

### **Groundwater Strategy**

# **Briefing & Discussion**

### Daniel J. Goode, Ph.D. Research Hydrologist

U.S. Department of the Interior U.S. Geological Survey



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### U.S. Geological Survey U.S. Department of the Interior

Mission: The USGS serves the Nation by providing reliable scientific information to describe and understand the Earth; minimize loss of life and property from natural disasters; manage water, biological, energy, and mineral resources; and enhance and protect our quality of life.



WATER RESOURCES PUBLICATIONS OF THE U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY FOR TENNESSEE, 1906-1987

Glenn, L.C., 1906, Underground waters of Tennessee and Kentucky west of the Tennessee River and of an adjacent area in Illinois: USGS Water-Supply Paper 164.

www.usgs.gov

### **Recent Reports**

#### Geologic map of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park region, Tennessee and North Carolina

2012, Southworth, Scott; Schultz, Art; Aleinikoff, John N.; Merschat, Arthur J. USGS Scientific Investigations Map: 2997

### Effects of groundwater withdrawals associated with combined-cycle combustion turbine plants in west Tennessee and northern Mississippi

2012, Haugh, Connor J. USGS Scientific Investigations Report: 2012-5072





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GSF

GRF

GBF

### Public water-supply systems and associated water use in Tennessee, 2005



2010, Robinson, John A.; Brooks, Jaala M. USGS Open-File Report: 2010-1226

## Outline

Strategy Highlights Off-site Groundwater Quality **Assessment Project** ORR Groundwater Program Plume Rankings Off-site Groundwater Use Discussion





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Fig. 1.1. Groundwater strategy project charter and workshops.

## **Project Team (primary participants)**

- DOE Elizabeth Phillips
- EPA Carl Froede Jr. & Bill O'Steen
- TDEC Randy Young, Gareth Davies, & Wesley White
- UCOR/RSI Lynn Sims, Dick Ketelle, Craig Rightmire, & Holly Clancy
- SAIC Samantha Pack, Bob Gelinas, Kevin Jago, & Allen Motley
- USGS Dan Goode (liaison for ORSSAB / EM Committee, via DOE-USGS IA)



## Selection of the Off-site Groundwater Quality Assessment Project

- Consensus among the FFA parties was reached on key groundwater issues, including:
  - Additional near-term off-site monitoring is needed to assess potential off-site risks. This need guided selection of the Offsite Groundwater Quality Assessment Project.
  - An ongoing ORR Groundwater Program to systematically prioritize and investigate groundwater plumes and data gaps is needed.



Groundwater Strategy Recommendations

"ORR Groundwater Program" Additional baseline DOE funding

 Off-site Groundwater Quality Assessment Project
 FY2014 – FY2016 (early action \$)

Plume rankings for long-term strategy



### **Take Home Messages**

 Strategic Planning Process Worked: DOE, EPA, and TDEC participants (Strategy Team) agree on Recommendations

Initial issues raised (to USGS) by ORSSAB EM addressed:

- Uncertainty about potential off-site migration via deep groundwater flow paths
- Can groundwater modeling help?



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## ORR Groundwater Strategy Near-term Steps

### Conduct an Off-site Groundwater Quality Assessment in FY14 through FY16 as the first project under the ORR Groundwater Program.

- The project is consistent with the ORR Groundwater Strategy's ranking efforts and will be the focus of the new ORR Groundwater Program for the first 3 years.
- A Data Quality Objectives approach will be used to sample and analyze off-site groundwater, including residential wells and springs in downgradient areas to determine:
  - if contaminants unique to the DOE Reservation are present
  - if there is a potential public health risk from DOE contaminants off-site
- After data collection is complete, results will be evaluated to determine:
  - if follow-on actions may be needed
  - the next focus areas of the ORR Groundwater Program

# Reduce Uncertainty about Potential Off-site Migration and Risks

"There have been recent sporadic, low-concentration detections of radionuclides and volatile organic compounds in off-site sampling locations downgradient of the ORR ... There are no known health impacts from contaminants detected off-site . . . However, in order to minimize groundwater pumping that could draw DOE contaminants off-site, license agreements restricting groundwater use have been put in place for some residents in the area west of the Clinch **River across from Melton Valley**"

Source: Sep 2013 ORR Groundwater Strategy D1, V. 1, p. ES-1 (DOE/OR/01-2628/V1&D1)



Fig. G.10. Locations of Melton Valley exit pathway wells and off-site monitoring wells.

