



Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation

April 17, 2021

Get Informed DOE's Proposed "Environmental Management Disposal Facility" (EMDF) and Take Action

The Department of Energy (DOE) intends to build a new landfill (EMDF) on a greenfield site on the Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR) for disposal of radioactive and hazardous waste from ongoing cleanup. This landfill is classified as a remedial action under CERCLA (Superfund), which means it is not subject to local government authority or to the approval requirements of other environmental laws. The public's official opportunity for input ended over two years ago, but there are known to be serious problems with the DOE proposal and public voices may still be effective in getting DOE to reconsider its plans, or (more likely) getting the regulatory agencies that have a say in this (U.S. EPA and the Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation) to nix the plans or insist on major changes.

For several years, local government, environmental groups, and the public have been pressing DOE for information about topics including what wastes would be put in the landfill ("waste acceptance criteria"), the DOE analysis of comparative costs and jobs for onsite versus offsite disposal, the environmental regulations that DOE wants to have waived, and how DOE expects to immobilize the mercury waste it intends to put in the landfill, but DOE has not answered. Background information about this situation can be found at <https://aforr.info/hazardous-waste-landfill-emdf/>.

The Oak Ridge City Council will meet with DOE and TDEC representatives to discuss the proposed EMDF landfill during the City Council work session at 6 PM on April 20 – see [agenda](#). This is an in-person meeting in the Oak Ridge Municipal Courtroom; we do not know yet whether it will be broadcast on the City's [live stream](#).

DOE personnel also are scheduled to give a presentation about EMDF during the public meeting of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (OR SSAB) meeting on May 12, with more detail during the Environmental Management/Stewardship Committee meeting on May 26. OR SSAB is a federally appointed citizens' panel chartered to provide independent advice and recommendations to DOE's Oak Ridge Office of Environmental Management (OREM). DOE asks members of the public to request invitations to these virtual meetings via email to orssab@orem.doe.gov by no later than 5 p.m. on the Thursday before each meeting. Note that the SSAB is generally uncritical of OREM and has been on record as supporting the EMDF

proposal for about a decade, largely because they were told that it is needed to assure continued cleanup of contaminated properties in Oak Ridge. Still, the SSAB presentations and discussions may be informative.

Concerns about the EMDF should be submitted to Jay Mullis (DOE: Jay.Mullis@orem.doe.gov), Colby Morgan (TDEC: Colby.Morgan@tn.gov), Connie Jones (US EPA: jones.constance@epa.gov), and elected officials.

Success Story regarding Motorsports Complex in Oak Ridge

On April 6, 2021, DOE formally determined that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would be required for the motorsports park proposed to be located at the Horizon Center in Oak Ridge. Furthermore, DOE made clear that the federal government could not pay for preparing an EIS for this private development. After DOE's position was clarified, the prospective developer of the motorsports complex announced that he would move his proposed project to some other location.

The many letters sent by members of AFORR and other organizations were helpful in pointing out concerns about the project. Please send a thank you to John Shewairy (john.shewairy@science.doe.gov) for DOE's assertive role in protecting the Natural Areas in the Horizon Center and the Black Oak Ridge Conservation Easement (BORCE). DOE has done the right thing in recognizing its responsibility to heed the agreement made decades ago in the original land transfer contract for the Horizon Center. In your communication to DOE, be sure to copy the Trustees of the BORCE: the US Fish and Wildlife Service (steven_alexander@fws.gov), Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (Debbie.Duren@tn.gov), and the Tennessee Valley Authority (fbedmondson@tva.gov).

Manhattan Project National Historical Park Stakeholder Engagement Community Meetings

The National Park Service wants to hear from the public as ~~they~~**we** prepare an interpretive plan for future programming, exhibits, and media at Manhattan Project National Historical Park that will capture a wide array of experiences and perspectives. The Oak Ridge Community meeting is Thursday, April 22, 5:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. Individuals interested in attending can register via the following link: <https://www.nps.gov/mapr/getinvolved/stakeholder-engagement-project-2021.htm>

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