



*Many Voices Working for the Community*

# Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

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May 19, 2014

Susan Cange  
Acting Manager  
Oak Ridge Office of Environmental Management  
U.S. Department of Energy  
P.O. Box 2001, EM-90  
Oak Ridge, TN 37831

Dear Ms. Cange:

**Recommendation 224: Recommendation on Fiscal Year 2016 DOE Oak Ridge  
Environmental Management Budget Request**

At our May 14, 2014, meeting, the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board approved the enclosed recommendation regarding the FY 2016 DOE Oak Ridge Environmental Management Program budget request.

We appreciate your consideration of our recommendation and look forward to receiving your response by August 14, 2014.

Sincerely,

*Dave Hemelright*

Dave Hemelright, Chair  
DH/rsg

Enclosure

cc/enc:

Dave Adler, DOE-ORO  
Dave Borak, DOE-HQ  
Fred Butterfield, DOE-HQ  
Kristof Czartoryski, TDEC  
Connie Jones, EPA Region 4  
Terry Frank, Anderson County Mayor  
Melyssa Noe, DOE-ORO  
John Owsley, TDEC  
Mark Watson, Oak Ridge City Manager  
Ron Woody, Roane County Executive  
File Code 140



## **Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board Recommendation 224: Recommendations on the FY 2016 DOE Oak Ridge Environmental Management Budget Request**

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### **Background**

Each year the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management (EM) Program develops its budget request for the fiscal year two years beyond the current fiscal year. It uses budget requests from the various DOE field offices in developing the EM Program budget request to the President.

DOE EM Headquarters typically issues guidelines to the field offices advising them how much budget they should reasonably expect when developing their fiscal year +2 budget requests to headquarters. The field offices then brief the public, the regulatory agencies, and the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) and seek input from them regarding budget requests.

### **Discussion**

In March 2014, DOE briefed ORSSAB on the current budget picture and described near-term, mid-term, and long-term priorities. Near-term priorities (2014–2016) are:

- Demolish Building K-25
- Prepare the K-27 Building for demolition
- Continue direct disposition of uranium-233 from Oak Ridge
- Process and dispose of transuranic (TRU) waste inventories
- Planning, engineering, and design for the Y-12 Outfall 200 Mercury Treatment Facility
- Planning, engineering, and design for the TRU Waste Processing Center Sludge Processing Facility build-outs
- Planning, engineering, and design for the Environmental Management Disposal Facility (EMDF)

Mid-term (2017–2026) priorities include:

- Complete U-233 material processing and disposition
- Complete TRU waste processing and disposition
- Complete closure of the East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP)
- Construct/operate the Y-12 Outfall 200 Mercury Treatment Facility at the Y-12 National Security Complex
- Initiate demolition of Y-12 mercury use facilities
- Construct and begin waste operations at the EMDF

Long-term (2027–2043) priorities include completing cleanup of Y-12 and Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

In March 2014, the ORSSAB EM & Stewardship and Budget & Process committees met with DOE for a more in-depth discussion. At that meeting, Dave Adler and Tammy Blaine (DOE) went into more detail explaining the reasoning for the near-term, mid-term, and long-term priorities.

Mr. Adler said any suggestions on the appropriateness of currently proposed priorities, would be welcome.

Committee members discussed some of the projects and suggested alternatives that might be employed should actual funding levels challenge planned implementation schedules. Those alternatives are included in the recommendation below.

**Recommendation**

ORSSAB agrees with DOE's near-term, mid-term, and long-term priorities as stated above and strongly encourages DOE EM to request funding sufficient to adequately address those projects. In particular, ORSSAB recommends aggressive implementation of projects which, as completed, will reduce the "base" costs of the Oak Ridge cleanup program and allow accelerated investment in remaining cleanup work.

ORSSAB recognizes that continuation of cleanup work at ETTP serves to both maintain productivity of currently assembled Oak Ridge EM workforce, and reduce the base costs of the Oak Ridge EM program.

ORSSAB offers the following observations regarding accommodating budget shortfalls, if necessary:

1. Although mercury levels in East Fork Poplar Creek are low, they exceed regulatory limits and accordingly remain a priority for near term actions. However stream postings along East Fork Poplar Creek warn against consumption of fish taken from the creek and actual human exposures and health risks are very low. Accordingly, deferral of mercury control measures should not result in significant risk impacts.
2. Delaying processing of TRU waste at the TRU Waste Processing Center is also not expected to significantly increase on site risks. However, failure to maintain forward progress employing the facilities and work force would result in significant lifecycle cost penalties.
3. EM should examine the merits of deferring low risk ETTP decontamination and decommissioning activity as a means of accommodating potential budget challenges, particularly if deferral allows concurrent deferral of budget requirements necessitated with construction of associated waste disposal capacity.