

Public land (including old growth forest) at risk on Oak Ridge Reservation

There are rumors that the Department of Energy in Oak Ridge has committed to transfer a 900-acre tract of the Oak Ridge Reservation, known as “Self-Sufficiency Parcel 2” (SSP-2), to a local government or economic development entity for economic development, and that the receiving entity intends to convey the entire tract to a single entity for an industrial project that would use a fraction (less than half) of the land area.

This news is extremely disturbing. Below are specific concerns:

- The proposed transfer of such a large tract of U.S. public land to a private interest should have been publicly reviewed with an environmental document.
- The use of the land should be considered in a local comprehensive land-use plan.
- An outside corporation should not be given permanent control of a large piece of the City of Oak Ridge when the land area greatly exceeds the needs of their proposed project. Unlike the adjacent counties that have large rural areas potentially suitable for development, Oak Ridge has very little land that is both available and suitable for development.
- SSP-2 includes a tract of forest land that has been identified as “old growth forest” (meaning there is no evidence that humans ever logged it) and should be preserved as a site for research and educational visitation, as well as a source of community pride. The unique features of this forest are described at https://www.nerp.ornl.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/old_growth_forest_biobrief.pdf

Please communicate with the officials listed below and ask that they use their authority or position to help ensure that any transfer of SSP-2 land is limited to the area that the prospective tenant is reasonably expected to need, and that the old growth forest is protected. Furthermore, please ask that that future actions related to this area are appropriately addressed in local land-use planning.

Communications should go to the following:

- DOE OREM: Jay Mullis (head of OREM); Jay.Mullis@orem.doe.gov
- DOE OREM: Erin Sutton (reindustrialization manager) erin.sutton@orem.doe.gov
- Wade Creswell, Roane County Executive: wade.creswell@roanecountytn.gov
200 East Race Street, Suite 1 P.O. Box 643 Kingston, TN 37763
- Randy Hemann, Oak Ridge City Manager (rhemann@oakridgetn.gov)
200 South Tulane Avenue, Municipal Building, Oak Ridge, TN 37830
- Oak Ridge Industrial Development Board: sroyster@oridb.net (Samantha Royster; **ask her to distribute message to Board members**)
- Roane County Industrial Development Board: chairman is Jim Palmer, palmer-jr@comcast.net (**ask him to distribute to Board members**)

Oak Ridge Industrial Development Board, 1400 Oak Ridge Tpke, Oak Ridge, TN 37830

- Roane Alliance: jsnow@roanealliance.org – this is the president Justin Snow (**ask him to distribute to other alliance members**).

The Roane Alliance, 1209 N. Kentucky St., Kingston, TN 37763

- Oak Ridge City Council (council@oakridgetn.gov -- this address includes Mayor Gooch)

City of Oak Ridge, 200 S. Tulane Ave., Oak Ridge, TN 37830

- Lt. Governor Randy McNally: lt.gov.randy.mcnally@capitol.tn.gov
425 5th Ave. N, Nashville, TN 37243

- State Senator Ken Yager: sen.ken.yager@capitol.tn.gov

425 Rep. John Lewis Way North, Cordell Hull Building, Suite 704, Nashville, TN 37243

- Terry Frank, Anderson County Mayor: tfrank@andersoncountyttn.gov
100 N Main Street, Room 208 | Clinton, TN 37716-3617