

News from the Savannah River Site

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mobility Impaired Hunters and Wounded Warriors Aim for Success during Annual Deer Hunt at SRS

SRNS managed hunt provides an opportunity of a lifetime for military veterans

AIKEN, S.C. (Oct. 30, 2014) – Thirty physically disabled hunters recently participated during the fourteenth annual deer hunt for the mobility-impaired and fifth annual Wounded Warriors deer hunt held at the Department of Energy's (DOE) Savannah River Site (SRS).

Mobility-impaired hunters, typically from throughout the southeast and wounded veterans, most from a local veteran's hospital, met recently to pursue the opportunity of a lifetime during the multi-hunt event.

"For physically-impaired hunters, this event provides a unique opportunity, all within a safe, highly controlled environment containing a large deer population," said Joe Solesby, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) employee and program manager for the site's deer hunts. "SRS is a prime location to conduct this special type of hunt."



SRS employee and guide Dale Cullom (right) describes the deer stand hunt location to U.S. Army veteran Charles West (center) during this year's SRS Mobility Impaired and Wounded Warrior Deer Hunt as his son, Mark West, looks on.

SRS offers over 150,000 acres of pristine, government-owned forest to be hunted each year, benefiting not only the hunter, but vehicular drivers at the DOE site as well. The hunt helps control the site's deer and hog population in an effort to reduce the potential for animal/vehicle collisions.

SRNS manages the hunt and provides sponsorship in conjunction with DOE, the USDA Forest Service–Savannah River, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and the Wheelin’ Sportsman National Wild Turkey Federation.

Jackson, S.C., resident Sean Falcon, with only 25 minutes left in the first hunt of the day, saw an eight-point, 184 pound buck. To his dismay the first shot misfired. But fortunately for Falcon, the buck did not spook and the second shot found its mark. Falcon remains a member of the U.S. Army and is currently receiving medical treatment in Augusta, Ga. for wounds received in action while serving in Afghanistan.

“This is a great hunt,” said Falcon. “I look forward to this event more than any other.” Harlem, Ga., resident Daryl Wallace, former member of the U.S. Army’s 82nd Airborne Division, and a victim of an anti-tank mine that exploded beneath his Humvee vehicle in Southern Afghanistan, had his patience pay off after hours of waiting, taking down a four-point buck and narrowly missing a second, larger deer.

Wallace was extremely appreciative of his chance to again pursue the sport he loves during the hunt at SRS.

“I had an awesome time. You don’t get this opportunity every day,” said Wallace. “It really makes you feel good. It shows that people really care about what you did for your country. It means a lot.”

Wallace added that during the hunt, it was discovered that his guide and his grandfather were former co-workers. “He (the guide) had everything set up perfect, I couldn’t have asked for anything better,” said Wallace. “This is by far the best hunt I’ve been on.”

Hunt participants at SRS are escorted by a volunteer who ensures their safety and provides assistance as needed. “Many of our volunteers return year after year to work with the hunters to ensure an enjoyable and, hopefully, successful experience,” said Solesby. “We greatly appreciate each volunteer for their time and effort. The many ways they show their desire to help these wounded warriors and physically impaired hunters is to be admired. We can’t thank them enough.”

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions is a Fluor-led company whose members are Fluor Federal Services, Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site, including the Savannah River National Laboratory, located near Aiken, South Carolina.

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SRNS- 2014 – 278