



Many Voices Working for the Community

Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

October 19, 2026

Erik Olds
Manager for Environmental Management
DOE-Oak Ridge Office
P.O. Box 4067, EM 90
Oak Ridge, TN 37831

Dear Mr. Olds:

Recommendation 261: On the FY 2028 Oak Ridge Environmental Management Program Budget Priorities

At our October 14, 2026, meeting the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board approved the enclosed recommendation on the FY2028 Oak Ridge Environmental Management (OREM) Budget Priorities.

The recommendation is based on the May 2026 presentation to the board on the Oak Ridge Environmental Management Program as well as the 10-year Program Plan, EM Strategic Vision document, and the current EM Budget Request.

We ask that DOE consider these recommendations as it formulates its own plan for future budget needs. We appreciate your consideration of our input and look forward to receiving your response by December 18, 2026.

Sincerely,

Kris Bartholomew, Chair

Enclosures

cc/enc:

Kelly Snyder, EM-2.33
Kristof Czartoryski, TDEC, Oak Ridge
Jana Dawson, EPA Region 4
Teresa Robbins, EM-90
Melyssa Noe, EM-94
Abby Hill, EM-94

Wade Creswell, Roane County Executive
Terry Frank, Anderson County Mayor
Randy Hemann, Oak Ridge City Manager
Roger Petrie, EM-94
Leah Alexander, EM-94



Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board Recommendation 261: On the FY 2028 Oak Ridge Environmental Management Program Budget Priorities

Background

Each year the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management (EM) Program develops its budget request for the fiscal year (FY) two years beyond the current year, including requests from DOE field offices to develop the EM Program budget request to the president.

DOE-EM Headquarters typically issues guidelines to the field offices advising them how much funding they should reasonably expect when developing their FY+2 budget requests. The field offices then brief the public, the regulatory agencies, and the respective site-specific advisory boards and seek input from each regarding budget requests.

On May 13, 2026, representatives from the Oak Ridge Environmental Management (OREM) program presented information about its FY 2028 budget formulation process to the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB). This presentation provided content and discussions that ORSSAB used to draft its recommendations.

Discussion

In creating its recommendations for the FY 2027 OREM budget, ORSSAB focused on general near-term and long-term cleanup priorities identified by OREM. Project-specific objectives provided additional details for discussions that took place at the May 27, 2025, EM & Stewardship Committee meeting.

The board also referred to the current [EM Budget Request](#), and the board's [previous Recommendations](#), as well as documentation from OREM on how previous recommendations were implemented in past budget requests for additional guidance on budget recommendations.¹

Recommendations

ORSSAB supports OREM's cleanup plan and recommends fully funding the activities that are currently supported by that plan for FY 2028. OREM's goals are in bold with ORSSAB's specific concerns are highlighted as sub-topics where needed:

- **Maintaining excess facilities at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) and Y-12 National Security Complex (Y-12)**
- **Dispositioning U-233 and other legacy materials (nickel, sodium shields, transuranic contact- and remote-handled debris and sludge, etc.)**

¹ All documents are available on www.energy.gov/orem or www.energy.gov/orssab.

- **Continuing reindustrialization of the East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP) through property transfers and site reuse support programs**
 - Obtain adequate funding to implement current regulatory commitments for contaminated groundwater at ETTP. Many areas have been transferred to the public while contaminated groundwater remains to be addressed.
 - Accelerate implementation of existing groundwater remediation commitments to ensure final closure of ETTP
 - Complete historic preservation at K-25 / ETTP
- **Accelerating infrastructure development to enable future cleanup, focusing on the Mercury Treatment Facility (MTF) and CERCLA waste disposal facility**
 - ORSSAB acknowledges the need for a pause in the Mercury Treatment Facility. It continues to be concerned about water treatment needs in the future
 - Based on past best practices, ORSSAB feels it is important to maintain the integrity of the existing structure until a decision is made
 - Investigate the option to retain some portions of the Outfall 200 Mercury Treatment Facility, such as the headworks piece
 - Increase funding for mercury remediation technology (possibly using money previously marked for Outfall 200)
 - Support research into mercury and methylmercury pollution and development of new and improved technologies
 - Reduce mercury contamination in Upper East Fork Poplar Creek which continues to exit Y-12 into the City of Oak Ridge and surrounding community
 - Mitigate the presence of methylmercury in Bear Creek
 - Protect against inadvertent releases of mercury from demolition projects in the West End Mercury Area (WEMA)
 - Ensure funding for startup of EMDF allows operational overlap with closing of EMWMF
- **Demolishing excess contaminated facilities**
 - Implement a remediation strategy that allows beneficial reuse of the property, is protective of human health and the environment, and saves on overall costs.
 - Procure funding to accelerate remediation of soil in areas where new facilities are planned.

Other issues of interest to ORSSAB include:

- Supporting research and development activities and funding contracts for academia for the next generation of nuclear workers
- Allocating funds for the repair/upgrade of Liquid and Gaseous Waste Operations
- Ensure future facilities can process wastewater in ways that reduce need to truck liquids offsite

OREM and its contractors have continuously demonstrated an effective cost-to-value that leads the nation among federally funded facilities over a significant period of time and are recognized for their cleanup progress. ORSSAB recommends funding the FY 2028 budget to include all activities necessary to complete these cleanup priorities in an effective, timely and safe manner. Based on OREM's record of performance and effective project management, ORSSAB recommends additional funding wherever possible to accelerate the FY 2028 cleanup plan. With this support, OREM will continue to play a pivotal role in the nation's nuclear renaissance.