

DOE designated the Oak Ridge National Environmental Research Park (NERP) in 1980 as one of seven such research parks nationwide. Its objective was to provide protected lands for research and education, particularly to demonstrate the compatibility of energy technology development and a quality environment. The 20,000-acre Oak Ridge Research Park provides exceptional opportunities for research because of its established large-scale facilities, a security buffer that protects research, long-term records of environmental conditions, and partnerships with universities and industry. The Reservation also provides a land reserve for possible future research. Without this land reserve, the ORR would not have been a candidate site for new facilities such as the planned Spallation Neutron Source. Research opportunities related to the Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR), and international recognition as a Biosphere Reserve, attract researchers from all over the world to Oak Ridge. They have helped establish Oak Ridge as a national and world leader in research on global climate change, contaminant behavior in the environment, and other aspects of the relationship of both energy and nuclear weapons production with the environment.