

# Advocate

A publication of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board – a federally appointed citizens panel providing independent recommendations and advice to DOE’s Environmental Management Program

## Annual Meeting Recaps Successes of FY 2017, Sets Stage for Productive Year Ahead with Input from DOE, TDEC, EPA Partners

Clean water, restored land and safe waste disposal were top priorities from every voice at the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board’s (ORSSAB) Annual Planning Meeting in Townsend, Tenn. on August 19.

The yearly event brought together members of the board, leadership from DOE’s Oak Ridge Office of Environmental Management (OREM), and partners from the Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation (TDEC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The state and federal agencies presented their suggested topics for the Oak Ridge board to address in the coming fiscal year, which runs from October 2017 to September 2018.

Jay Mullis, acting manager for OREM, led the slate of presenters with his overview of the mission, vision and goals of OREM’s cleanup program in Oak Ridge and went on to lay out the organization’s near-term priorities. Foremost among those goals is “Vision 2020,” which includes cleaning up the remaining portion of the East Tennessee Technology Park



*David Adler presents DOE’s suggested board topics for fiscal year 2018 to attendees at the ORSSAB Annual Meeting in Townsend, Tenn. on August 19.*

(ETTP) and returning the site to the community as an economically beneficial industrial park. While the majority of the work focused on cleanup, on the eve of Oak Ridge’s 75th Anniversary, the importance

of documenting and preserving the historical significance of DOE sites as part of the cleanup process was also emphasized.

“Over the next few years, the EM program will see a number of positive changes,” he said. “Early-start construction of the Mercury Treatment Facility could begin before the end of 2017, groundbreaking to fulfill the program’s historic preservation commitments for K-25 should occur over the next two years, and the program will safely close the current waste disposal site and shift to a new waste facility, which is now in the site selection stage.”

*(See Annual Meeting on page 2)*

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### IN THIS ISSUE

### STAFF

FY 2017 at a Glance . . . . .	3
Reservation Update. . . . .	4
Recent Recommendations. . . . .	6
New Members. . . . .	7
Officer Elections . . . . .	8

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## Annual Meeting

*(Continued from page 1)*

The completion of Vision 2020 means the EM program will make a major transition from cleaning up ETTP to beginning similar operations at the Y-12 National Security Complex (Y-12).

Cleanup efforts there are part of Vision 2024, which will address the risks of mercury contamination from the site.

Using priorities like those shared by Mullis, DOE creates a schedule of meetings and presentations for members of ORSSAB so board members can make informed recommendations on key topics, which is the board's primary role in providing public input to DOE. However, partner agencies are also invited to offer topic suggestions to be considered, as are board members themselves.

### Work Ahead

DOE, TDEC and EPA each provided suggested topics this year and were in agreement on the most pressing environmental issues for the board:

- Evaluation of ongoing groundwater efforts;
- Disposition of excess contaminated facilities; and
- Ensuring sufficient waste disposal capacity.

DOE's Dave Adler covered the importance of the board's input on reuse and historic preservation activities at ETTP. He also reviewed feedback from the board on the EM program's budget priorities for FY 2019 and encouraged members to start thinking about FY 2020 priorities.

Kristof Czartoryski, the board's liaison from TDEC, specifically asked the board to consider processing of transuranic waste (TRU) and the need for funding the TRU Sludge Processing Facility – something DOE representatives said is 10 years to 15 years away from construction. A key



*Jenny Freeman, Bonnie Shoemaker, Leon Baker and Ed Trujillo chat during a break in the annual meeting proceedings.*

for TDEC is the need to safely dispose of waste where it cannot escape, Czartoryski said, and noted several specific locations that need to be addressed. He said TDEC also praised the ongoing groundwater assessments as "one of the most successful remediation projects" and hopes for continued board input on future groundwater work.

Connie Jones, EPA's liaison to the board, presented suggestions exclusively around ongoing groundwater projects and future strategy for groundwater protection. She stressed community concerns about groundwater migration and advocated for several groundwater projects to be accelerated.

In the coming year, EPA would like the board to assist with looking at sites and recommending completion options, she said.


### From the Board

As discussion moved to board business, Belinda Price, the board's chair, reflected on the board's success over the past fiscal year.