# Bethel & Melton Valley Geology

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WHEN

Bonen

Magazin

Flearo

**Uncount** 

Upper Knox



Vertical exaggeration 3X

Source: DOE 1997a

G13-0032\_WOC\_gaologic block model

LOWET HOL

Fig. G.6. 3-D Block diagram of geology in Melton and Bethel Valleys (view up-valley to the east).

White Oak Creek

Copper Creek Thrust Fault

Pundin Law

Melton Branch

Manallo



Bethel

Valley



### "Summary observations from groundwater (DOE 2013) indicate the following for the Picket Wells:

- A number of radionuclides and VOCs [solvents] have been detected periodically at low levels in different monitoring zones on the MV Picket.
- Intermittent detections of metals and VOCs have been observed in off-site wells across (on the west side of) the Clinch. Two detections of <sup>90</sup>Sr [strontium] and one of <sup>99</sup>Tc [technitium] have been observed.

Source: Sep 2013 ORR Groundwater Strategy D1, V. 2, p. G-49 (DOE/OR/01-2628/V2&D1)



### "Summary observations from groundwater (DOE 2013) indicate the following for the Picket Wells: (cont.)

Natural head gradients indicate groundwater movement toward the Clinch River from both east and west of the river. Alteration of the natural gradients caused by pumping can induce flow through interconnected fractures. This type of gradient alteration has the potential to induce contaminant movement from areas beneath the river to off-site wells."

Source: Sep 2013 ORR Groundwater Strategy D1, V. 2, p. G-49 (DOE/OR/01-2628/V2&D1)



300m **4** 1000ft

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### Communicating with Public – Transparency



#### **Groundwater Watch**



### **Take Home Messages**

With the exception of a low VOC detection in one sample in one well in 2010, no results for known DOE contaminants in off-site wells across the **Clinch River from Melton Valley have** exceeded Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) maximum contaminant levels (MCLs).

This VOC was not detected in subsequent samples from the same well.

### **Take Home Messages**

Consensus that off-site migration via deep paths is plausible, may have occurred in the past, and deserves further investigation.

ORSSAB could consider recommending that DOE proceed with the Off-site Groundwater Quality Assessment project.



### Outline

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# ORR Groundwater Strategy Near-term Steps (cont.)

### Set up an ongoing ORR Groundwater Program based in the Water Resources Restoration Program (WRRP).

- To improve long-term planning, the Program will develop project scopes for consideration and prioritization.
- Selected projects (e.g., investigation, modeling, technology development support) will be integrated with WRRP monitoring to optimize resources.
- The program will provide flexibility to adapt based on investigation findings, cleanup progress, and budgets.
- Project prioritization and resource allocation will follow FFA and EM program budget protocols.
- ORR Groundwater Program findings will be used to:
  - reevaluate and adjust initial plume and project ranking and results
  - -identify interim measures that may be warranted
  - -support future groundwater decisions and remediation



### Revive state-of-the-art Groundwater Investigation at ORR

Many data gaps exist because little groundwater investigation work has been done since the 1990s ... Groundwater investigation, groundwater modeling, and technology development .. will improve understanding of plume sources and migration ...."

