

The BOARD BEAT

Summer 2026



Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board

DOE's Office of
Environmental
Management Restarts
One-of-a-Kind Facility
in South Carolina to
Fuel America's Nuclear
Future

Savannah River Waste
Vitrification Plant Celebrates 30
Years of Operation

DOE's Office of
Environmental
Management Restarts
Uranium Recovery in
South Carolina
to Support Energy
Independence

INDEX

3 What is the Citizens Advisory Board?

4 Savannah River Waste Vitrification Plant Celebrates 30 Years of Operation

5 Meet the Members

8 April Showers Bring May Flowers at SRS

10 'Transformative Success' Comes After Savannah River Optimizes Salt Waste Processing

12 DOE's Office of Environmental Management Restarts Uranium Recovery in South Carolina to Support Energy Independence

13 DOE's Office of Environmental Management Restarts One-of-a-Kind Facility in South Carolina to Fuel America's Nuclear Future

14 Get on the Bus - SRS Public Tours

WHAT IS THE CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD?

The SRS CAB is one of eight boards from other Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management (EM) sites. The eight boards together create the EM Site Specific Advisory Board (EM SSAB). The EM SSAB was founded in 1994 under the Federal Advisory Committee Act and the goal was to involve stakeholders more directly in DOE EM cleanup decisions. Public input helps agencies make decisions that are cost-effective, community-specific and environmentally sound, which lead to faster, safer cleanups.

Members are selected for two-year terms and can serve up to three terms (6 years total).

The SRS CAB 4 Subcommittees:

Facilities Disposition & Site Remediation

Soil & water remediation, Environmental monitoring,
Deactivation & Decommissioning, Solar initiatives

Long-term Missions & Budget

Budget development & Congressional appropriations, Savannah River
National Laboratory, Landlord transition

Nuclear Materials

H Canyon operations, Packaging & shipping Transuranic waste, receipt &
storage of nuclear fuel

Waste Management

Salt Waste Processing Facility, Tank Farm
Operations, Defense Waste Processing Facility

Over the past 32 years, board members have created value-driven recommendations and advice to DOE. Their hard work is appreciated and is instrumental with key decisions.



Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board



Savannah River Waste Vitrification Plant Celebrates 30 Years of Operation

For the last 30 years, the waste vitrification plant at Savannah River Site (SRS) has been transforming radioactive liquid material into a solid form safe for long term storage.

The Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM) site has been in operation since March 12, 1996, when former Secretary of Energy Hazel O'Leary officially commenced radioactive operations with the historic push of a button.

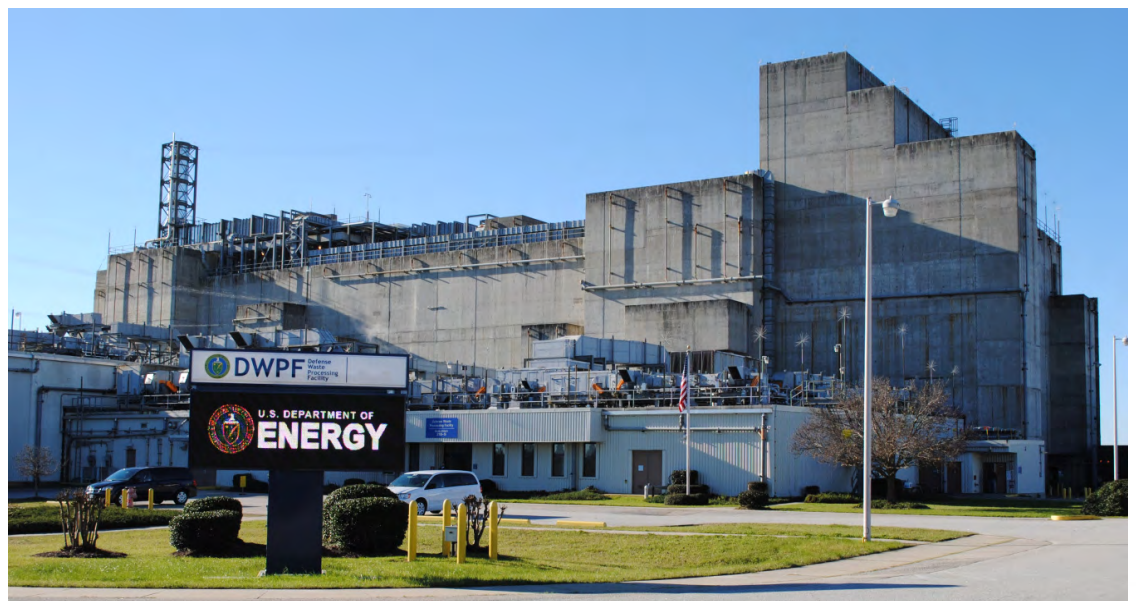
The first canister of vitrified high-level radioactive waste was poured six weeks later. Since then, DWPF has produced more than 17 million pounds of glass, filling just over 4,500 canisters, which is more than half of the canisters expected to be filled.

