

April 6, 2021

Dear Community Member,

As you know, the Department of Energy (DOE) has been evaluating the Oak Ridge Industrial Development Board (IDB) request for transfer of a portion of the Natural Areas at Horizon Center. I am writing to you today because you have communicated with DOE related to a Draft Environmental Assessment Addendum (EAA) that was prepared regarding possible impacts of changed land-use restrictions at the Horizon Center and related in part to a proposed Motor Sports Park at Horizon Center. Thank you for your valuable input.

After consideration of your comments as well as further review and assessment of available information and input from our subject matter experts, we have concluded that changing the land-use restrictions at Horizon Center for the proposed activity may pose a risk of potential significant impacts to the DOE natural areas and other conservation land holdings in close proximity. We have therefore paused preparation of the final EAA and determined that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is necessary to complete the encompassing review that is required to understand the full range of potential impacts to the environment and any potential mitigations. The EIS process provides a much more comprehensive examination and assessment of potential environmental impacts of a proposed action, as well as potential alternatives and mitigating actions. The EIS will also allow for further public participation throughout the course of its preparation.

The original Deed transferring the DOE land IDB owns at Horizon Center requires DOE to approve land-use changes. The Deed also requires the landowner to be responsible for expenses associated with mitigating actions in situations where activities cause or have the potential to cause a significant adverse impact to the sensitive zones in the Natural Areas on DOE's abutting land. In this case, IDB would be responsible for expenses associated with mitigation activities that are required, including, but not limited to expenses associated with the preparation of an EIS.

DOE has communicated this information to the IDB. At this time, pending potential further discussions with the IDB about preparation of an EIS should that entity desire to pursue that course of action, DOE is taking no further action regarding the IDB's request for conveyance of portions of the DOE-owned natural areas at Horizon Center.

Sincerely,

John C. Shewairy

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U.S. Department of Energy
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