

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Joanne Sweeney, Nuclear Watch South president,
savannahriverpilgrim@gmail.com, 706-809-1639, www.nonukesyall.org

Community Kayak to Protest Savannah River Site Plutonium Pit Production – March 28

AUGUSTA, GA (March 19, 2026) — A coalition of local groups are hosting a day-long “Paddle and Boogie to Stop the Bomb” event on the Augusta Canal next to the Savannah River to advocate against the production of plutonium pits for nuclear weapons and to share information about the radiation contamination risks of the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Savannah River Site (SRS) ahead of upcoming public hearing and comment periods.

Participants will paddle 5.5 miles in the morning from Savannah Rapids Park in Martinez to the Mill Village Trailhead in Augusta, where there will be an afternoon gathering with live music, educational information and more fun activities.

Background:

SRS is a 310-square-mile site near Aiken, SC, that was produced plutonium and tritium for use in nuclear weapons from the 1950s to the 1990s. The plutonium was shipped to Rocky Flats, CO, where it was turned into plutonium pits. Rocky Flats was shut down and designated as a Superfund site in 1989 after investigations found significant radioactive environmental contamination.

With little public discussion or notice, the Department of Energy (DOE) determined it would produce new plutonium pits at SRS. After a lawsuit, a 2024 court ruling found that DOE violated the law under the National Environmental Policy Act by failing to complete a new and comprehensive programmatic environmental impact study that fully considers the effects of producing plutonium pits for nuclear weapons at SRS and Los Alamos Nuclear Laboratory.

DOE and the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA, semi-autonomous agency within DOE) are due to release the required programmatic environmental impact study in the coming weeks. There will be a 90-day public comment period, and a series of five court-mandated public hearings, including one in Aiken, SC. The previous PEIS for the plutonium program, in 2008, provoked more than 100,000 public comments.

Event Details:

Paddlers will meet by Savannah Rapids Kayak Rental (Savannah Rapids Park, 7 Savannah Rapids Trail, Martinez) at 9 a.m. ET, and depart by 10 a.m. for Mill Village Trailhead on the Augusta Canal (109 Eve St., Augusta), with live solar-powered music headlined by roots rock reggae band Natti Love Joys and fun educational events beginning at 1 p.m. Bring your own kayak or rent one (mention Paddle and Boogie for a discounted rental). There will be a shuttle back to the starting point for paddlers.

The event is co-hosted by [Nuclear Watch South](#), [Savannah River Site Watch](#), [Georgia WAND](#), the [Savannah River Group of the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club](#), the [Carolina Peace Resource Center](#), [Savannah Rapids Kayak Rental](#), and the [Generational Radiation Impact Project](#).

Contact:

Reporters with questions or an interest in attending should contact Joanne Sweeney, president of Nuclear Watch South, at savannahriverpilgrim@gmail.com or 706-809-1639.

Additional Resources:

- [Plutonium Pit Production Fact Sheet](#)

###