Tony Robinson, DOE-Savannah River acting assistant manager for waste disposition, said DWPF has been a model for EM's mission to remediate legacy waste. "For many years, DWPF was the only operating waste vitrification plant in the nation," Robinson said. "The success of this facility benefited similar waste stabilization and disposal technologies across the DOE complex."

Savannah River Mission Completion (SRMC), EM's liquid waste contractor at SRS, operates DWPF. SRMC is responsible for treating and disposing of the millions of gallons of waste remaining in underground tanks at SRS, as well as closing the tanks.

DWPF uses the process of vitrification to turn the radioactive waste into glass. The highly radioactive waste is combined with frit, a sand-like material, and heated until molten in a 75-ton melter. The molten glass is poured into 10-foot-tall stainless steel canisters where it cools and hardens.

The canisters are then sealed by a remote welding process, and the waste is considered immobilized and safe for long term disposal. The canisters are stored safely in interim storage buildings onsite until a federal repository for high-level waste is established.





Meet the Members



Deborah Creech
Chair

I am excited to serve as Chair of the Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board. I look forward to learning about nuclear materials, the liquid waste processing facilities and daily operations at Savannah River Site.

Joining the CAB, I am hoping to attain knowledge about the processes at the site and the safety procedures that are in place to protect our community. Additionally, I have an interest in sharing this information with community members in a manner that is clearly understood.



Willie Priester
CAB Member



James Schacht
CAB Member

I joined the Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board to help watch over local cleanup project plans. I want to use my background in organization and oversight to make sure the work is done safely, openly, and correctly. By working together with the community and officials, I hope to help make good, honest choices that protect our people and our environment for the long run.



Hazel Cook
CAB Member

In joining the CAB, I am hoping to learn more about the Site's operations, environmental clean up and natural resource management.

With a background in social work and community technology, I decided to join the Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) to gain a deeper understanding of the Savannah River Site and its operations. I am eager to contribute meaningfully and serve my community in this important capacity.



Wanda Jackson
Vice Chair



Tonya Moton
CAB Member

I am excited to serve on the Citizens Advisory Board and increase my knowledge of the Savannah River Site and its missions.



Dell Priester
CAB Member

I joined the CAB to learn more about the clean up efforts at the Savannah River Site. I want to better understand the daily operations and how or if the environmental missions affect the surrounding counties. I am looking forward to also learning about future opportunities, for the youth in the surrounding areas.

My decision to join the Citizens Advisory Board stems from my close proximity to the Site's boundary. I felt it was important to gain a deeper understanding of the measures being taken to ensure the safety of citizens in the area.