Source: Sep 2013 ORR Groundwater Strategy D1, V. 1, p. ES-2 (DOE/OR/01-2628/V1&D1)



#### **Environmental Sciences Division**

#### STATUS REPORT ON THE GEOLOGY OF THE OAK RIDGE RESERVATION

Robert D. Hatcher, Jr.<sup>1</sup> Coordinator of Report

Peter J. Lemiszki<sup>1</sup> RaNaye B. Dreier Richard H. Ketelle<sup>2</sup> Richard R. Lee<sup>2</sup> David A. Lietzke<sup>3</sup> William M. McMaster<sup>4</sup> James L. Foreman<sup>1</sup> Suk Young Lee

Environmental Sciences Division Publication No. 3860

<sup>1</sup>Department of Geological Sciences, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville 37996-1410
<sup>2</sup>Energy Division, ORNL
<sup>3</sup>Route 3, Rutledge, Tennessee 37861
<sup>4</sup>1400 W. Raccoon Valley Road, Heiskell, Tennessee 37754

### Geology 1992



Date Published—October 1992

ORNL/TM-12026

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#### ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES DIVISION

#### STATUS REPORT

#### A HYDROLOGIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE

#### OAK RIDGE RESERVATION

D. K. Solomon, G. K. Moore,<sup>1</sup> L. E. Toran, R. B. Dreier, and W. M. McMaster<sup>1</sup>

Environmental Sciences Division Publication No. 3815

<sup>1</sup>Department of Civil Engineering, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

ENERGY SYSTEMS OAK RIDGE HYDROLOGY SUPPORT PROGRAM (Activity No. 26 45 02 00 0)

# Hydrology

1992

May 1992

Prepared for the Energy Systems Groundwater Program Office

Prepared by the OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37831



### Gain / Losing Streams 1994

#### **OPEN FILE REPORT 96-557**

Stream reach map-PLATE 1

Robinson, J. A., and Mitchell, R.L., III, 1996, Gaining, Losing, and dry stream reaches at Bear Creek Valley, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, March and September 1994





PREPARED IN COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY



Fig. 3.28. Tracks of particles released in Layer 1 from K-1035 area under sump-on condition for the assumed discrete high conductivity conduit in Layer 2.

### ground Water

### Estimating Reaction Rate Coefficients Within a Travel-Time Modeling Framework

by R. Gong<sup>1</sup>, C. Lu<sup>1</sup>, W.-M. Wu<sup>2</sup>, H. Cheng<sup>2</sup>, B. Gu<sup>3</sup>, D. Watson<sup>3</sup>, P.M. Jardine<sup>3</sup>, S.C. Brooks<sup>3</sup>, C.S. Criddle<sup>2</sup>, P.K. Kitanidis<sup>2</sup>, and J. Luo<sup>1,4</sup>



Figure 1. The multiple-well system installed at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, for in situ remediation of U(VI)-contaminated groundwater. The well system includes two injection (FW024 and FW104) and two extraction wells (FW026 and FW103), and three MLS wells. The dashed lines with arrows indicating flow directions are the streamlines within the nested inner cell, and the solid lines are the streamlines in the outer flow cell.

2011 Ga. Tech, Stanford, ORNL, DOEfunded



Managed by UT-Battelle for the Department of Energy

ORNL

### Mercury in Water Science at **Oak Ridge**

Remediation	Remediat				
Site Specific Problem					
Approach	Research Staf				
Current Progress	researen star				
Related Websites	Expertise/B				
Documents	Geochemistry				
	Environmental Chemist				
Publications and Presentations	Hydrogeology				
Expertise	Aquatic Ecology				
Contacto	Environmental Chemist				
Contacts	Environmental Engine				
	Field Research				
	Soil Science				
	Geographical Information				

#### Collaborators

Elizabeth Phillips, DOE Oak Ridge Operation

Terry Cothron, Y-12 BWXT

Dick Kettelle

Bob Alexander, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation

Home

Environmental

Brian Looney and Carol Eddy-Dilek, SRNL

Ralph Turner

George Southworth and Maryanna Bogle, Retired from ORNL

Scott Brooks, Baohua Gu, Dwayne Elias, Anthony Palumbo and Terry Mathews

### **Applied Field Research Initiative** on of Mercury and Indu

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Expertise/Bio	Name	Email
ochemistry	Eric Pierce	pierceem@ornl.gov
vironmental Chemistry	Liyuan Liang	liangl@ornl.gov
drogeology	Dave Watson	watsondb@ornl.gov
uatic Ecology	Mark Peterson	petersonmj@ornl.gov
vironmental Chemistry	Carrie Miller	millercl@ornl.gov
vironmental Engineering	Feng He	hef2@ornl.gov
eld Research	Ken Lowe	Loweka@ornl.gov
il Science	Brian Lester	Lesterbp@ornl.gov
ographical Information Systems	Sally Mueller	muellerma@ornl.gov

