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DT Townsend
Savannah River Nuclear Solutions
(803) 952-7566,
dt-lawrence.townsend@srs.gov

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Savannah River Site Achieves 4,000th Cleanup Milestone

AIKEN, S.C., February 11, 2022 – The Savannah River Site (SRS) recently achieved their 4,000th environmental cleanup milestone since an agreement was enacted in 1993 with state and federal regulators, known as the Federal Facility Agreement (FFA). Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) has been the Management and Operations contractor at SRS since August 2008, responsible for the Site's environmental cleanup program.

"Hitting this milestone validates the excellent performance and dedication of our workforce regarding cleanup projects, programs and compliance across the Savannah River Site," said Rick Sprague, Senior Vice President of Environment, Safety, Health and Quality for Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS), the site's management and operations contractor since 2008.

Cleanup at SRS is governed by a Resource Conservation and Recovery Act hazardous and mixed-waste permit and the Federal Facility Agreement (FFA), which was signed by DOE, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1993.

The Department of Energy and SRNS met all 4,000 milestones on or ahead of schedule at SRS.

"Not once did we miss a deadline. Often, we came in ahead of schedule, sometimes months ahead," SRNS FFA Liaison Shelia McFalls said. "I think we all have reason to take pride in that. I'm proud of my co-workers' exceptional work ethic."

The 4,000 milestones involved a range of cleanup initiatives, permits, testing and projects, and the workforce accomplished them by partnering with the regulators using a "core team process," according to McFalls. The team consists of officials from SCDHEC and EPA, with support from subject-matter experts from the regulatory agencies and SRNS.

"Working together with the best interests of all involved is the primary objective of this process," said McFalls. "The mutual respect displayed, positive reinforcement given for



A portion of the 4,000 environmental cleanup milestones met by the Department of Energy and Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) over the years involved cleanup of the site's D Area. Here, SRNS personnel manage the demolition of structures and steam lines that crisscrossed this major remediation project.

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innovative ideas and the sharing of expectations are but a few reasons this concept has been so successful and rewarding. It's a comprehensive and proven approach to environmental cleanup established here at the Savannah River Site."

Examples of milestones met using the core team process include:

- Grouting and permanently closing two nuclear reactor buildings.
- Preventing nearly 7,000 curies of tritium from entering the Savannah River, saving \$208 million by drawing up irrigated water containing legacy tritium through 62 acres of pine trees, which harmlessly released the isotopes into the atmosphere through photosynthesis.
- Constructing a large underground water-permeable wall made of 1.5 million pounds of iron filings from reclaimed automobile engines. The wall neutralizes Cold War-era chemical solvents found in the aquifer beneath SRS and acts like a giant water filter to remove and break down degreasing solvents.
- Completing cleanup of more than 90 acres of coal ash-contaminated land a year earlier than scheduled, saving \$8 million. This large undertaking consolidated more than 400,000 cubic yards of coal ash under a protective geosynthetic material and thick earthen caps.

"I'm looking forward to see what happens next. We have several major projects on the horizon and high expectations regarding our future milestones," said Sprague.

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.



A team from the Savannah River Site that completed cleanup of coal ash-contaminated land a year early and at a savings of more than \$8 million was recognized by the Department of Energy with the prestigious Project Management Excellence Award. Savannah River Nuclear Solutions remediated over 90 acres of Site property to ensure the successful completion of this task.