

Surface Water and Water Quality

Surface water is used for wildlife habitats, industrial uses, drinking water, irrigation, flood control, recreation, and cultural activities. Water quality can be affected by people, communities, industry, and wildlife.

The study analyzed:

- Potential impacts on surface water and water quality due to heavy equipment use, dredging, soil compaction, coal spills, coal dust deposition, terminal operation, and rail and vessel traffic.



Drainage features in the On-Site Alternative project area

The study found:

- Construction – The proposed export terminal would be required to have a construction stormwater permit. This would require best management practices to protect surface water and water quality during construction. Construction activities would not likely affect water quality.
- Operations - An industrial stormwater permit would be required. The proposed export terminal would include a stormwater treatment system to manage coal dust and runoff. Coal dust deposition would not have a demonstrable effect on water quality. There would be a low risk of spills of oil or hazardous materials affecting water quality.
- Rail Traffic - Spills of oil, hazardous materials, or coal could occur during rail transportation. Each locomotive can carry up to 5,000 gallons of fuel. Rail operators would be required to follow local, state, and federal laws if a spill were to occur.
- Vessel Traffic - The study found the risk of a spill is low. Vessels would be required to follow state and federal water quality and spill response requirements.

What could be done to reduce impacts?

- Maintain spill response kits throughout the project area during construction and operations. Kits will contain equipment needed to quickly contain and cleanup spills.
- Monitor coal dust levels during operation of the proposed export terminal and take action to reduce coal dust emissions if levels are exceeded.