



## Rainbow Bay Resolution

September 29, 1998

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### **Background:**

Rainbow Bay is one of more than 200 Carolina Bays on the Savannah River Site (SRS). Carolina Bays are depressions in the earth's surface with no natural outlet. They collect rainwater runoff. Depending on the season and year's precipitation they contain water for part of or most of the year. Many of the SRS Carolina Bays were drained and farmed prior to the transfer of the land to the US Atomic Energy Commission in the early 1950s. As part of the management of the SRS lands, some of the drainage ditches installed by farmers have been filled in so that Carolina Bays could re-establish themselves.

The Savannah River Ecology Laboratory started studying Rainbow Bay in 1978 when it was selected as a control site to examine the ecological significance of Sun Bay, a Carolina Bay which was eliminated in the construction of the Defense Waste Processing Facility. Extensive studies have been done on amphibians and reptiles that use the area. These continuous studies since 1978 have provided the model for future long term studies of the effects of climatic fluctuations and habitat disturbances on amphibian populations. The work on Rainbow Bay has resulted in numerous scientific and technical publications, popular press articles, and graduate student theses and these have led to a better understanding of the natural fluctuations of amphibians.

The research at Rainbow Bay has been one of the success stories at SRS.

### **Resolution:**

The SRS Citizen Advisory Board commends these studies by the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory. We believe it is in the interest of the nation, the stakeholders around SRS, and the advancement of science that the research at Rainbow Bay continue.

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### **Agency Responses**

Department of Energy-SR