FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR A PROPOSED DEED AMENDMENT FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY PARCEL 2 (SSP-2), OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE

November 2026

AGENCY: United States (U.S.) Department of Energy (DOE), Oak Ridge Office of Environmental Management

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

SUMMARY: An Environmental Assessment (EA), *Proposed Deed Amendment for Self-Sufficiency Parcel 2 (SSP-2) in Oak Ridge, Tennessee*, was prepared under the direction and independent evaluation of DOE pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and DOE NEPA Implementing Procedures with support from Navarro Research and Engineering, Inc. and United Cleanup Oak Ridge, LLC, and with information aided by Orano Enrichment USA, LLC.

NEPA (Volume 42 of the United States Code [U.S.C.] Section (§) 4321 et seq.) requires federal agencies to evaluate environmental effects of proposed federal actions. DOE's proposed federal action is amending the deed for SSP-2 to allow for industrial/commercial uses across Tracts 1A and 1B (623.71 acres) of the property, including site preparation activities for nuclear development. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is a cooperating regulatory agency on the EA. Pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1344), USACE's proposed federal action would be the issuance of a Department of the Army Permit for discharge of fill material into Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) associated with development of a proposed nuclear facility on SSP-2. The EA evaluates potential environmental impacts of DOE's and USACE's proposed actions (Proposed Action) in accordance with DOE NEPA Implementing Procedures (July 13, 2026).

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES: SSP-2 was transferred out of DOE ownership to the Industrial Development Board of the City of Oak Ridge via a quitclaim deed in March 2026, with limited allowable uses for the property. The Proposed Action is for DOE to amend the deed for SSP-2 to allow for industrial/commercial uses across Tracts 1A and 1B (623.71 acres) of the property, and for USACE to issue a permit for the release of fill into WOTUS for a potential future nuclear facility on the parcel. The Proposed Action also includes preliminary site preparation activities for potential nuclear development that are not included in the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) 10 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] § 70.4 and 10 CFR § 40.4 definitions of "construction," including site clearing; rough grading; soil characterization, treatment, stabilization and improvements; installation of underground utilities and storage tanks; final grading; and construction of administrative buildings.

Subsequent to this NEPA evaluation and the potential approval of necessary licenses and permits, further NEPA compliance will be conducted by the NRC as part of their independent regulatory oversight process for issuing a 40-year license for construction and operation of any nuclear development on the property.

Reasonably foreseeable uses on SSP-2 have been developed to bound the analysis in this EA. Industrial uses are considered permitted principle uses requiring a Board of Zoning Appeals permit in the City of Oak Ridge Zoning Ordinance, Industrial Districts. Additional commercial uses are included in the Zoning Ordinance, Unified General Business Districts. Clearing, grading, and other site preparation activities may be necessary for many of the permitted uses.

In addition to the Proposed Action, DOE evaluated a No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action activities would not occur.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES: In the EA, DOE dismissed Air Resources, Noise and Vibration, Socioeconomics, Waste Management, Transportation, Infrastructure, and Public Health and Safety from further analysis due to lack of potential for significant impacts upon these resource areas.

LAND USE AND VISUAL RESOURCES (described in Section 3.3 of the EA): Impacts from the Proposed Action would produce less than significant impacts to land use and visual resources. Extensive industrial/commercial development, including potential nuclear development, would have the greatest change on the visual character of the property. Acceptable land uses would be based on applicable City of Oak Ridge zoning requirements and a project proponent's ability to obtain construction and operating permits and licenses.

ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES (described in Section 3.4 of the EA): Implementation of the Proposed Action would result in the permanent loss of habitat and noticeably alter the composition of habitat within SSP-2 but would not destabilize the existence of these communities off site. Site preparation activities for a proposed nuclear facility would remove 146 acres of forested land and alter the composition of approximately 2,650 feet of streams, 3,300 feet of wet weather conveyances, and 0.46 acres of wetlands, and industrial/commercial development would be allowed across the property.

USACE may issue a permit for the discharge of fill material into WOTUS associated with construction of a proposed nuclear facility. To maintain downstream hydrologic continuity and to prevent degradation of receiving streams, an engineered diversion system to capture and reroute upstream tributary flows around the proposed nuclear facility footprint would be implemented, if appropriate.

Based on consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, impacts to federally threatened and endangered bat species would be minimized with the enactment of all agreed upon measures in the *Conservation Strategy for Indiana and Northern Long-eared Bats in the State of Tennessee* and its 2026 Programmatic Biological Opinion. While the loss of habitat and other direct and indirect effects would occur via the Proposed Action, large tracts of unaffected habitats are present across the ORR that are able to support bats throughout their lifecycles. With the inclusion of mitigation and conservation measures, impacts to water resources and special status species would not be significant under implementation of the Proposed Action.

CULTURAL RESOURCES (described in Section 3.5 of the EA): Implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in adverse effects on National Register of Historic Place-eligible historic properties, as none are present within SSP-2. The only identified archeological sites (40RE650, 40RE651, and 40RE655) were determined as not eligible for the National

Register of Historic Places following completion of a phase II archeological survey. The Tennessee State Historic Preservation Officer has concurred with these findings for SSP-2.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS (described in Section 3.6 of the EA): Site clearing, grading, and contouring would alter the topography of SSP-2 under the Proposed Action, but the geologic formations underlying the site would not be adversely affected. Development for industrial/commercial uses would disturb soils; however, ground disturbance would be conducted incrementally to limit the potential for soil erosion. Construction projects that would disturb one acre or more of land would require a stormwater permit from the state under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. The permit process would require a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan for the site. The plan would include erosion, sediment, and stormwater management controls to minimize the potential for adverse impacts. Given the required permits and associated best management practices for industrial and commercial activities, no significant effects on geology and soils would occur as a result of the Proposed Action.

DETERMINATION: The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (Pub. L. 91-190, 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) defines a FONSI as a document produced by a federal agency briefly presenting the reasons why an action, not otherwise excluded, will not have a significant effect on the human environment, and therefore, would not require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This FONSI considers all information included in the EA and project record and raised in the NEPA process.

Based on the information and analysis in the EA, DOE has determined that the Proposed Action will not have a significant effect on the human environment in accordance with NEPA and the 2026 DOE Implementing Procedures. An EIS will not be prepared, concluding the NEPA process for the Proposed Action.

JUSTIN MARBLE

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John Zimmerman
Acting Associate Principal Deputy Assistant
Secretary for Regulatory and Policy Affairs

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY: The Final EA and this FONSI are available to the general public on the DOE NEPA web page (https://www.energy.gov/nepa/ doe-environmental-assessments).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information on this EA, contact NEPA Compliance Officer, Leah Alexander.

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