John Thomas
CAB Member



Patrick Kilroy
CAB Member

I joined the CAB to represent the citizens of South Carolina and the nation from harm. The work that occurs at SRS I know is for the protection of the nation and is done in a manner to protect the local area and everyone else. My main concern is understanding the potential environmental pathways of nuclear materials via the groundwater and air.

April Showers Bring May Flowers at SRS

The Savannah River Site (SRS) hosts a diverse array of native wildflowers and plants, including the federally endangered smooth purple coneflower, coreopsis, yellow-ray flowers, and the rare Rocky Shoal Spider Lily. Other species in the area include purple vein milkweed, catbells, and pickerelweed, which thrive in the site's aquatic and pine habitats. Native flowers at the Savannah River Site (SRS) include Purple Passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*), Oak Ridge Lupine (*Lupinus diffusus*), and Purple Coneflower. These species thrive in the sandy, often disturbed soils of the Site. Other common, resilient flowers at SRS include Coreopsis, Black-eyed Susan, and Butterfly Milkweed, which provide vital support to local pollinators.



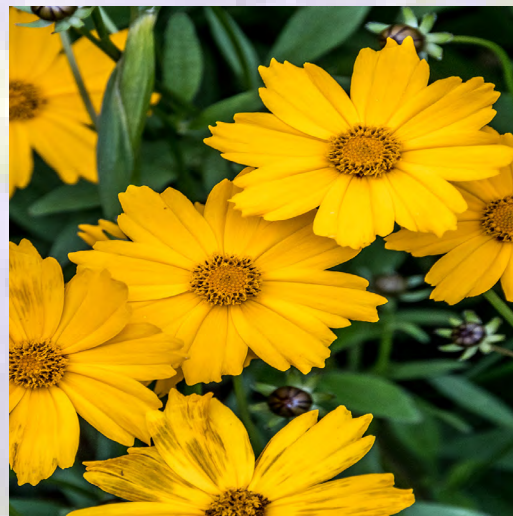
Purple Coneflower (left)

Echinacea purpurea is an herbaceous perennial up to 120 centimeters (47 inches) tall by 25 cm (10 in) wide at maturity. Depending on the climate, it blooms throughout summer into autumn. Its cone-shaped flowering heads are usually, but not always, purple in the wild. Its individual flowers (florets) within the flower head are hermaphroditic, having both male and female organs in each flower. It is pollinated by butterflies and bees.

Coreopsis (right)

These plants range from 46–120 centimetres (18–47 inches) in height. The flowers are usually yellow with a toothed tip, but can also be yellow-and-red bicolor or pink. They have showy flower heads with involucre bracts in two distinct series of eight each, the outer being commonly connate at the base. The flat fruits are small and dry and look like insects.

There are nearly 40 species of *Coreopsis*, all of which are native to North, Central, and South America.



Rocky Shoals Spider Lily (left)

Hymenocallis coronaria, commonly known as the Cahaba lily, shoal lily, or shoals spider-lily, is an aquatic, perennial flowering plant species of the genus *Hymenocallis*. It is endemic to the Southeastern United States, being found only in Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina.

The plant was first observed in 1773 by William Bartram and described as the "odoriferous *Pancreatium fluitans* which almost alone possesses the little rocky islets". He saw it growing in the Savannah River near Augusta, Georgia.



Tupelo (left)

Swamp tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica* variety *biflora*) trees are key components of the wetland ecosystems found within the Savannah River Site (SRS) in South Carolina. These trees thrive in the moisture-rich areas of the site, often associated with sphagnum moss and other wetland species.

Swamp tupelos are found in the wetlands on the Savannah River Site, often in areas with increased moisture, such as the areas bordering the Savannah National Wildlife Refuge.

Loblolly Pine (right)

Loblolly pine (*Pinus facria* L.) is an ideal tree for site restoration and forest management. It is the most hardy and versatile of all southern pines, in terms of its ability to reproduce and grow rapidly on diverse sites.

