



AK RIDGE RESERVATION

Environmental Management

March 4, 1998

Mr. Rod Nelson
Assistant Manager for Environmental Management
DOE/ORO
P.O. Box 2001
Oak Ridge, TN 37831

Dear Mr. Nelson:

The Oak Ridge Reservation Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board (ORREMSSAB) approved the enclosed recommendation on the "Department of Energy's Social, Cultural, and Economic Prioritization Category" at our March 4, 1998 Board meeting.

We look forward to your written response to our recommendation. Thank you for your continued support of the ORREMSSAB.

Sincerely,

William M. Pardue, Chair
ORREMSSAB

WMP/sb

Enclosure

cc: J. Hankinson, USEPA Region IV
E. Leming, TDEC
S. Gawarecki, LOC
M. Heiskell, DOE/ORO
Karol Hazard, DOE/HQ
ORREMSSAB Members



**Department of Energy's
Social, Cultural, and Economic Prioritization Category**

The Oak Ridge Reservation Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board (ORREMSSAB,) at the request of the Department of Energy-Oak Ridge/Environmental Management (DOE-OR/EM,) considered the merit of continuing to include a "Social, Cultural, and Economic Effects" category within the Environmental Management Benefit Assessment Matrix (EMBAM) budget prioritization process. The DOE-OR/EM suggested that the OREMSSAB undertake to redefine the category. The category was a Headquarters-directed initiative, but no instructions were supplied on how to define and score it, or how it could be applied beneficially to the prioritization process. Headquarters specified a weighting factor of three percent for this category.

The ORREMSSAB decided to decline redefinition of the category because it contains complex elements that are very difficult to express quantitatively. ORREMSSAB recommends that the category not be addressed in a quantitative manner in the EMBAM prioritization process. Furthermore, given the weightings of the other categories in the EMBAM prioritization process (i.e., 12% and greater), the Social, Cultural, and Economic Category at three percent is unlikely to change the ranking of any project.

However, because we recognize the importance of and interest in social, cultural, and economic issues by a broad segment of the public, we suggest the following approach:

- (1) review each project for potential social, cultural, and economic issues; and
- (2) when applicable, qualitatively consider social, cultural, and economic issues during the sequencing process.

The following hypothetical examples are cited as guidelines to when such issues shall be considered:

- (a) when a remediation action would have a major economic impact on the area either positively or negatively (economic factor);
- (b) where remedial action would place an undue burden or risk on a segment of the community (social factor);
- (c) where an important archeological site would be adversely impacted (cultural factor).