

Bear Creek Valley Watershed

Is it safe? _____

The Bear Creek Valley watershed area is safe for waste management operations. Most of the Bear Creek Valley watershed area, where waste is disposed, is not accessible to the general public.

Are there use limitations for this area? _____

- The general public is not allowed to travel east from Highway 95 along the waste management portion of the Bear Creek Road without badges or pre-approval from DOE. Both East and West Bear Creek Road have guard stations to control public access. Sponsored visitor badges are provided for visits or meetings held at the Environmental Management Waste Management Facility (EMWMF).
- Unfenced, forested portions of the watershed adjacent to Highway 95 and the haul road are available to the public during the fall for deer and turkey hunts. All kills made during these hunts are checked for radiation levels prior to being released.
- All controls required for this area are performed under the direction of DOE.

Background: _____

Waste management and disposal activities in Bear Creek Valley, principally associated with waste generated from the uranium processing performed at Y-12 since the early 1940s, contributed to the contamination of the soils, surface water, and groundwater. Because of the extensive nature of the waste management approaches utilized, there have been many releases of hazardous substances (radioactive and chemical) to the environment over the years.

How was the problem addressed? _____

The initial Record of Decision (ROD) signed for this watershed includes excavating and disposing hazardous waste, capturing and treating shallow groundwater associated with the S-3 Site, and decreasing the flow of water through



the areas where waste will remain in place. The end-use of this area was separated into 3 separate zones with remediation levels established for the surface and groundwater in each zone.

Another ROD signed for this area allowed the construction of the Environmental Management Waste Management Facility (EMWMF) for the disposal of CERCLA waste generated from the EM remediation activities throughout the Oak Ridge Reservation.

Two RODs will be developed for this area to address the large Uranium Burial Ground, and the final ROD for this watershed will address the remaining ecological issues, surface water, and groundwater.

More Information is available: _____

- *Record of Decision for the Phase I Activities in Bear Creek Valley at the Oak Ridge Y-12 Plant, Oak Ridge, Tennessee.* June 16, 2000.
- *Phased Construction Completion Report for the Boneyard/Burnyard Remediation Project at the Y-12 National Security Complex, Oak Ridge, Tennessee.* January 12, 2004.
- *Phased Construction Completion Report for the Bear Creek Valley Oil Landfarm Soil Containment Pad at the Y-12 National Security Complex, Oak Ridge, Tennessee.* July 16, 2001.
- Administrative Record – a listing of all available documents and correspondence in reaching this decision is available at the DOE Information Center in Oak Ridge.