Loblolly pine is a dominant tree species within the Savannah River Site (SRS), often managed in pine plantations and within the site's national environmental research park. The site features mature 45 to 50-year-old pine stands, with substantial studies conducted on their regeneration, growth, and resistance to damage from events like ice storms.



‘Transformative Success’ Comes After Savannah River Optimizes Salt Waste Processing

A trio of new and improved filters in a key operating facility at the Savannah River Site (SRS) has optimized efficiency and accelerated production of the radioactive waste tank cleanup mission — marking the completion of a U.S. Department of Energy Office of Environmental Management (EM) priority to execute key cleanup to safely address the risk associated with legacy waste.

EM’s liquid waste contractor at SRS installed larger, higher-capacity cross flow filters at the Salt Waste Processing Facility (SWPF) during a planned system-wide operational outage this year to conduct repairs and upgrades across all SRS liquid waste facilities.

Tony Robinson, DOE-Savannah River acting assistant manager for waste disposition, said increasing the processing rate at SWPF was critical to advancing the cleanup mission at SRS. “Salt waste is the majority of the volume that remains in the tank waste at SRS,” Robinson said.

“SWPF is the key facility to remediate the remaining tank waste. The increased processing rate and improved operational reliability of SWPF will accelerate the tank waste mission and reduce the risks of this legacy waste.”

In a significant feat of innovation, Savannah River Mission Completion (SRMC) engineers devised a novel way to double the available surface area of the filters. The previous 10-foot-long filters, containing 234 filter tubes, were replaced with 16-foot-long filters, containing 288 filter tubes.

SWPF receives salt waste from the tank farms, a grouping of underground waste tanks, and decontaminates the waste by removing the highly radioactive contaminants using filters and a solvent-extraction process.

The cross flow filters at SWPF are used in the decontamination process to separate the radioactive materials, such as strontium, uranium, and plutonium, and solid particles from the less-radioactive salt waste stream. Filtration is the first step before the liquid waste undergoes a solvent-extraction process to then remove the cesium from the waste.

Since restarting the plant post outage with the new filters, SWPF continues to set new processing records. SWPF set a new 30-day processing record in November of over 600,000 gallons.

When operating only one filter, SWPF can process at a rate of 18.5 gallons per minute, providing the throughput to meet mission needs.

Operating a first-of-a-kind and highly integrated nuclear facility does not come without unique challenges that require innovative solutions, according to Thomas Burns Jr., SRMC president and program manager.

“SRMC has had transformative success with the targeted effort to increase throughput capabilities at SWPF,” Burns said. “This is a world-class team that leans into ingenuity to apply breakthroughs to any challenge that comes our way.”

The installation of cross flow filters is just one of the ways SRMC is using innovation and technology for critical tasks associated with the cleanup mission.

Other SWPF optimizations completed by SRMC over the last three years include streamlining the strategy for contactor cleaning and repair, improving the cleaning process of the strip effluent coalescer and acquiring a bank of 16 spare contactors. All of these improvements increase plant availability to process waste.



Savannah River Mission Completion installed three larger, higher-capacity cross flow filters used in the decontamination process at the Salt Waste Processing Facility to achieve the facility's optimum production rates. Pictured are personnel conducting a mock-up trial of the filter changeout before executing the work in a highly radioactive area.



Eight of 51 waste tanks in F and H Areas at SRS have been closed

DOE's Office of Environmental Management Restarts Uranium Recovery in South Carolina to Support Energy Independence

Decision leverages Savannah River Site to produce fuel for advanced nuclear reactors, securing America's energy future

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM) announced that it is restarting uranium recovery operations at the Savannah River Site (SRS) H Canyon facility in South Carolina, marking a strategic step forward in strengthening America's nuclear industrial base and advancing energy independence.

The process of uranium recovery also creates an opportunity to recover valuable isotopes currently available in limited domestic quantities, supporting critical needs in scientific research, medical applications and commercial uses.

