

**DT Townsend**  
**Savannah River Nuclear Solutions**  
**(803) 952-7566**  
[dt-lawrence.townsend@srs.gov](mailto:dt-lawrence.townsend@srs.gov)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Education Outreach at Savannah River Site Draws Interest from Across U.S.**

AIKEN, S.C., November 15, 2021 – As educators and students across the U.S. find academic resources, field trips, and extracurricular programs limited by the COVID-19 pandemic, Savannah River Site (SRS) contractor Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) is striving to provide alternatives to local, national and international audiences through its education outreach organization.

The National Science Teaching Association (NSTA) shared SRNS' virtual field trips and its video, "In the Beam, Science in the Fast Lane," to an audience of more than 40,000 science educators and professionals. NSTA provides free news, information and teaching tools related to education and learning science.

"This opportunity to work through NSTA to reach a national and — as of late — an international group of students and educators occurred when a teacher from New Jersey suggested the idea," said Kim Mitchell, with the SRNS education outreach programs. "We've had teachers across the country begin to contact us and express their interest in the virtual learning tools we're providing. We've even received a request from a school in Australia."

Mitchell and her co-workers found they needed a new approach to education outreach to overcome challenges from the pandemic.

"Out of necessity, we had to find new ways to connect with the education community," Mitchell said. "When COVID-19 hit, we were managing 12 different education outreach programs, all of which required face-to-face communication within a small to large group environment. That all came to a temporary stop in March of 2020."

After extensive research, the SRNS education outreach group decided to develop a platform using technology offered through Web-based applications.

The educational offerings from SRNS were highlighted in the column titled, "Freebies for Science Teachers, July 20, 2021" by Debra Shapiro, associate editor of the e-newsletter NSTA Reports.

"They (the SRNS education outreach group) cover relevant topics, such as habitats, conservation, freshwater ecosystems, sampling to determine pond health through virtual field trips and a video explaining mass spectrometry," Shapiro said. "These resources also can expose students to potential careers in fields related to science, technology, engineering and math. In addition, our teachers have said they appreciate the high quality of free resources from federal agencies, so we're always on the lookout for them."

To date, the NSTA column has reached 5,300 students and educators in 62 schools and academic organizations across the country, including Alaska and Hawaii.

---

# News Savannah River Nuclear Solutions

SAVANNAH RIVER SITE • AIKEN • SC 29808

An increasing number of schools around the world are also participating in SRNS online programs, including Pittwater High School, in Mona Vale, New South Wales, Australia.

The demand for SRNS education outreach videos is still growing. To date, more than 30,800 students have viewed them.

Mitchell credits the SRNS video production, computer graphics, engineering and information technology groups for the expanding interest in SRNS education outreach throughout the U.S. and world.

“Each made valuable contributions towards the success of this initiative,” Mitchell said.

Francine Burroughs, SRNS director of human resources operations and education outreach, said it’s a new era for all facets of education. “It will require new ways to meet the needs of those who, year after year, find value in our outreach programs,” Burroughs said. “There’s no doubt in my mind we’ll get there. It’s too important.”

Educators interested in accessing SRNS virtual field trips can click (“Wet Wonders”) [here](#) and (“Feathers in the Forest”) [here](#). To access the video, “In the Beam, Science in the Fast Lane,” click (“In the Beam... Science in the Fast Lane”) [here](#).

*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 located near Aiken, South Carolina.*



*Caption: The web-based video, “Feathers in the Forest,” features Kimberly Fickling, left, and Beth Eberhard, of the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center, University of South Carolina Aiken. This video and others were created by Savannah River Nuclear Solutions. Earlier this year, the National Science Teaching Association featured the free videos and accompanying teacher’s guide in its e-newsletter, NSTA Reports.*