- The board submitted four recommendations to DOE this

- year, one more than in FY 2016.
- The board voted to approve two recommendations developed by the EM Site Specific Advisory Board, the national umbrella organization for all of DOE's local advisory boards, during the Spring 2017 Chairs Meeting in Paducah, Ky.
- Local board members participated in numerous community and national events.

Members, including the five attending new members, were particularly invested in serving on issue groups in the coming year. New members were eager to join the board's work and this renewed current members' commitment to mentoring their colleagues.

The board's work plan for FY 2018 will be approved in October. The next board meeting will be Wednesday, October 11. 



## A Varied Approach Makes FY 2017 a Productive Year for ORSSAB

The work plan developed at the August annual meeting establishes the topics ORSSAB will focus on the coming year and guides the board in developing recommendations to DOE.

In FY 2017 the board continued a plan established two years earlier to get members more engaged in work plan topics by having meetings at different locations, taking field trips, and assuring that meeting presentations were focused only on EM issues where decisions are to be made and ORSSAB input is requested by DOE, and spending less time on project updates.

FY 2017 topics included excess contaminated facilities, ongoing groundwater efforts, waste disposal capacity, key material disposition, and budget priorities. Several topics inspired board recommendations and some fun tour opportunities.

### Special Events & Site Tours

Board members participated in a variety of special events and site tours in FY 2017. The site tours, in particular, were popular with members because they offered a first-hand view of the EM cleanup projects that members had been discussing in meetings. The year's events included:

- Tour of the Transuranic Waste Processing Center, October 19, 2016;
- Tour of excess contaminated facilities at Y-12 and Oak Ridge National Laboratory, November 28, 2016;
- Tour of groundwater contamination sites at ETTP and Oak Ridge National Laboratory, January 23, 2017;
- Tour of Oak Ridge Reservation waste disposal facilities and proposed siting for the EM Disposal Facility, February 21, 2017;
- Dinner meeting at the Olive Garden Restaurant, September 13, 2017; and

- Participation in the EM Community Workshop, April 12, 2017.

### Travel

Several SSAB members took time out from their schedules to attend DOE EM-related meetings that broadened their perspective on the board's mission. These trips included:

- Waste Management Symposium, March 5-9, in Phoenix, Ariz.;
- 2017 Spring Chairs Meeting, May 9-11, in Paducah, Ky.; and
- DOE National Cleanup Workshop, September 13-14, in Alexandria, Va.



*ORSSAB members at the Spring SSAB Chairs Meeting, from right to left: Dennis Wilson, Belinda Price, Dave Hemelright.*

### Historic Preservation

ORSSAB has a long history of involvement in historic preservation, beginning with its "Recommendation to DOE on Historic Preservation of the K-25 Building at East Tennessee Technology Park" in 2008. In FY 2017 ORSSAB provided a liaison to the Consulting Parties to the Memorandum of Agreement for the Interpretation of the East Tennessee Technology Park and provided comments on the Preliminary Design Documents for East Tennessee Technology Park Site Interpretation and K-25 Historic Preservation.

### EMAB Meets Oak Ridge

The EM Advisory Board (EMAB) held a two-day public meeting in Oak Ridge in April to discuss excess facilities and potential infrastructure opportunities.

EMAB is similar to ORSSAB, but it provides advice and recommendations directly to the DOE Assistant Secretary for EM. ORSSAB Chair Belinda Price participated in the meeting

### Public Outreach

The board completed a number of public outreach goals this year in its continuing mission to inform and involve the public in the EM decision-making process. The board issued three news releases, four Advocate newsletters, and its annual report. Board meetings were filmed and broadcast on local cable stations. Regular posts were made about board meetings, events, and videos on Facebook and YouTube, and significant upgrades were made to the board's Facebook presence.

### Membership

Six members left the board this year, either for personal reasons or because they had reached the six-year term limit imposed by ORSSAB bylaws. Departing were: Mike Ford, Dave Hemelright, Howard Holmes, Greg Paulus, Elizabeth Ross, and Mary Smalling.

Taking their spots on the ORSSAB roster were six new members, whose appointments began on July 1, 2017, (*see story on Page 7*).

The board also said farewell this year to student representatives Lara Manning, from Oak Ridge High School, and Gabrielle McAllister, from Hardin Valley Academy. Their one-year terms expired in April. In May, ORSSAB welcomed their replacements: Chloe Nussbaum, from Oak Ridge High School, and Cameron Niemeyer, from Hardin Valley Academy.

