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**For Immediate Release**

## Inspections Uphold Dam Safety Standards at Savannah River Site

**AIKEN, S.C.** – (December 18, 2025) – In a significant achievement for dam safety and environmental management, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions' (SRNS) Site Services department has successfully completed the five-year, high-hazard dam inspections of the Steel Creek and PAR Pond dams. These inspections, which included functional testing and preventive maintenance, adhered to rigorous guidelines to ensure safety and effectiveness at the Savannah River Site (SRS).

SRNS oversees the management of eight low-hazard dams and two high-hazard ones. The Steel Creek Dam has been operational since the 1950s when it served as a cooling water source for reactors that are now decommissioned. The dam is maintained to keep contaminated sediment submerged, a cost-effective option that is beneficial for local wildlife, such as fish or osprey. Each inspection is crucial for ensuring the dams' continued operational safety.



*Richard Swygert, Site Infrastructure Engineer, descends into one of the four vertical shafts to inspect roughly 600 feet of conduit for mechanical integrity, ensuring that all mechanical parts are in optimal condition at the Steel Creek Dam.*

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Key figures in the inspection process, Danny Banks of Site Transportation and Richard Swygert of Site Infrastructure, highlighted the teamwork and detailed planning that were essential to the project's success.

"Many different Site Services groups came together to make this happen, despite challenges of confined space entry and numerous mechanical inspections," said Banks. "The comprehensive inspection required six months of preparation and two days in the field, showcasing SRNS' commitment to safety."

"We completed this inspection on time, with no injuries, thanks to the extensive planning and preparation from various groups across the Site," said Swygert, who has over 30 years of experience at SRS. "These inspections are vital for the ongoing operability and safety of our dams."

Requested by DOE, the inspections required a comprehensive critical lift plan to ensure safe descent into the wells for examination. Employees at Steel Creek Dam surveyed four vertical shafts in the intake tower, each roughly 80 feet deep, by descending each shaft in a crane basket. An inspection team then walked through the 72-inch diameter, 600-foot-long outlet conduit from the spillway to the intake tower. The inspection identifies any issues concerning mechanical parts and structural integrity.



*Savannah River Nuclear Solutions Site Services personnel perform the inspection of Steel Creek Dam at L Lake.*

The inspections were a collaborative effort for SRNS, involving employees from several divisions, from Radiological Protection to the SRS Fire Department. Their tasks included:

- Surveying and inspecting conduit for mechanical integrity
- Inspecting all mechanical parts to ensure optimal condition
- Examining concrete structures for signs of structural cracking and other issues

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Beyond the five-year independent high-hazard dam inspections, SRNS records lake level readings twice a week and conducts monthly walking inspections, among other tasks. The [Federal Energy Regulatory Commission](#) also conducted a thorough review of Steel Creek and PAR Pond dams, finding no issues. DOE relies on the commission for annual inspections, complementing the continuous monitoring by SRNS.

“The collaborative effort of various work groups is another example of how challenging tasks can be accomplished through meticulous planning and execution,” said Randy Keenan, SRNS Director of Site Services. “The outcomes of this critical inspection prove that the dam will continue to perform its function for years to come.”

Click [here](#) to watch the inspection highlight video.

*Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, a Fluor and HII partnership company, is responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site, located near Aiken, South Carolina.*

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