



**Public Outreach Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, May 21, 2013, 5:30 p.m.  
DOE Information Center**

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**Members Present**

Alfreda Cook  
Dave Hemelright  
Howard Holmes  
Jan Lyons  
Scott McKinney, Chair

**Absent**

Jan Hart, Vice Chair  
Scott Stout

**Others Present**

Dave Adler, DOE  
Sally Brown, RSI  
Pete Osborne, ORSSAB support office  
John Owsley, Tennessee Department of Environment  
and Conservation (TDEC)  
Corkie Staley, ORSSAB  
Ben Williams, DOE

**DOE and TDEC Signage Responsibilities**

Mr. McKinney thanked Mr. Adler and Mr. Owsley for meeting with the committee to discuss stream postings. The Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency will be asked to come to a future committee meeting, he said, to discuss their stream posting responsibilities. The signage the committee is interested in is outside the Oak Ridge Reservation. Signage inside the reservation is not within the committee's purview, he noted.

Ms. Cook explained that the committee's initial plan was to put together a comprehensive booklet of warning signs that alert the public of hazards around the periphery of the reservation. Through her research, she has learned that some of the signs are quite old, some are unintelligible, and there are no signs at all in some places in Poplar Creek. Ms. Cook talked to Tab Peryam with TDEC and Tony Simms with DOE, and she traveled around the reservation with Mr. Simms for two or three hours inspecting signs. Her endeavors lead her to wonder if there is any guidance about the various agencies' responsibilities or a top-down directive from DOE regarding signage.

Mr. Owsley noted that DOE has no involvement in the current fish advisory signs and that his comments this evening will pertain only to fish advisory signs related to the Oak Ridge Reservation records of decision (RODS). Those RODs that require fish advisory posting as institutional controls require DOE to maintain the postings in the event TDEC is unable to do so for any reason.

Mr. Adler pointed out that the reservation began as a one-mission site some time ago, and it has now become much more complicated in terms of missions and administration. In the beginning there was one administration; now there are several administrators with responsibility for various aspects of DOE operations, and these administrators report directly to Headquarters. Therefore, there is no longer one central Oak Ridge authority to dictate signage requirements. He reminded the committee that the SSAB's charter is focused solely on the Environmental Management (EM) portion of DOE operations, and the committee should not wander off into other areas outside the EM mission.

EM, he said, is set up to manage legacy waste issues; TDEC is set up to look into both legacy and ongoing DOE missions at the reservation. Generally speaking, the signage on the reservation periphery is not part of the EM mission—it's part of the DOE Oak Ridge Office Support Center. EM's responsibilities are defined under CERCLA RODs and other regulatory agreements. Most of the things EM does are generally removals and barriers, rather than signage. A sign can be helpful, but it's not the core of a remedy.

EM has land use and other institutional controls that comprise the ‘softer’ side of remediation, and these controls are defined in watershed documents (RODs). The RODs identify signage requirements, but the RODs have evolved over time in their definition of signage. But regardless of how signage is prescribed in a ROD, EM responsibilities are bound to those RODs. There are stipulations in the RODS about what to do and when to do it. There are also DOE orders related to signage. Often the requirements in the RODS are just restatements of the order-driven requirements.

Ms. Brown distributed a table of ROD signage requirements (Attachment 1). The majority of these are inside the Oak Ridge Reservation boundary, she said.

Mr. McKinney asked how often the signs are monitored. Ms. Brown replied that Phased Construction Completion Reports contain a land use control passage providing detail on how often the surveillance and maintenance program will assess the signs. Then, during the annual Remediation Effectiveness Report process, DOE certifies that the signs are being maintained.

Ms. Cook said she understands now that what the committee initially wanted is likely outside the SSAB’s EM scope. However, the board does have an interest in protecting the public. She has seen children in Southwood Subdivision play in East Fork Poplar Creek. There is stream posting signage outside the subdivision, but there is none in the area where the children play. Mr. Owsley explained that TDEC does not place signs on private property, only public property.

Ms. Lyons asked if what Mr. Adler said is true of East Tennessee Technology Park (ETTP) and if that is where the committee should concentrate its efforts. Mr. Adler said that EM is the ETTP landlord and does have overall signage responsibility for the site, but other organizations have responsibility in specific areas of ETTP.

Ms. Lyons said there may be some other community group to take this on that has a broader charge than the SSAB. Mr. McKinney agreed, saying that unless there’s some action at ETTP, the committee should bow out.

Mr. Owsley described TDEC’s signage responsibilities for the committee. The TDEC commissioner is required to notify the public in several ways if there’s a problem with a public water supply. Signs are included in that notification, and that’s the method used for fish advisories. Other notification methods are available to TDEC, and these are listed in a CD he supplied to SSAB staff this evening (Attachment 2).

Mr. Owsley said the state publishes a list of impaired streams annually. Any contaminated waterway outside the DOE fences in a publically accessible area is expected to have a sign. The TDEC Water Resources Division decides the wording that will appear on the signs. DOE provides resources to the state to manage signage that pertains to the RODs, such as along the Clinch River. TDEC goes out annually to replace damaged signs and make sure all others are readable.

Mr. Owsley acknowledged that signs are in various states of repair, but that’s a matter of resources, he said. TDEC makes every effort to make sure the signs are up to date.

Mr. Hemelright recommended that the committee consider the case closed and thank Ms. Cook for her efforts in learning about the signage issue. The committee concurred.

### **Issue Manager & Liaison Updates**

Secret City Festival—Mr. McKinney said that only three members had signed up to man the SSAB booth at the festival so far.

### **Action Items**

*Open*—none

*Closed—none*

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, June 25, 5:30 p.m. The meeting will be held as a teleconference.

Attachments (2). Available upon request from the ORSSAB support office.

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