment Grand Haven, Michigan (Soils & Structures, 2014)
- Annual Ash Impoundment Inspection Report (Soils & Structures, July 2016)
- Select GHBLP Personnel's J.B. Sims Ash Pond Daily Inspection Forms (Dated August 2018 to July 2019)
- 2017 Grand Haven Board of Light and Power J.B. Sims Generating Station, Unit 3 East and West Ash Pond Surface Impoundments Annual Visual Inspection Report (Golder, July 2017)
- Grand Haven Board of Light and Power J.B. Sims Generating Station, Units 1 and 3 Ash Ponds and Unit 3 East and West Bottom Ash Ponds – Documentation of Liner Construction, (Golder, January 2018)
- 2018 Grand Haven Board of Light and Power J.B. Sims Generating Station, Unit 3 East and West Ash Pond Surface Impoundments Annual Visual Inspection Report (Golder, August 2017)

#### 4.0 2019 VISUAL INSPECTION

The 2019 onsite inspection of the Unit 3 East and West Bottom Ash Ponds was performed by Ms. Tiffany Johnson, P.E. on July 16, 2019. Ms. Johnson is a Professional Engineer, licensed in the State of Michigan. Golder's inspector was directed by Mr. Paul Cederquist, Environmental Compliance Specialist for the GHBLP JBSGS.

The inspection provides the following information as stipulated in 40 CFR 257.83(b)(2):

- Any changes in geometry of the CCR surface impoundment since the previous annual inspection.
  - None.
- The location and type of existing instrumentation and the maximum recorded readings for each instrument since the previous annual inspection.
  - There is currently no instrumentation in place designed to monitor for the structural stability of the Unit 3 East and West Bottom Ash Ponds.
- The approximate minimum, maximum, and present depth and elevation of the impounded water and CCR since the previous annual inspection.
  - Minimum: Approximately 585 ft-msl (empty) (assumed based on information from GHBLP)
  - Maximum: Approximately 589 ft-msl (2 to 3 feet below the crest) (assumed based on visual observation)
  - Present Depth: The West and East pond's water depth is approximately 3 feet below the crest (based on visual observation).
- The storage capacity of the impounding structure at the time of inspection.

- With two feet of freeboard - approximately 68,000 and 77,000 cubic feet for the East and West ponds, respectively (based on review of available information).
- The approximate volume of the impounded water and CCR at the time of inspection.
  - Water = East pond impounded approximately 68,000 cubic feet of water (was recently cleaned), West pond has approximately 77,000 cubic feet of water and CCR.
  - CCR = West pond has approximately 350 tons of CCR (based on review of available information from GHBLP), East pond had no CCR due to the CCR removal during the previous week.
- Any appearances of an actual or potential structural weakness of the CCR unit, in addition to any existing conditions that are disrupting or have the potential to disrupt the operation and safety of the CCR unit and appurtenant structures.
  - None were observed.
- Any other change(s) which may have affected the stability or operation of the impounding structure since the previous annual inspection.
  - None were observed.

Based on the July 16, 2019 visual inspection, the overall condition of the Unit 3 East and West Bottom Ash Ponds is acceptable. There were no structural weaknesses or safety issues observed within the upstream, downstream, crest or hydraulic structures that would likely impact operations. The following minor observations were documented (Note: Features observed and documented during the inspection were not considered a deficiency or release as classified under 40 CFR 257.83(b)(5) and required no immediate action beyond periodic inspection or maintenance):

- Minor erosion at the northwest corner of the East Pond.
- Minor erosion on the south side of the East Pond.
- Woody vegetation present along the western outboard slope of the West Pond's road next to the Grand River.

## 5.0 CLOSING

This report has been prepared in general accordance with normally accepted civil engineering practices to fulfill the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) reporting requirements in accordance with 40 CFR 257.83(b). Based on review of information provided by GHBLP and Golder's on-site visual inspection, the overall condition of the Unit 3 East and West Bottom Ash Ponds is acceptable. Golder's assessment is limited to the information provided by GHBLP and to the features that could be visually inspected in a safe manner. Golder cannot attest to the condition of subsurface or submerged structures.

**APPENDIX A**

# Visual Inspection Checklist



## CCR SURFACE IMPOUNDMENT VISUAL INSPECTION CHECKLIST

**Facility Name:** J.B. Sims Generating Station (JBSGS) Unit 3  
East and West Bottom Ash Ponds

**Owner:** Grand Haven Board of Light and Power (GHBLP)

**Purpose of Facility:** These ponds are used to store bottom ash from the power plant. The ash is sluiced to the ponds where it is allowed to settle. The ash ponds are operated in a cyclic manner with the active pond receiving ash and other waste streams while the inactive pond is being cleaned of accumulated ash. Dried ash is then disposed of at a local licensed solid waste landfill.

