

ADVOCATES FOR THE OAK RIDGE RESERVATION

136 West Revere Circle, Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830

www.aforr.org/

NEWSLETTER – March 2008

AFORR Members' Meeting, April 17, 2008

The next AFORR members' meeting will be held on the evening of April 17, 2008, 7:00PM at the Wildcat Den. The featured speaker at the meeting will be Lara Sousa, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Tennessee. Her presentation title is: "Plant invasions in old fields: from local communities to the landscape". Ms. Sousa holds BS and MS degrees from Appalachian State University (Communication and Biology, respectively). Her presentation will include graduate research work she has conducted within the Three Bend Conservation Area of the Oak Ridge Reservation.

We will also discuss anticipated Oak Ridge Reservation land use issues and potential land transfer conflicts.

Early Spring Hike

Bill Johnston will lead a hike on April 13 on a new trail segment in the Black Oak Ridge Conservation Easement which traverses the crest of McKinney Ridge. Plan to meet at the Rt. 95 entrance to the North Boundary Trail at 1:00 PM on March 22. The hike will total approximately 2 miles and include part of the Wheat Greenway Trail, the new McKinney Ridge Trail, and return to the parking area at Rt. 95 via the North Boundary Trail. AFORR members Warren and Carol Devine and Bill Johnston have recently been working with Larry Creech and Lois Martin (Greenways Oak Ridge) and Jim Evans (TWRA) to create a hiking trail that will branch from the Wheat Greenway Trail at the big gulley and wind its way across McKinney Ridge for approximately 1 mile and intersect the North Boundary Trail approximately 0.25 mile from the East Fork bridge, and approximately 0.75 mile parking area at the gate at Rt. 95. The trail will also be suitable for mountain bikes, but some long grades will deter all but the most hardy bikers. The trail has not been completely constructed, so there will be some rough spots during this initial hike. The hike should be considered moderate in difficulty, due to long grades and rough trail surface. Wear sturdy boots and bring insect repellent (the ticks are already out). Contact Bill Johnston: 482-7663
bill.johnston22@comcast.net

3 Bend Conservation Area

The Three Bend Conservation Area continues to be of great interest to AFORR. We are pleased to report that the scientific value of this ecosystem for climate change studies is now well documented and is a part of the vision of Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) to continue its leadership in climate change research. In May, ORNL will host a visit from staff of the National Environmental Observation Network (NEON) and provide an overview of the planned activities that ORNL will do as a future NEON site. Part of these activities will include educational initiatives that may involve the Three Bends Area.

News Concerning the Breeder Site

Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation and Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning (TCWP played the lead role) developed detailed recommendations for the Breeder Reactor site, as part of TVA's request for comments on the Watts Bar Land Use Plan. TCWP sent separate letters to the TVA VP of Economic Development John Bradley and TVA Board member Susan Williams. We also commented on the site map that TVA provided. More recently, TCWP President Jimmy Groton, Frank Hensley and TCWP Executive Director Sandra Goss, met with TVA Project Manager Erin Prichard to discuss the Breeder Reactor Site. (Continued on next page)

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Susan Williams toured the site, along with staff, and heard our recommendations and viewed the map we submitted detailing our recommendations.

TVA listened to our comments and addressed our concerns.

In the preferred alternative, 758 acres of the Breeder site will be allocated to TVA Project Operations (termed Zone 2). TVA has proposed the addition of approximately 110 acres of riparian land to the Sensitive Resource Management classification (termed Zone 3) along the river, as we requested. With this 110 acres and the originally proposed 62 acres of riparian land, the entire 4.3 miles of shore line will be preserved as Sensitive Resource Management land (Zone 3). In addition, the Grassy Creek Habitat (265 acres) is also allotted to Zone 3, making a total of 437 acres of Zone 3 land.

TVA is planning to conduct a study in the coming year to determine if the site will be useful for a power generating facility.

The land use issues may not be completely settled. All final decisions on the plan's zone allocations will be made by the TVA Board. The EIS will likely be released this summer, after which there will be a 30 day waiting period before the board finalizes TVA's decision.

Organization News

Since our last election for AFORR officers at the November 16, 2006 meeting, JoAnn Thompson has resigned from the Board, and Becky Van Dyke has relinquished her duties as Board Secretary, although she remains as an at large Board member. Current officers and board members are:

Virginia Dale, President;
Ellen Smith, Vice President;
Becky Van Dyke at-large Board member
Frank Hensley, Treasurer (also represents TCWP)
Bill Johnston, at-large Board member
Tim Myrick, representative for The Nature Conservancy, Tennessee Chapter
Wolf Naegeli, representative for Foundation for Global Sustainability
Bill Schramm, at-large Board member
Lorene Sigal, at-large Board member

ED-3 and Horizon Center, Area 4

If you read the Oak Ridger, you know that CROET is attempting to take possession of ED-3 property along the south side of Rt. 58, across from K-25, and they may have a buyer for the Horizon Center. AFORR has historically opposed transfer of undeveloped land for industrial development while large acreage of previously developed land is available. We also oppose CROET's sale of Area 4 of the Horizon Center because that is an isolated parcel that will require the North Boundary Trail to be converted to an industrial access road, and another bridge across Bear Creek. We are assessing our options for opposing both transfers. More information should be available by the time of our meeting on April 17.

Please Join AFORR or Renew Your Support

Name _____

Address _____

Phone - Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

Membership level: ___ Individual (\$15/yr) ___ Family (2+ at same address) (\$20/yr)

___ Supporting (\$50/yr) ___ Additional contribution

Ways that you want to assist AFORR:

- ___ Trail development and maintenance
___ Communications (web sites, newsletters and mailing lists)
___ Educational outreach (planning hikes and presentations)
___ Proposal development and fund raising

Mail to AFORR, 136 West Revere Circle, Oak Ridge, TN 37830