The decision enables the facility to once again recover uranium and valuable isotopes through its chemical separations capabilities while continuing to safely process used nuclear fuel as part of the site's cleanup mission.

"Thanks to President Trump's leadership, we're maximizing the value of existing assets, supporting national security objectives and advancing our cleanup mission — all while supplying America's next generation of advanced nuclear reactors," EM Assistant Secretary Tim Walsh said.

H Canyon remains the only operating, production-scale, radiologically shielded chemical separations facility in the U.S., successfully operating and recovering uranium and other valuable materials from used nuclear fuel for more than 70 years.

The decision to restart uranium recovery will produce high-assay low-enriched uranium (HALEU) needed for advanced reactors, create an opportunity to recover valuable isotopes with limited availability and demonstrate America's capability to manage the complete nuclear fuel cycle.

The restart directly supports Trump's executive orders, Reinvigorating the Nuclear Industrial Base and Deploying Advanced Nuclear Reactor Technologies for National Security, which call for jumpstarting America's nuclear industrial base to ensure national and economic security.

The current inventory of used nuclear fuel at SRS contains enough highly enriched uranium to create as many as 19 metric tons of HALEU, enough to fuel several proposed small modular reactors.

DOE's Office of Environmental Management Restarts One-of-a-Kind Facility in South Carolina to Fuel America's Nuclear Future

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM) announced the decision to restart HB-Line operations at the Savannah River Site (SRS) in South Carolina. Restarting HB-Line provides the capability to power America's nuclear future by recycling surplus plutonium and partnering with industry to produce uranium-plutonium mixed oxide (MOX) fuel for advanced nuclear reactors. The facility is an integral part of H-Canyon, the only chemical separations facility of its kind in the United States.

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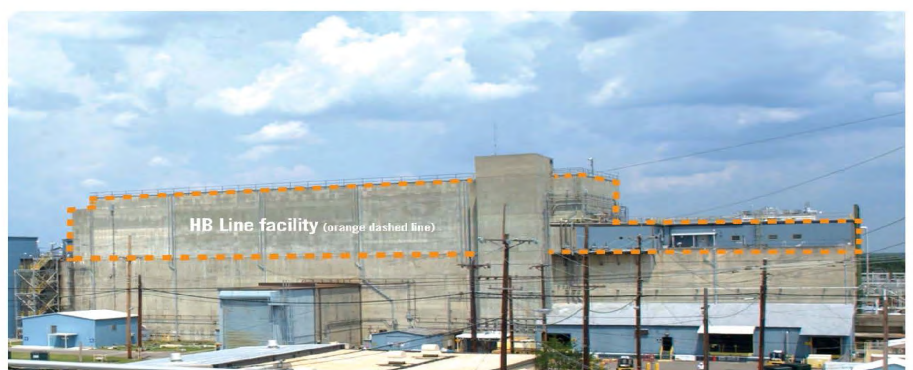
"Restarting HB-Line is the right decision for taxpayers, for our national security and for America's energy future," said EM Assistant Secretary Tim Walsh. "We are restoring a unique capability that will accelerate our mission, strengthen the domestic nuclear industrial base and deliver fuel the country needs to power advanced reactors."

The restart decision is the first step in a multi-year restart plan. Once operational, HB-Line will accelerate EM's plutonium disposition mission by 10 to 13 years while reducing the existing cost and saving American taxpayers up to \$350 million. Restarting HB-Line also creates an opportunity to recover valuable isotopes currently available in limited quantities domestically, supporting critical needs in scientific research and commercial applications.

HB-Line is a specialized processing facility within the H-Canyon complex that has supported critical national nuclear missions. Following completion of its last mission in 2018, the facility was placed in a managed layup state, preserving its one-of-a-kind capability for future use.