# Groundwater Modeling – A tool for data analysis & decision making

Groundwater modeling will play an instrumental role in the CERCLA RI/FS process in coming years, and for some of the more complex decisions, it may play a role in the long-term monitoring (LTM) phase of CERCLA implementation."

Source: Sep 2013 ORR Groundwater Strategy D1, V. 1, p. 5-12 (DOE/OR/01-2628/V1&D1)



# Groundwater Modeling – A tool for data analysis & decision making

- No further action on residual sources
- Monitored Natural Attenuation (MNA)
- Technical Impracticability (TI) waivers
- Design of active remediation (e.g. well rates & locations)
- Optimization of monitoring programs
- ORR-wide regional flow model needed

Source: Sep 2013 ORR Groundwater Strategy D1, V. 1, p. 5-12 (DOE/OR/01-2628/V1&D1)



### **Take Home Messages**

- DOE effort since early 1990s has focused on remediation and monitoring
- Scientific advances in characterization and modeling in last 20 yrs.
- ORSSAB could consider recommending that DOE secure additional baseline funding for interpretive analysis, including modeling, to obtain maximum benefit of monitoring data and other information



### **Take Home Messages**

ORSSAB could consider recommending that DOE broaden the technical support team beyond site contractors to include academic and government experts, akin to the scientific groundwater program at Oak **Ridge prior to 1993. Such an approach** seems to be underway with respect to Mercury at ORR.



# Outline

Strategy Highlights Off-site Groundwater Quality **Assessment Project** ORR Groundwater Program Plume Rankings Off-site Groundwater Use Discussion



### **Plume Rankings**

Pathway Score = Pathway (0-10) + Receptor (0-10)Plume Score = Pathway Score + Hazard Score Hazard Score = 0.57 x [ Toxicity (0-15) + Area (0-10) + Longevity (0-10) ] Hazard Score weighted by 0.57 = (20/35) to equalize values with Pathway Score Table sorted by Pathway Score (not Plume) Score)

Source: Sep 2013 ORR Groundwater Strategy D1, V. 1, section 5.1.3 (DOE/OR/01-2628/V1&D1)



### Overall Rank (Plume Score) (fig. 5.1)

BV-4

MV-3

Ok

Oma

01

Ome

-Crs

-

-Cm

MV-2

BV-2

BV-1

MV-1



0k

Oma

BETHEL	VALLEY					
BV-1	Main Plant Sr-90, H-3, mercury					
BV-2	Corehole 8, Sr-90, U, Cs-137					
BV-3	7000 Area VOC Plume					
BV-4	SWSA 3 Sr-90					
MELTON VALLEY						
MV-1	Shallow Groundwater Contamination emanating from buried waste operations overlying the Conasuga Group formations					
MV-2	Hyrdofracture Sites					
MV-3	Exit Pathway/Picket Wells					

