



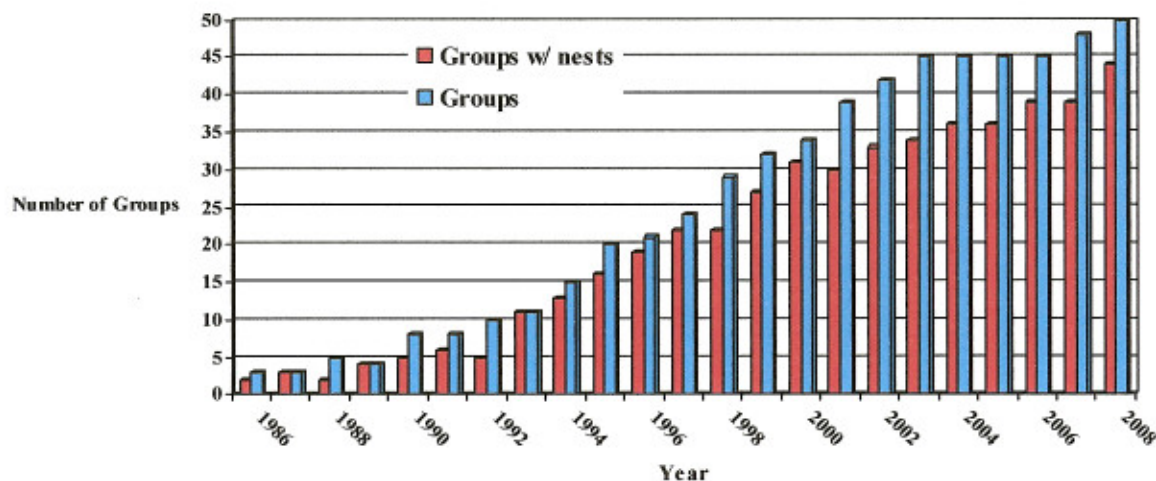
USDA Forest Service-Savannah River (USFS-SR) Fiscal Year 2008 Environmental Report

In support of SRS environmental stewardship, USFS-SR

manages the natural resources at the United States Department of Energy's (DOE) Savannah River Site (SRS). Operating under an interagency agreement, USFS-SR follows SRS Strategic Plan goals and objectives to implement the SRS Natural Resources Management Plan.

Maintained and improved habitat to meet recovery population objectives for Threatened, Endangered, and sensitive species

USFS-SR continued to improve habitat conditions for the endangered Red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW) by removing 81 acres of brush and small hardwood vegetation in the longleaf pine forest. Additionally, the use of prescribed fire not only reduced hazardous forest fuel, but it also helped remove midstory vegetation in the longleaf pine forest. Successful habitat manipulation increased the number of active groups from two in 1986 to 45 in 2003, and 49 in fiscal year 2008.



Number of red-cockaded woodpecker groups at SRS

USFS-SR continues to team with a number of universities, as well as the Forest Service Southern Research Station, for on-going tasks that improve our knowledge and understanding of southern forest ecosystems. The following tasks have applications for natural resources management at SRS:

- Completion of potential productivity estimates addressing the supply requirements for the D-Area cogeneration and heating facility replacement;
- Monitoring the impacts on amphibian, reptile, birds and invertebrate populations by the removal of large woody debris;
- Studying the alternative roosts and foraging behavior of the Big-eared bat between SRS bridges and trees;
- Completion of the restoration of four Carolina bays;
- Continuation of the annual monitoring of the longleaf pine/savanna restoration studies;
- Continuation of the development of fuel beds characteristic of the SRS in assessing wildland fire hazard;
- Presentations on the impacts of 50 SRS prescribed fires, fine particulate matter, and strategies that can be used to protect air quality and public health; and
- Continuation of studies on exposure to particulate matter from prescribed fires on firefighters.

Reduced risk of catastrophic wildland fires at SRS through systematic and safe application of prescribed fire

USFS-SR improved safety and security through reduction of hazardous forest fuels across the SRS landscape. A majority of the 26,444 acres receiving prescribed fire were in the boundary area near communities, providing additional protection from wildland fire to SRS and those communities.

Excelled in safety and health performance

USFS-SR continued an excellent safety record. During 2008, the USFS-SR had zero lost-work-days due to injuries and one "OSHA 300 Log" recordable injury of 212,981 hours worked and 303,033 vehicle miles driven.

Continued Environmental Restoration

The Savannah River Site's Soil and Groundwater Closure Projects phytoremediation pond, administered by USFS-SR, removed approximately 10.9 million gallons of tritiated water through evapotranspiration. This project employs a natural remedy, phytoremediation, using natural vegetative processes to reduce risk to the environment.

Maintained infrastructure systems in a safe and environmentally sound state of operational readiness

USFS-SR suppressed 16 SRS wildland fire incidents ranging in size from 0.1 acres to 24 acres and responded (with neighboring communities) to four mutual aid fires which threatened SRS, ranging from 0.1 acres to five acres.

USFS-SR maintained 934 miles of SRS secondary roads and constructed 1.6 miles of road for timber harvesting. USFS-SR also maintained 27 miles of multipurpose trails, used primarily by SRS wellness programs. Boundary management included 38.2 miles maintained, 2 gates repaired, 5 fence breaks repaired, posting no-trespass signs along the Lower Three Runs corridor to the Savannah River, and posting signage around the expanded Advanced Tactical Training Area Range boundary.

Communicated SRS stewardship

USFS-SR and cooperating universities submitted 14 publications, including journal articles, a thesis and reports that are provided to the public through the United States Department of Energy's Office of Science and Technical Information.

Outreach efforts to educate stakeholders about managing SRS natural resources reached over 800 individuals in fiscal year 2008, through *Take Our Children to Work Day* and the SRS Safety Conference. Public communication included news releases (1), elementary school visits and parades by *Smokey Bear* (16), newsletters (12). Internal and external planning and communications included participation in SRS Citizens Advisory Board Combined and Committee meetings. USFS-SR also provided support to the SRS Heritage Foundation and the Ellenton Heritage Trail committees interpreting the stewardship of the former private lands.

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<http://www.srs.gov/general/srenviro/srfs/srfs.htm>
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