## Reservation Update



*A rendering of the planned Mercury Treatment Facility at Y-12 in Oak Ridge.*

### Contract Awarded for Site Work at Mercury Treatment Facility

GEM Technologies of Knoxville will perform limited demolition of existing abandoned utilities and the extension of new utilities at the future site of the Outfall 200 Mercury Treatment Facility at Y-12 under a \$1.4 million contract awarded by URS | CH2M Oak Ridge (UCOR) in September.

Work is expected to begin in late November with completion planned for fall 2018. Construction of the treatment facility is scheduled to start in late 2018. It will be in place before demolition and cleanup of facilities begins at Y-12 to minimize the amounts of mercury released by those operations.

The plant is expected to reduce mercury in water leaving Y-12 through Upper East Fork Poplar Creek by about 84 percent.

### Oak Ridge Sends First TRU Waste Shipment Since 2014

Oak Ridge's Transuranic Waste Processing Center in August made its first shipment to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico since a string of accidents shut down the WIPP facility in 2014. Transuranic waste (TRU), consists of materials and

debris contaminated with elements with a higher atomic mass and listed after uranium on the periodic table.

Resuming shipments from Oak Ridge has been a priority due to the large amount of stored waste waiting for disposal, DOE officials said.

The majority of Oak Ridge's inventory comes from previous research and isotope production at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL). DOE representatives said they expect to make multiple shipments per month from Oak Ridge.

### UCOR Partner CH2M Being Acquired by Jacobs for \$3.27B

CH2M, one of two firms that make up UCOR, the Department of Energy's environmental cleanup contractor in Oak Ridge, has been bought by Jacobs Engineering Group for \$3.27 billion. Jacobs, based in Dallas, Texas, also has an office in Oak Ridge.

The combination of CH2M's advanced design, technical and program management expertise with Jacobs' global footprint will enable the company to deliver more solutions to more clients in both the government and private sector, the companies said.

The deal, announced in August, is expected to close by the end of the year.

### CTI and Associates Finishes Cleanup at K-732 Switchyard

Workers from CTI and Associates in July removed and disposed of components from the K-732 Switchyard at ETTP.

The contractor removed extensive electrical infrastructure and equipment and remediated the soil for the \$3.8 million project.

The site is now available for transfer from government ownership to the community for reuse. It's the latest step in transforming the former uranium site into a private industrial park.

### Demolition of Poplar Creek Facilities at ETTP Underway

Crews in July demolished two of the 23 buildings and structures that make up the Poplar Creek facilities: the K-832-H Cooling Tower and the K-832 Cooling Water Pumphouse.

The buildings are some of the most contaminated facilities remaining at the site, according to DOE, and are a significant milestone in the transformation of the East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP).

A new phase of building demolition work at the site began in September.

### Pro2Serve Receives 5-year, \$49M Contract for Oak Ridge Cleanup

In June, DOE announced Professional Project Services (Pro2Serve) of Oak Ridge, Tenn. was the winner of a contract to provide technical support services for OREM.

The company, which already offers services to the EM program locally, is responsible for reviewing and evaluating the cost, schedule, and technical approach for cleanup projects. It will also assist with engineering, project planning, project management, cost estimating, and schedule and cost analysis. The five-year contract has a maximum value of \$49 million.



## New Senior Advisor Tours Cleanup Sites Across Nation

Roger Jarrell has joined DOE headquarters as senior advisor to the secretary of energy for EM.

This summer, Jarrell visited EM sites across the country, including Oak Ridge. Over two days, he met with employees, contractors, and other stakeholders to better understand the ongoing projects and partnerships at the site. It also provided an opportunity for OREM and its partners to learn more about the Administration's vision and priorities for the cleanup mission.

Jarrell has a background in energy law, has worked as a civil litigator, and served as a political consultant.



*Senior Advisor Roger Jarrell (second from left) tours the TRU Waste Processing Center during his tour of Oak Ridge in July 2017.*

## Eclipse Event Marks Cleanup Progress at Technology Park

Nearly 1,000 people came to a public event at ETTP to watch the August 21 solar eclipse, according to the National Park Service. The "All-American Total Solar Eclipse" public viewing, made possible by a partnership of OREM, its cleanup contractor UCOR, the Community Reuse Organization of East Tennessee, and the National Park Service was the first major public event at ETTP since cleanup operations began.

