



# Fernald • FACT SHEET

Environmental Management Project

March 2001

## Natural Resources at Fernald



The Ecological Restoration Park along Paddys Run Road was completed in 1998 (6967-D88).

impacts to those natural resources, and in some cases, compensate for any loss of natural resources.

In 1986, the State of Ohio filed a \$206 million claim against the DOE for natural resource damages caused by former uranium production operations. To resolve the State of Ohio's Claim, a *Natural Resource Restoration Plan* (NRRP) was developed. The plan outlined a detailed strategy to compensate for injured natural resources in lieu of payment. In April 1998, the Fernald Natural Resource Trustees (composed of

### Background

The primary drivers for natural resource restoration efforts at Fernald are compliance with natural resource regulations and the liability faced by the Department of Energy (DOE) for past damages to natural resources under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act.

There are a number of regulations related to natural resources with which DOE is required to comply, including the National Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act and DOE's Floodplains/Wetlands Review Regulations. Each regulation requires DOE to be cognizant of the conditions of natural resources at Fernald, minimize

representatives from the DOE, the Ohio environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) reached a tentative agreement for ecological restoration of the 1,050-acre site. That agreement calls for 884 acres to be dedicated to natural resource restoration, 20 acres to be dedicated to ecological research projects and 23 acres to be set aside for potential community reuse. It also requires completion of a groundwater education project.

### Natural Resources at Fernald

The Great Miami Aquifer is the primary groundwater resource for the region. The principal surface water resources in the Fernald area include the Great Miami River and Paddys Run. The Fernald site hosts two pine plantations, deciduous and riparian woodlands,



*An 18-acre Restoration Project in the northwestern part of the site was completed in 2000 (7321-D104).*

over 36 acres of jurisdictional freshwater wetlands, and hundreds of species of flora and fauna.

## Natural Resource Restoration Overview and Projects

The fundamental goal of ecological restoration at Fernald is to enhance existing natural resources and restore disturbed areas of the site to ecosystems native to pre-settlement southwestern Ohio. Following are some projects that have been or will be completed as part of the NRRP:

- Establishment of an aesthetic barrier, using densely planted trees, to provide a visual buffer between Willey Road and Fernald construction activities;
- Mitigation of 16.5 acres of wetlands that were impacted

during construction and production activities;

- Revegetation, with native forest and/or prairie cover, of grazed pasture and remediated areas;

- Enhancement of existing woodlots;
- Restoration of the riparian corridor of Paddys Run;
- Transformation of excavated areas into wetlands systems, tallgrass prairies, tallgrass savannas and upland forests; and
- Establishment of a permanent buffer around the On-Site Disposal Facility (OSDF) with appropriate topography and vegetation to function as a wooded corridor.

## Final Land Use Development

In September 1998, DOE issued an Environmental Assessment (EA) and the NRRP to solicit public input on the proposed restoration work and final land use of Fernald. The Environment Assessment summarized the final land use based on the following considerations: the final land use must integrate previous DOE commitments, such as continued federal ownership of the site in perpetuity, operation and maintenance of the OSDF and

wetland mitigation requirements; it should consider stakeholder input; and it must satisfy the concerns of the Natural Resource Trustees.

After an extensive public dialogue on the issue, DOE finalized the Environment Assessment in June 1999, establishing a path forward for natural resource restoration at Fernald. The trustees' final settlement (including a final NRRP) is expected in 2001. DOE and Fluor Fernald will perform natural resource restoration by implementing a series of 12 projects using a phased approach that will essentially follow the sequence of soil remediation. Restoration in undisturbed areas of the site will occur as scheduling and funding permit. A determination on public use of restored areas is expected in early 2001.



*The Wetland Mitigation Project in the northeastern part of the site was completed in 1999 (7081-D249).*

## For more information . . .

**Visit** the Public Environmental Information Center at 10995 Hamilton-Cleves Highway (Delta Building);  
**Attend** a Cleanup Progress Briefing (second Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. on site);  
**Contact** Pete Yerace, DOE-Fernald at 513-648-3161 or Eric Woods, Fluor Fernald, at 513-648-5268; or  
**View** the Fernald Web site (<http://www.fernald.gov>).