



the preserve. Research projects conducted with nearby universities include invasive plant control, American chestnut reintroduction, and reforestation methods. The Fernald site provides a living laboratory for restoring an industrial site to a natural condition. "The effort of so many people at the Fernald site is amazing," said Jane Powell, DOE Office of Legacy Management Site Manger, "and we honor their accomplishments in the restoration and long-term monitoring of the site, as well as the construction of a Visitors Center."



In mid-2008, the visitors center will open to the public to provide education about the continuing activities at Fernald, such as legacy management activities, ground water management, and land use restrictions. The center will include an exhibit area detailing aspects of Fernald's rich history such as land acquisition, construction, Cold War production, plant workers, environmental contamination, citizen involvement, studies, cleanup and restoration. The Fernald Community Alliance is developing a living history of the site which will include tens of thousands of photographs and thousands of video tapes.

For more information, call or write:

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**Community Essential to Successful Reuse at Former Nuclear Plant**  
Former Feed Materials Production Center, Fernald Plant



**What happens when the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA), active and interested local residents and citizen groups, elected officials, and private parties come together to address a challenge?**

**It becomes the recipe for successful cleanup of a major federal facility.**



The cleanup and reuse of the 1,050-acre former Feed Materials Production Center Fernald Plant (Fernald) is the fruition of close collaboration among government agencies, early and active public participation, and an open dialogue among all interested parties. In 2006, after nearly 20 years of cleanup activity and \$4.4 billion in costs, stakeholders celebrated the completion of cleanup at Fernald – and this was no small feat.

Approximately 60 years ago in the rural community of Fernald, Ohio construction began on a new DOE facility for use in the production of nuclear materials to support national defense programs during the Cold War era. Operations began in 1952 and for the next 37 years the facility produced high-purity uranium and thorium metal products for the nation's nuclear weapons program. Production of these nuclear materials required use, storage and disposal of radionuclides, some



contaminating the surrounding environment. When production at the facility stopped in July 1989, the site was added to U.S. EPA's National Priorities List (NPL), which designated it as warranting further environmental investigation and cleanup.



After subsequent assessment, it was estimated that 31 million pounds of uranium products, 2.5 billion pounds of other waste, over 300 buildings and structures, and three million cubic yards of contaminated soil and debris required action that included either on-site treatment and disposal, or transport to an appropriate off-site disposal location. Approximately 23 percent of the waste was shipped off site and 77 percent is contained on site in an engineered disposal structure. Seventy-five acres at Fernald are dedicated to the footprint of the on-site disposal facility and are permanently closed to the public.

Ohio EPA and the U.S. EPA worked together to develop a framework for cleaning up the site. Ohio EPA and U.S. EPA worked together to navigate the myriad of laws and regulations that applied to a cleanup of this nature. By entering into joint agreements, and amending those agreements as needed, Ohio EPA, U.S. EPA, DOE and concerned stakeholders were able to set and achieve realistic schedules and budget expectations. In fact, it is estimated that expedited activities and cooperation between Ohio EPA, U.S. EPA and DOE resulted in reducing cleanup costs at Fernald by \$2 billion. According to Jim Saric, the U.S. EPA Remedial Project Manager at Fernald, "Closing out this site – which we refer to as a 'megasite' – proves that large, complex sites like Fernald can be cleaned up, and that federal and state agencies and that cooperation between federal and state agencies can facilitate cleanup and save money."



Due to the unique and contentious nature of nuclear waste disposal, the Fernald community was galvanized by the discovery of radioactive waste contamination associated with the nearby facility. The Fernald community came together and created the citizen group called Fernald Residents for Environmental Safety and Health (FRESH). From 1984 through 2006, FRESH played an active role in the cleanup process at Fernald by educating and serving as a voice for the larger community, influencing key decision-makers, and participating in the national debate on

nuclear waste issues. In 1993, various community representatives convened the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board (FCAB) to address the more technical challenges. FCAB issued reports and recommendations on future use, waste disposal, cleanup levels and priorities. FCAB also participated in major budget and policy initiatives. FCAB was instrumental in alleviating the fear and mistrust brewing in the community and fostering a renewed spirit of collaboration between the community and government agencies.



Other citizen groups that contributed to the process include the Fernald Citizens for Health and Environment Committee, the Fernald Community Reuse Organization, and Fernald Living History, Inc. With the completion of much of the cleanup, many of these groups disbanded in 2006 as their missions were complete. With long-term stewardship issues still looming, the Fernald Community Alliance emerged as the single voice for the Fernald community.

In June 2006, DOE finalized the Comprehensive Legacy Management and Institutional Controls Plan to provide the roadmap for the future of Fernald. This plan documents requirements going forward for institutional controls, ongoing operations and maintenance, integrated environmental monitoring, and community involvement. The focus of DOE's Legacy Management Mission is to ensure continued protection of human health and the environment through effective and efficient long-term site monitoring and maintenance. The reuse plan for Fernald includes restoring the site to native wetlands, prairie, and woodlands to provide wildlife habitat and transform Fernald into a community asset. The site will remain under federal ownership and management indefinitely.



Today, 975 acres of Fernald are designated for the creation of a park to be known as the Fernald Preserve. The preserve will provide opportunities for wildlife viewing, environmental education, wetlands development and research. Restoration activities around the preserve include wetland mitigation, stream bank stabilization, prairie management, thinning and maintenance of a major pine stand, and grass seeding. There also will be parking areas and footpaths throughout