

The Environment and Conservation

The Tennessee Department of Environment Conservation celebrates completion of Tennessee’s first Brownfield Remediation Grant Project

MORRISTOWN – The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) announced the completion of the state’s first remediation project under the Brownfield Redevelopment Area Grant (BRAG) program.

TDEC Commissioner David Salyers joined local officials and members of the community at a ceremony for the occasion.

The Morristown Industrial Development Board last year received a \$500,000 BRAG grant from TDEC for the mitigation of legacy contaminants from the former Plumley Rubber Company site. The property had been vacant for almost 10 years before becoming redevelopment ready. It will now serve as a warehousing and third-party logistics space leased to R&S Logistics. The lease payments will benefit the Third Judicial District Recovery Court of Hamblen County.

TDEC’s Division of Remediation worked closely with Knoxville-based engineering firm Cannon & Cannon, Inc. throughout the project and contractor MTN-INC to mitigate harmful vapors at the site.

BRAG grants are derived from Gov. Bill Lee’s Rural Brownfield Redevelopment Investment Act, which protects the environment and creates economic opportunities, especially in rural settings. The legislation empowers local governments and development



TDEC Commissioner David Salyers, center, leads a ribbon-cutting for the completion of the state’s first remediation project under the Brownfield Redevelopment Area Grant (BRAG) program. (Photo/Courtesy: TDEC)

boards with resources needed for investigation, cleanup, and redevelopment of blighted properties.

"What happens in rural Tennessee matters to all Tennesseans, and I'm proud to announce the completion of our first brown-

field redevelopment project," said Lee. "The process of cleaning up a contaminated property and turning it into an asset is an important step in environmental stewardship, and this project will have a positive impact on Hamblen County for years to come."

"I applaud the Morristown leaders who used BRAG program funds to clean up a contaminated and blighted property and repurpose it in a way that benefits the entire community," Salyers said. "We're excited about this milestone in the BRAG program. This is a remarkable achievement for Morristown, and we look forward to other success stories that will come from this process."

"We are proud that Morristown is the site of the first completed

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project under the BRAG program," said Sen. Steve Southard, R-Morristown. "This is an excellent environmental step that turns a problem into a success story."

"We are excited to see this result from such a valuable program," said Rep. Rick Eldridge, R-Morristown. "We're glad this can be a forerunner to such projects to come in Tennessee."

"This takes a long-vacant site and repurposes it into a positive step for this area," said Rep. Jeremy Faison, R-Cosby. "It will benefit the community for years to come, and the BRAG grant helped make it all happen."

A brownfield is a property vacant or underutilized due to contamination. Remediation minimizes threats to public health, safety, and the environment. Brownfield sites vary in size, location, age, and past use.

Strike King Bassmaster College Series Presented by Bass Pro Shops will offer plenty of opportunities at Buggs Island

MECKLENBURG COUNTY, Va., April 22, 2025 — Teams competing in the Lunkers Trail of the Strike King Bassmaster College Series presented by Bass Pro Shops will visit Buggs Island, a new venue to the College Series, at one of the best times of the year according to St. Croix Bassmaster Opens presented by SE-VIIN angler Jack Dice.

"It is an amazing tournament lake," Dice said. "It doesn't have the giants other places have, but there is the opportunity for anglers to fish their strengths and the opportunity for anglers to figure out something in practice and run with it. It is a very dynamic time of year. The bass will be doing a little bit of everything." Tournament days are scheduled for April 30 and May 1 with daily takeoffs and weigh-ins set to take place at Oconeechee State Park in Clarksville, Va. The top 10% of the field will clinch a spot in the 2025 Strike King Bassmaster College National Championship presented by Bass Pro Shops, and all teams will earn points toward the Team of the Year race. The Strike King Bassmaster High School Series and Bassmaster Junior Series will compete on Buggs Island on May 4. Straddling the border of North Carolina and Virginia, Buggs Island is the second of four reservoirs in the Roanoke River system and is the largest lake in the state of Virginia. B.A.S.S. returned to Buggs Island in 2023



Bassmaster college anglers will visit new water at the Strike King Bassmaster College Series at Buggs Island presented by Bass Pro Shops April 30-May 1. (Photo by Dalton Tumblin/B.A.S.S.)

for the first time in many years at an Open in early May that was won by Powell Kemp. That Open could potentially resemble what the college anglers will face during this event, and it all has to do with water level. In 2023, a massive storm system came through the area just before the event, dumping enough rain to raise the lake levels well above full pool. As a result, plenty of wood cover became accessible to the bass, and anglers found themselves catching

quality bass around the bank. There may not be a major flood this year, but even just a little rise in the water levels will bring the bush bite into play, Dice said. "Buggs Island is famous for bush flipping when the water gets right," Dice explained. "You're going to have plenty of fish still wanting to spawn, and the post-spawn bass will be guarding fry in those bushes too. And that is all dependent on the water level." Dice anticipates much of the lake will be in play for this tournament,

from where the Dan and Roanoke rivers converge on the northeast side down to the dam and Nutbush Creek. Nutbush Creek, Dice said, acts as almost a different lake than the rest of Buggs Island. Largemouth will be the species in play for this event, and those bass will be in the middle of their spawning cycle. Some will be prespawn, some will be spawning and some will be postspawn, Dice said. The beginning of May is also the time of year the shad

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spawn starts to ramp up. "If I was an angler going into it, the biggest thing would be watching the temperature trends," Dice said. "When we had the Open, there was a shad spawn happening and I took advantage of that." There is also a solid offshore bite on Buggs Island, and teams should be able to use their graphs to find stumps and fish points. A Yamamoto Senko would be a top choice for Dice if he were fishing the tournament. Flipping baits like a Yamamoto Flappin' Hog and a beaver-style bait will also be key for anglers focusing on the bushes. Spinnerbaits will also factor if the shad start spawning.

Mecklenburg County, Virginia, is hosting the tournament.

Jamal Mitchell named AAC Field Athlete of Week

IRVING, Texas, April 22, 2025 -- Memphis thrower Jamal Mitchell was named the American Athletic Conference Men's Field Athlete of the Week, the conference announced on Tuesday afternoon.

Mitchell, a senior from Southaven, Mississippi, turned in a career performance in the discus throw over the weekend at the Tom Jones Invitational. His 56.39-meter launch was the best of his career and earned him second at the competition. It is the fourth-best throw this outdoor season in the conference and the 48th-best in Division I.

Mitchell joins Gabriel Koletsi, Jazmyn James and Sascha Salesius Schmidt as recipients of AAC Field Athlete of the Week this season, with all four coming in the outdoor season.

The Tigers will head to Baton Rouge for the LSU Alumni Gold Invitational this Saturday, April 26.



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