*Visitors attend the "All-American Total Solar Eclipse" public viewing at ETTP's Heritage Center in August. The event was hosted by the National Park Service for the Manhattan National Park.*



## Owendoff Serves Double Duty for EM After Promotion

James Owendoff has been named principal deputy assistant secretary in the Office of Environmental Management. He will also serve as the acting assistant secretary for EM until a presidential nominee is submitted and confirmed. He was previously senior advisor to the assistant secretary. As one of his first actions, Owendoff initiated a program review to identify opportunities to improve the waste cleanup program. 🌱



## Join Us for an Update on Progress Made Toward Vision 2020

**6 p.m. Wednesday, October 11**

**DOE Information Center  
1 Science.gov Way  
Oak Ridge, TN 37831**

Vision 2020 is the Oak Ridge EM program's goal to complete all cleanup at ETTP and transfer the site to the private sector by 2020 for industrial development.

The current work involves Poplar Creek Facilities, and more are planned through the next two years.

EM will also complete historic preservation projects to commemorate the historic achievements of the men and women at the former K-25 site.

Questions? Call the ORSSAB office at (865) 241-4583 or (865) 241-4584

## Recent ORSSAB Recommendations

Following is a summary of the recommendation ORSSAB approved at its August 2017 meeting and voted to send to OREM for consideration. The full text of the recommendation is available at [www.energy.gov/orssab](http://www.energy.gov/orssab).

### Recommendations on the FY 2019 OREM Budget Priorities

In April, the Oak Ridge EM program held its annual Community Budget Workshop to discuss the FY 2019 budget formulation as part of the larger process by headquarters to submit a final budget request to the president. Each year the program develops its funding request for the fiscal year two

years beyond the current fiscal year.

ORSSAB focused on general cleanup priorities identified at the Community Budget Workshop to create its recommendations for the FY 2019 Oak Ridge EM budget. These priorities are associated with general program “visions,” including one that is finished:

Vision 2016 - Complete demolition and removal of all five gaseous diffusion buildings at ETTP.

Vision 2020 - Clean up remaining facilities at ETTP and prepare the land for reindustrialization.

Vision 2024 - Transition resources from ETTP and expand cleanup work to Y-12 to address mercury contamination.

Project-specific objectives spelled out in the Community Budget Workshop provided additional details for discussions by the board’s EM and Stewardship Committee.

### Recommendations

From its study, ORSSAB identified five priorities for Oak Ridge Reservation cleanup and recommended full funding for these projects as well as suggesting they be prioritized for any future excess funds.

#### Offsite Groundwater Monitoring.

- Assessment of offsite groundwater quality and public health impacts
- Evaluation of potential offsite plume migration pathways
- Continued monitoring of offsite groundwater
- Future Waste Disposal Capacity.
- Plan for sufficient capacity at a proposed new onsite disposal facility
- Maintain a trust fund for long-term stewardship of future onsite disposal facilities