"Savannah River Site has been integral to America's nuclear mission for more than 70 years, and HB-Line is one of the unique capabilities the site has to offer," said Edwin Deshong, Savannah River Operations Office manager. "Our workforce has the expertise, experience and dedication to execute the mission safely and successfully."

The decision directly advances President Trump's executive orders, Reinvigorating the Nuclear Industrial Base and Deploying Advanced Nuclear Reactor Technologies for National Security, which call for jumpstarting America's nuclear industrial base to ensure national and economic security.



Savannah River Site Tour Program

Dedicated to maintaining the highest possible safety and security standards, the Savannah River Site (SRS) is a key U.S. Department of Energy industrial complex, responsible for supporting our nation's nuclear defense; preventing nuclear weapon proliferation; environmental stewardship and cleanup; waste management; and disposition of nuclear materials. More specifically, SRS processes and stores nuclear materials in support of the national defense and U.S. nuclear non-proliferation efforts. The Site also develops and deploys technologies to improve the environment and treat nuclear and hazardous wastes left from the Cold War.

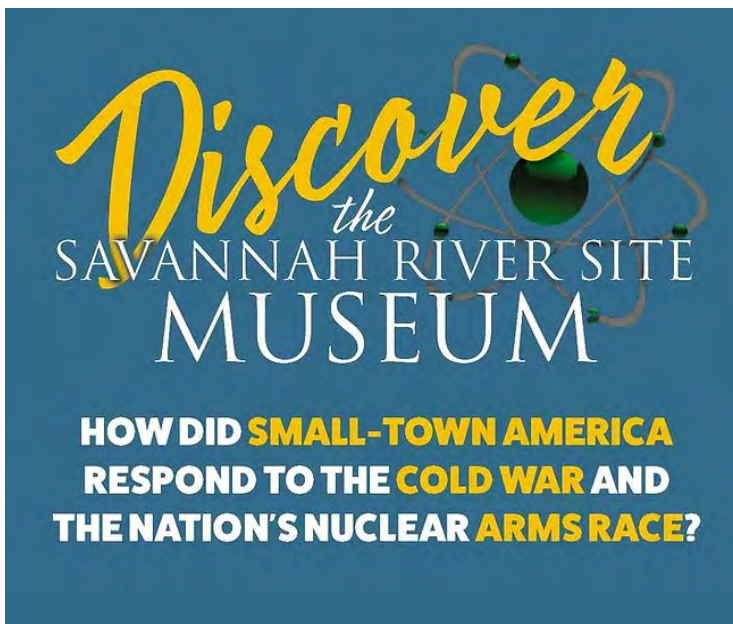
The SRS complex covers 198,046 acres, or 310 square miles, encompassing parts of Aiken, Barnwell and Allendale counties in South Carolina, bordering the Savannah River.

The Site is owned by the U.S. Department of Energy and managed and operated by Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC, a partnership formed by the Fluor Corporation with HILL. SRNS is responsible for the Site's nuclear facility operations; environment; safety; health and quality assurance; and all the Site's administrative functions.

Tour Contact

For additional tour information and questions, or to arrange a mission-related tour, please contact or email:

