

ADVOCATES FOR THE OAK RIDGE RESERVATION

136 West Kevare Circle, Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830

www.discoveret.org/aforr/

Congressman John Duncan
U.S. House of Representatives
800 Market Street, Suite 110
Knoxville, Tn 37902

Dear Congressman Duncan,

The Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation (AFORR) is a 501(c)3 community organization in the Oak Ridge Tennessee area whose purpose is to ensure the protection and full public use of the unique and valuable Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR), a Department of Energy property encompassing three major DOE facilities near Oak Ridge. The Three Bend Area of the ORR can be considered the crown jewel of the Reservation in terms of opportunities for recreation, conservation, education and research. In 1999 the Secretary of Energy dedicated the Area to conservation and the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency now manages the Area under continuing five-year agreements. However, there is continuing pressure to develop the Areas for commercial or residential use.

At the Annual AFORR meeting in January 2006, Gerald Boyd of the Department of Energy stated that DOE would consider alternative uses for the Three Bend area on the ORR if presented with a consensus community proposal. Since then, the AFORR Board has been very active. In May of this year, AFORR organized an environmental stakeholders meeting in Oak Ridge with invited participants from across the State to share perspectives on the Areas and its potential future. That meeting resulted in confirmation of the environmental importance of the Three Bends resource, identification of the unique features of the Bends, and outlined potential future uses and issues. The group recommended that AFORR set out immediately to define a Vision for the Three Bends to serve as a baseline for future discussions.

Following a formal strategic visioning effort held in June, the AFORR Board of Directors has developed and approved a Draft Vision Statement for the Three Bend Area of the Oak Ridge Reservation. That Draft Vision Statement is attached for your review and comment. As defined in that Vision, AFORR sees the best use of the Three Bends resource as a World Class Center for Habitat/Wildlife Protection, Science Education, and Environmental Research. Such a concept combines recreation and conservation values with economic development in a way that would enhance the value of this unique resource located at the entrance to the Oak Ridge area.

We welcome any feedback you have on the AFORR approach to the Three Bends evaluation and vision. This is an important issue for the East Tennessee region, one which we wanted you to be aware of as you continue to represent our area in Washington.

Sincerely,


Tim Myrick
AFORR Board Member

Aug 15, 2006