02/19/2019

Vale moves forward with dredging preparation of Dam 1 tailings

The initiatives are part of a plan that was presented to the Public Prosecutor's Office and to environmental agencies at the end of January

Vale is moving forwards with emergency projects to implement measures to contain the tailings coming from Dam I of the Córrego do Feijão Mine as was communicated to the Secretary of State for the Environment and Sustainable Development (SEMAD) on February 8. The initiatives are part of a plan that was presented to the Public Prosecutor's Office and to environmental agencies at the end of January.

In Section 1 of the plan, in the affected 10-km stretch that extends from Dam 1 to the Paraopeba River, running along the Ferro-Carvão Stream, the company is cleaning the area where there will be a dike (consisting of blocks of compacted rock) for the retention of the thicker and heavier tailings. In parallel, the transport and storage of rocks that will be used in the construction of the structure is in progress.

The company has also begun the removal of tailings that were responsible for blocking a stretch of the Alberto Flores Avenue and the installation of a metal barrier to prevent the tailings from covering the road again.

This initiative is taking place in parallel to the construction of a 50-meter metal bridge to restore access to the communities of Parque da Cachoeira and Córrego do Feijão to the central area of Brumadinho.

The bridge will allow dual-vehicle traffic and includes a pedestrian sidewalk. Vale is employing a construction method that prevents vibrations in the soil and structures adjacent to the site.

In addition, Vale will install more hydraulic barriers and small dams, to assist in the retention process. Also being studied is the implementation of a Water Treatment Station (ETA) to reduce the turbidity of the water in the Ferro-Carvão stream. The purpose is to return the cleaned water to the Paraopeba River.

In Section 2, in a 30 kilometer area that stretches from the meeting of the Ferro-Carvão stream with the Paraopeba river to the city of Juatuba, as defined in the emergency plan, Vale is mobilizing and installing equipment that will be used to dredge the coarsest debris, like sand and stones. The main objectives are the cleaning and the de-sanding of the Paraopeba river channel. The residue will be collected by two dredgers and will be disposed of properly, outside of the Permanent Preservation Area (APP) of the river.

In the area known as Section 3, a 170 kilometer stretch of the Paraopeba River between Juatuba and the Retiro Baixo Plant, Vale has put five anti-turbidity barriers into operation. Three in the Pará de Minas region and two others in the municipalities of Juatuba and Betim, before the Igarapé Thermoelectric Plant. Three more barriers are in place in Juatuba and Betim. Specific monitoring demonstrates, to date, that the installed barriers show a reduction of 10% to 15% in the turbidity of the river water.

It is worth mentioning that all initiatives are being widely discussed with the competent agencies before their implementation, and that the ongoing activities are being properly released by the Fire Service and Civil Defense.

Water Monitoring

Since January 28, Vale has 48 water and sediment monitoring points along the Paraopeba River to the mouth of the São Francisco River, with daily water collections and weekly sediment samples for chemical analysis. Water turbidity analyzes are also performed every hour at four other points.

More information

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