#### Excess Facilities Disposition.

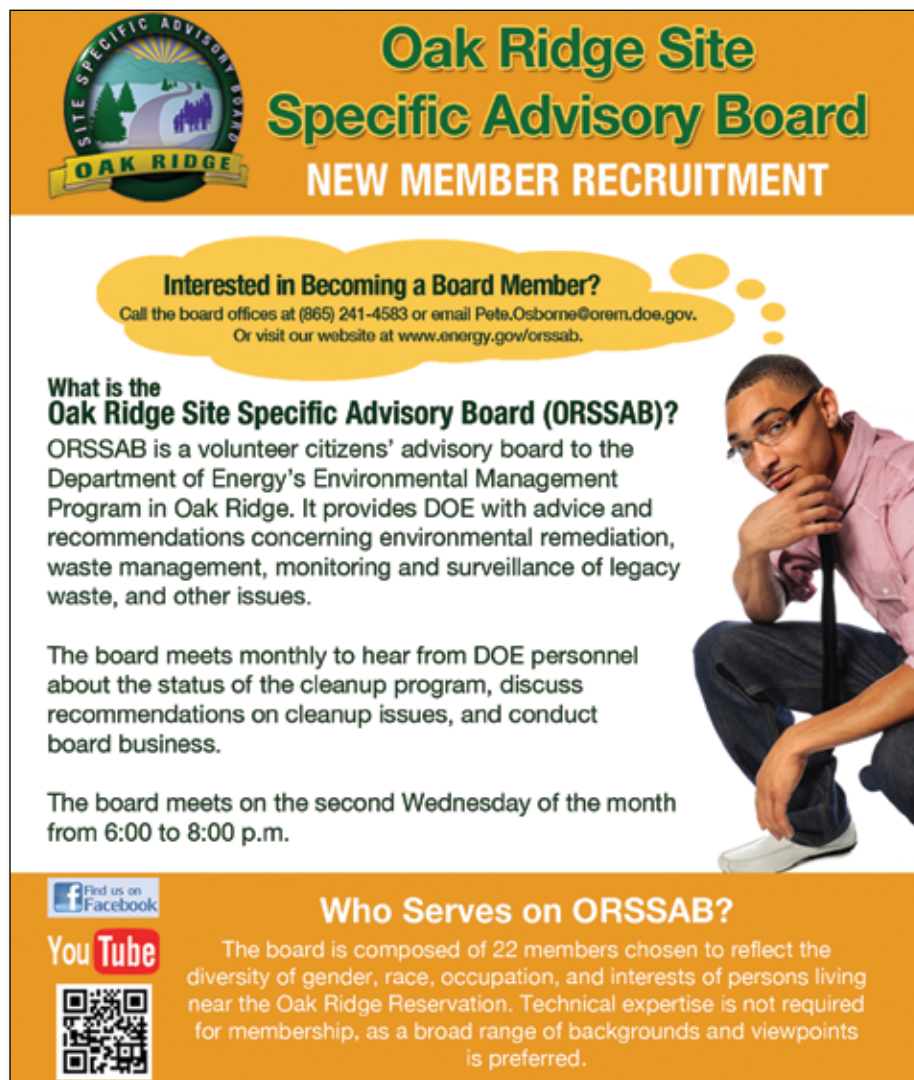
- Continue planning and implementing of upfront activities
- Removal/decontamination of equipment not grossly contaminated
- Developing an access plan to establish safe means for access and egress from facilities under consideration

#### Mercury in East Fork Poplar Creek.

- Continue technology development to support the Mercury Cleanup Strategy
- Continue mitigation of mercury methylation in East Fork Poplar Creek

#### Residual Debris at ETTP.

- Plan and implement cleanup of remaining debris, trash, and unwanted items left over from EM cleanup at ETTP for uncomplicated transfers to potential tenants. 



**Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board**  
**NEW MEMBER RECRUITMENT**


**Interested in Becoming a Board Member?**  
Call the board offices at (865) 241-4583 or email [Pete.Osborne@orem.doe.gov](mailto:Pete.Osborne@orem.doe.gov).  
Or visit our website at [www.energy.gov/orssab](http://www.energy.gov/orssab).

**What is the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB)?**  
ORSSAB is a volunteer citizens’ advisory board to the Department of Energy’s Environmental Management Program in Oak Ridge. It provides DOE with advice and recommendations concerning environmental remediation, waste management, monitoring and surveillance of legacy waste, and other issues.

The board meets monthly to hear from DOE personnel about the status of the cleanup program, discuss recommendations on cleanup issues, and conduct board business.

The board meets on the second Wednesday of the month from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

**Who Serves on ORSSAB?**  
The board is composed of 22 members chosen to reflect the diversity of gender, race, occupation, and interests of persons living near the Oak Ridge Reservation. Technical expertise is not required for membership, as a broad range of backgrounds and viewpoints is preferred.

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YouTube  




## DOE Approves Six New Board Members



*New ORSSAB members Leon Shields, Bonnie Shoemaker, John Tapp, David Branch and Tara Walker participated in the board's annual meeting in Townsend, Tenn. Michelle Lohmann was unable to attend.*

ORSSAB welcomes six new members to its roster for FY 2018. The new members bring a diverse set of backgrounds and experiences to the board, but all share a commitment to cleaning up the Oak Ridge Reservation and improving the local area.

The new members have been active in preparing for their responsibilities. Five members attended the annual meeting in August, and all have participated in tours of federal facilities.