**Location:** Harbor Island, Grand Haven, Michigan

**Inspected By:** Tiffany Johnson, P.E. accompanied by Paul Cederquist (GHBLP)

**Inspection Date:** July 16, 2019

**Weather:** 80 degrees, partly cloudy/humid, no precipitation

ITEM	Acceptable	Monitor/Maintain	Investigate	Repair	REMARKS
1. General Conditions					The East Pond was recently cleaned.
a. Year Minimum Water Elevation		-			Elevation: Approximately 585 ft-msl (or empty when ponds are cleaned, based on information from GHBLP)
b. Year Average Water Elevation		-			Elevation: Approximately 588 ft-msl (assumed based on visual)
c. Year Maximum Water Elevation		-			Elevation: Approximately 589 ft-msl (assumed based on visual) (approximately 2 feet below crest)
d. Current water level		-			Current water level: West and East ponds are both approximately 3 feet below the crest.
e. Current storage capacity		-			Volume: With two feet of freeboard - approximately 68,000 and 77,000 cubic feet for the east and west ponds, respectively
f. Current volume of impounded water		-			Volume: With two feet of freeboard - approximately 68,000 and 77,000 cubic feet for the east and west ponds, respectively
g. Alterations	X				None
h. Development of downstream plain	X				None observed
i. Grass cover	X				
j. Settlement/misalignment/cracks	X				None observed.
k. Sudden drops in water level?	X				
2. Inflow Structure					
a. Settlement	X				
b. Cracking	X				Cracking under inlet pipe on the West Pond observed during previous inspection (August 2018) was repaired.
c. Corrosion	X				
d. Obstacles in inlet	X				
e. Riprap/erosion control	X				Cracking in concrete under inlet pipes observed during previous inspection (August 2018) was repaired.
3. Outflow Structure					
a. Settlement	X				
b. Cracking	X				Minor cracking visible on the West Pond side of the concrete overflow structure separating the East and West ponds was repaired.
c. Corrosion	X				
d. Obstacles in outlet	X				
e. Riprap/erosion control	X				
f. Seepage	X				None observed.

ITEM	Acceptable	Monitor/Maintain	Investigate	Repair	REMARKS
4. Upstream slope					
a. Erosion		X			Minor erosion was observed on North and South sides of the East Pond interior slope.
b. Rodent burrows	X				
c. Vegetation	X				Clay interior slopes.
d. Cracks/settlement	X				
e. Riprap/other erosion protection	X				
f. Slide, Slough, Scarp	X				
5. Crest					
a. Soil condition	X				Recently regraded on the east.
b. Comparable to width from previous inspection	X				West pond crest width: 14-ft East pond crest width: 19-ft
c. Vegetation	X				Gravel road crest.
d. Rodent burrows	X				None observed.
e. Exposed to heavy traffic	X				Inspection performed after the excavation of bottom ash from the East Pond. Crest is exposed to of heavy vehicle traffic, but no damage was observed.
f. Damage from vehicles/machinery	X				
6. Downstream slope					
a. Erosion	X				None observed, erosion was recently repaired.
b. Vegetation		X			Woody vegetation present along the western slope of the West Pond next to the Grand River.
c. Rodent burrows	X				None observed.
d. Slide, Slough, Scarp	X				
e. Drain conditions	X				
f. Seepage	X				
7. Toe					
a. Vegetation	X				Area of recent repair had newly established vegetation.
b. Rodent burrows	X				
c. Settlement	X				
d. Drainage conditions	X				
e. Seepage	X				
f. Other	X				

**Notes:**

- 1.) A concrete overflow structure and sluice gate conduit between the east and west ponds allow for water level regulation between the two ponds and prevents overtopping of the embankment. These ponds do not have an outlet structure that discharges from the ponds. Water from the ponds is pumped back to the plant for reuse in plant operations after the bottom ash has settled out. A side stream from the recycled water is discharged to control the quantity of recycled water and is regulated by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) Permit number MI 0000728. Bottom ash is excavated from these ponds via crane or excavator and transported off-site. Periodically, GHBLP relines the ash ponds with clay to replace the clay liner that is removed during pond cleaning.
- 2.) Approximate impoundment volumes and interior elevations obtained from, Soils and Structures: Final Report of Evaluation For Grand Haven Power Plant Ash Impoundment Grand Haven, Michigan (Soils & Structures, 2014), and Annual Ash Impoundment Inspection Report (Soils & Structures, 2016). There have been no changes to the geometry of the Unit 3 East and West Bottom Ash ponds.
- 3.) Features observed and documented in this checklist were not considered a deficiency or release as classified under 40 CFR 257.83(b)(5) and required no immediate action beyond periodic inspection in accordance with the Operations and Maintenance Plan.
- 4.) ft-msl = feet above mean sea level.



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