



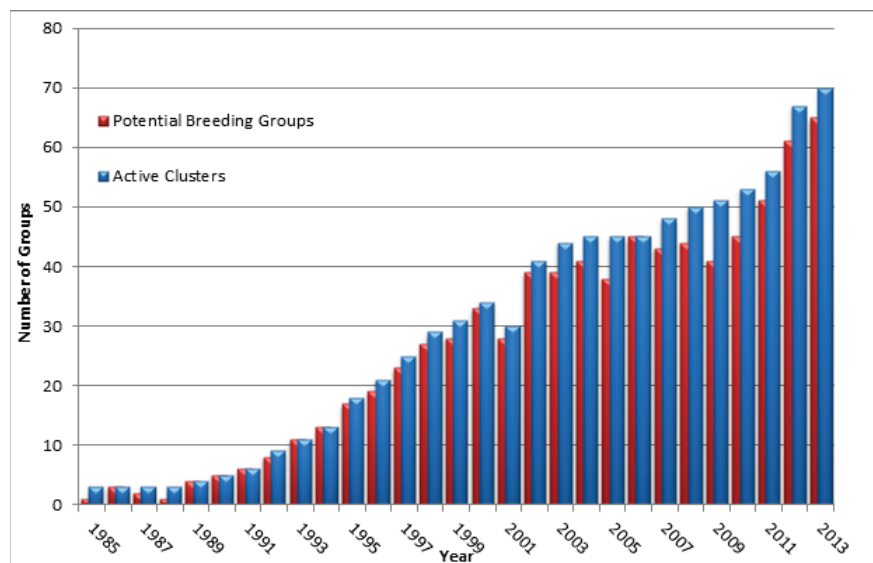
USDA Forest Service-Savannah River Fiscal Year 2013 Savannah River Site Environmental Report

In support of the environmental stewardship mission, the U.S. Forest Service – Savannah River manages natural resources at the U.S. Department of Energy's Savannah River Site. Operating under an Interagency Agreement with the SRS Operations Office, USFS-SR follows SRS Strategic Plan goals and objectives to implement the [*United States Department of Energy Natural Resources Management Plan for the Savannah River Site*](#).

The following initiatives and accomplishments reflect the various ways in which USFS-SR worked to implement the plan in fiscal year 2013.

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*](#) by removing brush and small hardwood vegetation over 572 acres of longleaf pine forest. Prescribed fire was also used extensively to reduce hazardous fuels and to improve habitat on a larger scale. Successful habitat restoration increased the number of active red-cockaded woodpecker clusters from three in 1985 to 70 in fiscal year 2013.



Number of red-cockaded woodpecker active clusters at SRS

Managed natural resources and harvested forest products

During fiscal year 2013, the USFS-SR sold 77.2 million cubic feet of forest products through active forest management. Forest products were sold to meet security needs, encourage habitat development for TES species, promote forest health and generate revenue. Management activities were and continue to be implemented in support of the Site's nuclear mission and in compliance with best management practices.

Evaluated the effects of management on the environment

Through partnerships and collaborations with a number of universities as well as USDA Forest Service Research Stations, USFS-SR added applied knowledge and understanding in support of the Interagency Agreement, including:

- Cooperating research institutions completed first season of home range monitoring of red-cockaded woodpecker foraging habitat to establish relationships between density of clusters and available foraging. The data will be used to establish potential cluster density in the existing recovery areas;
- University cooperators received a five-year, long-term grant from the National Science Foundation to continue monitoring of large spatial scale savanna restoration treatments in response to connectivity in the landscape;
- Water quality, productivity and soil quality impacts of intensive biofuel production systems continued to be monitored, as part of a national research grant by the DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. With our assistance, partnering universities and the Southern Research Station obtained a USDA competitive grant to study water use of bioenergy crops; and
- Hog movement studies were initiated to determine the extent of movement and home range of groups. The data will be used to determine the potential effectiveness of area control strategies.

Excelled in environmental and occupational safety and health performance

During fiscal year 2013, USFS-SR had no restricted workdays due to injury, no lost workdays due to injuries and three Occupational Safety and Health Administration 300 Log recordable injuries. Employees and contractors reported 321,065 hours worked and 358,768 vehicle-miles driven.

USFS-SR is an active participant in the DOE Integrated Safety Management System, which has resulted in a higher level of safety awareness and sound application of safety requirements. USFS-SR submitted the required annual ISMS declaration to DOE-SR on Jan. 23, 2013.

Continued environmental restoration

The Savannah River Site's Soil and Groundwater Closure Projects, administered by USFS-SR, treated approximately 8.8 million gallons of tritiated water. Low irrigation total due to saturated soils from above average summer rainfall. This project employs a natural remedy (phytoremediation), using vegetative processes, to reduce risk to the environment. Additionally, throughout the year USFS-SR managed 2,344 acres of vegetation caps through mowing, pesticide and herbicide application, prescribed fire and seeding. Vegetation was managed at 4,500 well sites, allowing easier access for SRS water and well monitoring.

Safely maintained infrastructure in an environmentally sound state of operational readiness

USFS-SR maintained more than 1,258 miles of SRS secondary roads, including blading and calcium chloride application for dust abatement, constructed 0.72 miles of secondary roads and replaced four culverts in support of site activities. USFS-SR also maintained 11 miles and constructed 0.6 miles of multipurpose trails used primarily by SRS wellness programs; as well as 60 miles of boundary fence; 30 miles of exterior boundary (disking) and 12 miles of boundary along the Savannah River, including replacement of signs.

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

In fiscal year 2013, fire management burned 41,571 acres of hazardous fuel and suppressed ten wildfires totaling 47 acres.

Smokey Bear went to 20 local elementary schools, visiting 1,430 children. Smokey also participated in the New Ellenton Atomic City Festival with 500 contacts and in the Jackson Fire Department anniversary with 100 contacts.

Communicated SRS stewardship

USFS-SR outreach efforts to educate stakeholders about natural resource management included participation in Take Our Children to Work Day, SRS Ultimate Turkey Hunt, and SRS Safety Blitz. Public communication included various newsletters touting monthly accomplishments, as well as a presence at community events, including the Atomic City festival and New Ellenton Christmas parade. Internal and external planning and communications included participation in the SRS Citizens Advisory Board combined and committee meetings.



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