**David Branch** retired in 2013 from a 20-year career as a rural letter carrier for the U.S. Postal Service. He was previously employed in the health care field and studied nursing at Walter State Community College in Morristown. He lives in Knoxville.

**Michelle Lohmann** is a human resources director for U.S. Cellular. Previously she was the program manager for the University Recruiting and Graduate Education Programs for ORNL in collaboration with the University of Tennessee.

She supports several local and national nonprofits in her spare time and is a resident of Lenoir City.

**Leon Shields** is the supervisor for field operations at Lenoir City Utilities Board where he has worked for more than 20 years. He also owns Instructional Concepts, which provides a variety of specialized safety training to individuals and organizations.

In addition to serving on ORSSAB, Shields is Chairman of the Lenoir City Planning Commission/Board of Zoning Appeals, and is a commissioner on several other boards as well as a member of a number of civic groups. Leon lives in Lenoir City.

**Bonnie Shoemaker** retired in 2008 after 34 years working for DOE at ETTP and ORNL in a variety of capacities, including chemical laboratory analyst, environmental compliance specialist, plant shift superintendent, and others. She received two awards for operations and technical support in environmental compliance and emergency management. Bonnie has a bachelor's in biology from the University of Tennessee and lives in Clinton.

**John Tapp** is a retired civil/environmental engineer. He began his

career in the federal government as a commissioned officer in the Public Health Service and the EPA. He also co-founded a Kentucky environmental and engineering consulting firm and has managed a municipal water, wastewater and stormwater utility along with statewide water and wastewater planning for the Kentucky Infrastructure Authority.

He has a doctorate in engineering from the University of Kentucky. John has served on the board of several civic and professional organizations. He lives in Powell.

**Tara Walker** graduated with an associate's degree in 2016 from Pellissippi State Community College and is pursuing a bachelor's in chemical engineering from Tennessee Technological University. She is an assistant teacher at Starting Points Day Care in Knoxville and has served as a supplemental instructor at Pellissippi State and an intern at ORNL. She has volunteered as a Tennessee Promise Mentor to incoming freshmen and a Tennessee Achieves ambassador, among others. Tara lives in Knoxville. 🍃

## Board Elects Officers for FY 2018

Board members in September elected three new officers to serve in the coming 2018 fiscal year.



*Dennis Wilson*

**Dennis Wilson** was elected board chair. He previously served as the board's vice chair and has been a member since 2015. Wilson is a retired technology manager from JohnsonDiversey Products (now Sealed Air). Most of his career was spent in technology and intellectual property management. He also received seven patents during work as a resin and polymer chemist.



*Belinda Price*

**Belinda Price** was elected board vice chair. She previously served two consecutive terms as chair of the board and has represented ORSSAB at a number of public and industry events. She joined the board in 2013 and has more than 30 years of experience in environmental investigation and environmental remediation as a geologist, hydrogeologist, and project manager. She currently works as a senior hydrogeologist with Alliant Corp.



*Richard Burroughs*

**Richard Burroughs** was elected board secretary, filling a post left vacant by the retirement of David Hemelright in July. Burroughs has been a member of the board since 2015. This is his first executive position with the board. He works in Anderson County government and has a background as a registered professional geologist with hydrogeological expertise in aquifer characterizations and remediation in soil and groundwater environments. 



### Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

P.O. Box 2001, EM-90  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831  
[www.energy.gov/ORSSAB](http://www.energy.gov/ORSSAB)

#### UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are held at 6 p.m. in the DOE Information Center, 1 Science.gov Way, Oak Ridge, TN, unless noted otherwise.

**ORSSAB Board:** Wednesday, October 11

**EM & Stewardship Committee:** Wednesday, October 25

#### ABBREVIATIONS

DOE — Department of Energy  
EM — Environmental Management  
EPA — Environmental Protection Agency  
ETTP — East Tennessee Technology Park  
OREM — Oak Ridge Environmental Management  
ORNL — Oak Ridge National Laboratory  
ORSSAB — Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board  
TDEC — Tennessee Dept. of Environment & Conservation  
TRU — Transuranic Waste  
UCOR — URS | CH2M Oak Ridge  
WIPP — Waste Isolation Pilot Plant  
Y-12 — Y-12 National Security Complex