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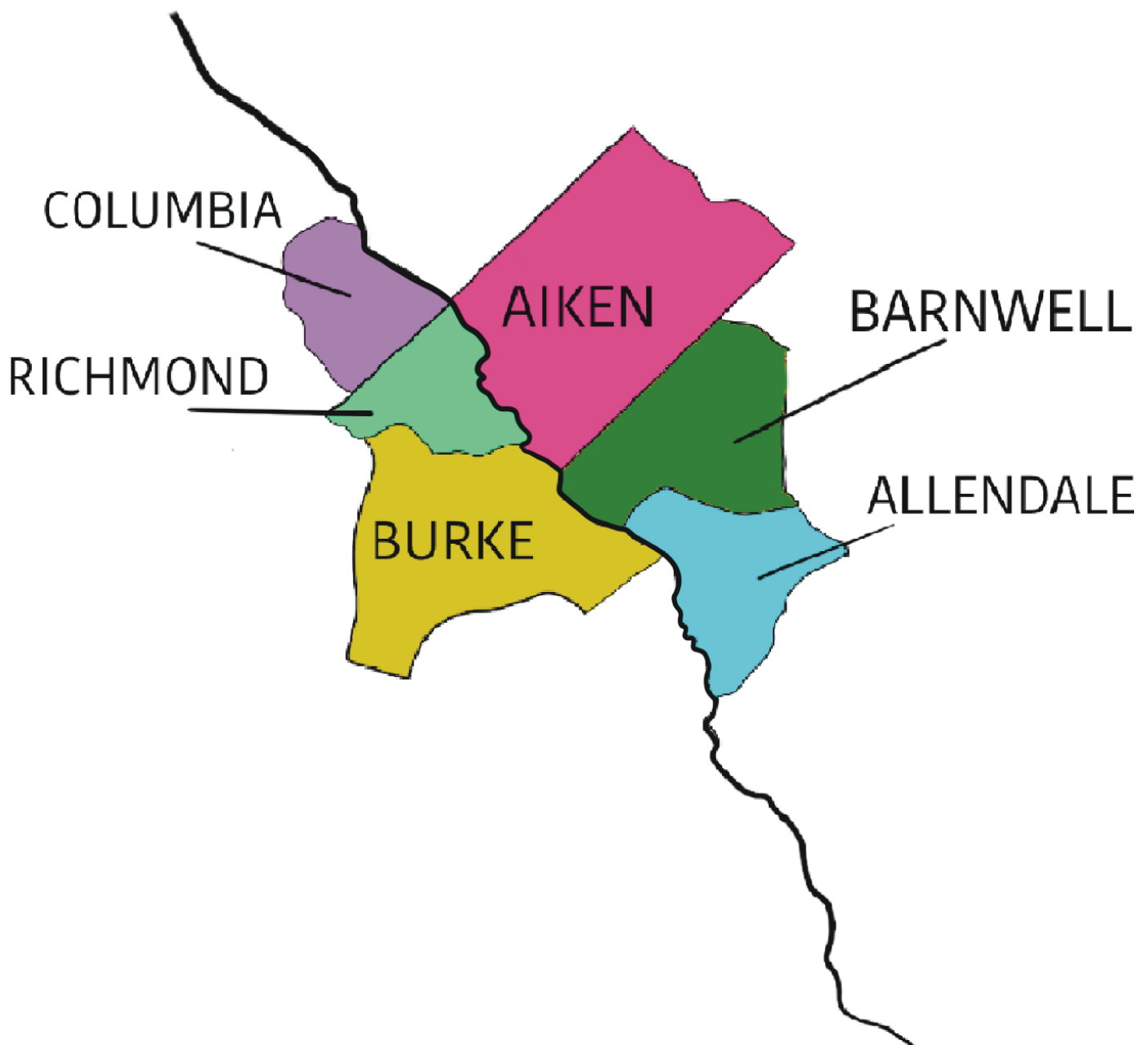


The SRS Museum is uniquely situated to narrate the amazing history of the Savannah River Site. The SRSM was established to preserve and interpret the technological and scientific achievements, the social impacts, and the ecological accomplishments of the SRS, while inspiring future generations to pursue technologies that improve our world. The SRSM shares the historic and scientific accomplishments of a region indelibly changed by science.

Free guided tours are available upon request. We ask that groups call ahead to be scheduled. The SRSM tours cover the Site's pre-federal history, the production era of SRP, along with the ecological and legacy management currently ongoing.

The Museum is open Wednesdays – Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and admission is free.

Citizens Advisory Board Eligible Counties





WE WANT YOU!

Learn about Savannah River Site
Cleanup Missions and how
you can be a voice for the
community!

Visit cab.srs.gov to find out how!



Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board

