



Independent Drilling Study Frequently Asked Questions

Why was the study done?

ADEQ undertook this investigation as part of its regulatory authority and in response to citizen concerns regarding the findings of the Electrical Resistivity Imaging (ERI) study conducted by University of Arkansas Buffalo Creek Research Extension Team. As the standard next step, ADEQ authorized Harbor Environmental and Safety through an existing contract to conduct a drilling study to better understand the subsurface conditions at the point of interest identified by the ERI study.

Who paid for the independent study?

ADEQ utilized limited available environmental settlement fund resources to conduct the independent study. A total project cost can be provided at a later date once the project is complete.

Why was only one borehole drilled?

The scope of the study was to resolve questions regarding subsurface conditions at the single point of interest identified by the ERI study. Coordinates for the drilling location were provided by Dr. Todd Halihan who conducted the ERI study. Based on recommendations received from some experts, it was determined that only one borehole was needed to satisfy the scope of the study.

How involved has ADEQ been in the contractor's work?

ADEQ technical staff provided oversight throughout the drilling study, verifying that the study report meets the scope of the Drilling Study Work Plan as contracted.

What was the role of the independent geologist?

ADEQ required Harbor to retain an independent geologist to serve as an observer for the project. The independent geologist, Tai Hubbard, was on-site during field work for the project and provided a written report, which is included in the study report.

How were other interested parties engaged in this process?

The samples were split with Arkansas Analytical (the commercial lab retained by Harbor), the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture's Soils Testing and Research Lab, and the Ouachita Baptist University lab under the direction of Dr. Joe Nix (at the request of the Buffalo River Watershed Alliance).

What's next?

ADEQ will review the report and questions received on the website. ADEQ's conclusions on the report will be based on sound scientific reasoning and analysis. ADEQ will make an announcement regarding its conclusions and next steps following its completion of the review of the final report.

Where can I find more information?

The study report along with field notes, photographs, and videos taken by Harbor during the fieldwork are available at <https://www.adeq.state.ar.us/water/bbri/c-and-h/drilling.aspx>. If you are interested in viewing the subsurface cores removed from the site and placed in core containers, then they are stored at the Arkansas Geological Survey warehouse.