

Principal Media Contact: DT Townsend
Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC
803.952.7566
dt-lawrence.townsend@srs.gov

DOE Media Contact: Monte Volk
803.952.8283
monte.volk@srs.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cleanup Workers Transform Former Waste Site Into Grassy Field at SRS

AIKEN, S.C., January 30, 2020 – A pond-like basin built in the early years of the Cold War was recently remediated to regulatory standards after Savannah River Site (SRS) workers filled it with 1,400 tons of stone and 7,000 cubic yards of dirt, and capped it with grass sod.

“It’s been a rewarding project and an excellent team to work with, and the icing on the cake is the fact that this project was completed about a year early,” said Steve Conner, Engineer and Project Manager for primary SRS contractor Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS).

An analysis of sediment and water showed that several types of waste were placed in the basin decades ago, when the site was named the Savannah River Plant.

“Herbicides and pesticides were the only substances found that were of potential concern for human health,” Conner said.

The once swamp-like, algae-covered basin located near the center of the 300-square-mile site is now an open field of healthy grass.

“Anything can be safely built or grown here, now and in the future, and if it is left alone, the site will return to its natural habitat, indistinguishable from the surrounding forest,” Conner said.



Before and after: A former waste basin near the center of the 300-square-mile Savannah River Site is shown at left prior to cleanup. Workers completed cleanup of the site, transforming it into an open field of grass, at right.

The basin is one of several waste sites SRNS workers have successfully remediated over the years at SRS.

“Each waste unit has presented its own set of challenges,” Conner said. “We’ve continually sought out new methods and technologies to steadily increase the effectiveness of our remediation practices and our environmental cleanup program as a whole.”

Crews have completed extensive cleanup and closure work at SRS under a consensus-based process in which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and DOE work together to reach agreement on key soil and groundwater remediation work.



Savannah River Nuclear Solutions engineers Justin Fuller, left, and Steve Conner evaluate progress in the cleanup of a pond-like basin containing low levels of herbicides and pesticides at the Savannah River Site.

“It took close coordination and focus from all parties to achieve this end state and get here early,” Conner said.

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, a Fluor-led company with Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, is responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site, including the Savannah River National Laboratory, located near Aiken, South Carolina.

Visit us on the web at www.savannahrivernuclearsolutions.com

SRNS-2020-877