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For Immediate Release

SRNS Sponsors Wounded Warriors and the Mobility Impaired Hunt at SRS

AIKEN, S.C. – Nov. 15, 2010 – Thirty-two hunters participated in this year's "Mobility Impaired and Wounded Warriors Deer Hunt" held on Saturday, Nov. 13, at the Savannah River Site (SRS) in Aiken, S.C. Dedicated to meet the special needs of each disabled participant, the Mobility Impaired Deer Hunt Program began in 2000, while the Wounded Warriors aspect of the event was added in 2008.

Pat Ross, a disabled veteran herself, volunteers her time each year to help those she so closely identifies with. "It just brings tears to my eyes," said Ross. "You just can't stay at home when you have the opportunity reach out to help fellow veterans."

Working in coordination with the USDA Forest Service-Savannah River (USFS-SR) and the Department of Energy, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC (SRNS) sponsors and manages the one-day event.

"SRNS handles the hunt coordination and logistics, and they do so seamlessly," said Scott Ray, Wildlife Services Supervisor, USFS-SR. "They place the hunter, field dress the deer, and bring the animal to them when they're ready. All the hunters have to do is shoot and enjoy the day."

Typically, nearly all of the hunters participating in this annual hunt have a serious physical impairment, such as one or more missing limbs.

According to hunt volunteer Tim Nixon, an employee with AllSafe Industrial, Augusta, Ga., "Tim Bolton and Ed Spears of SRNS do a great job each year organizing this event. These guys work from the heart to do everything they can to put each hunter on a big deer," said Nixon. "This hunt is known to be one of the best in country. SRNS works to make it a free and much appreciated reality for mobility impaired people every year."

The day started at 5:30 a.m. with hunter check-in, breakfast and a safety briefing. Each hunter was assigned a helper who transported him to his stand and provided additional assistance, as needed.

“There’s no doubt that this is the highlight of our entire hunting season,” said Ed Spears, SRNS Deer Hunt Coordinator. “A lot of these guys were very active before they were injured and had a passion for the outdoors and this sport. We’re pretty proud to be able to offer this service to them.”

Spears noted that nearly all of the Wounded Warriors are patients from Augusta, Georgia’s Veteran’s Hospital, where they are receiving treatment and rehabilitation services. “Because nearly all of them are from out of state, we provide them with all they need to hunt, including gear and guns,” said Spears.

“For me, and many of these guys, it’s not just physical healing that’s needed, it’s a need to heal mentally as well,” said Sgt. David Remaley, a Wounded Warrior hunt participant. “It’s this type of special event that means so much to us and helps us to heal in every way. It gives us a positive outlook while breathing new life into us.”

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