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-=2

### Rankings by Pathway & Plume Scores

Table 5.3. Pathway ranking and Overall ranking of ORR groundwater plumes

		Hazard Score			P				
N								Pathway Ranking <sup>ª</sup> by Total	Overall Ranking <sup>ª</sup> by Total
Plume				_	Weighted			Pathway	Plume
No.	Groundwater Plume	Toxicity	Area	Longevity	Total	Pathway	Receptor	Score	Score
	Exit Pathway/Picket Wells contamination								
MV-3	from undetermined sources	7	5	2	8.0	10	10	20	28
BCV-2	Uranium in the Maynardville Limestone	5	5	10	11.4	10	7	17	28
BCV-1b	S-3 Deep nitrate in Maynardville Limestone	4	10	1	8.6	10	7	17	26
ETTP-1	K-1070-A Burial Ground	7	3	3	7.4	7.5	9	16.5	24
ETTP-2	Contractor's Spoil Area (CSA)	4	3	3	5.7	7.5	9	16.5	22
BV-2	Corehole 8, <sup>90</sup> Sr, U, <sup>137</sup> Cs	15	5	2	12.6	7.5	7	14.5	27
ETTP-11	K-27/K-29 Area	8	1	6	8.6	7.5	7	14.5	23
ETTP-5	K-720 Fly Ash Pile	5	1	10	9.1	5	9	14	23
BV-4	SWSA 3, <sup>90</sup> Sr	6	3	2	6.3	5	9	14	20
ETTP-4	Duct Island/K-1070-F	4	3	3	5.7	5	9	14	20
UEFPC-7	East End VOC Plume	10	10	6	14.9	10	3	13	28
MV-2	Hydrofracture Sites	15	7	10	18.3	5	7.5	12.5	31
UEFPC-1	S-3 Site Eastern Plume/S-2 Site Plume	9	10	10	16.6	7.5	5	12.5	29
	S-3 Shallow Contamination in Nolichucky								
BCV-1a	Shale and Bear Creek (Pathways 1, 2, 3)	12	7	10	16.6	7.5	5	12.5	29
UEFPC-6	Localized Mercury Sources to Groundwater	12	3	10	14.3	7.5	5	12.5	27
ETTP-9	Mitchell Branch Commingled Plumes	15	3	6	13.7	7.5	5	12.5	26
BV-3	7000 Area VOC Plume	12	3	6	12.0	7.5	5	12.5	25
	HCDA Shallow/deep VOCs (DNAPL) in								
BCV-3	Nolichucky and Maynardville	9	5	6	11.4	7.5	5	12.5	24
ETTP-7	K-1200 Area	8	3	3	8.0	7.5	5	12.5	21
CR-1	Chestnut Ridge Security Pits	5	5	3	7.4	7.5	5	12.5	20
ETTP-8	K-1004 Area	4	3	3	5.7	7.5	5	12.5	18
CR-2	United Nuclear Corporation Disposal Site	5	1	2	4.6	7.5	5	12.5	17
ETTP-10	K-1064 Peninsula	2	1	3	3.4	7.5	5	12.5	16
BV-1	Main Plant, <sup>90</sup> Sr, <sup>3</sup> H, mercury	13	3	2	10.3	5	7	12	22
	Uranium Sources in Maynardville								

### **Rankings by Pathway & Plume Scores**

Table 5.3. Pathway ranking and Overall ranking of ORR groundwater plumes

		Hazard Score			P				
Plume					Weighted			Pathway Ranking <sup>a</sup> by Total Pathway	Overall Ranking <sup>a</sup> by Total Plume
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	HCDA Shallow/deep VOCs (DNAPL) in								
DCV 2									2.4
DCV-3	Nolichucky and Maynardville	9	5	6	11.4	7.5	5	12.5	24
ETTP-7	Nolichucky and Maynardville K-1200 Area	9 8	5	6 3	11.4 8.0	7.5 7.5	5 5	12.5 12.5	24 21
ETTP-7 CR-1	Nolichucky and Maynardville K-1200 Area Chestnut Ridge Security Pits	9 8 5	5 3 5	6 3 3	11.4 8.0 7.4	7.5 7.5 7.5	5 5 5	12.5 12.5 12.5	24 21 20
ETTP-7 CR-1 ETTP-8	Nolichucky and Maynardville K-1200 Area Chestnut Ridge Security Pits K-1004 Area	9 8 5 4	5 3 5 3	6 3 3 3	11.4 8.0 7.4 5.7	7.5 7.5 7.5 7.5	5 5 5 5	12.5 12.5 12.5 12.5	24 21 20 18
ETTP-7 CR-1 ETTP-8 CR-2	Nolichucky and Maynardville K-1200 Area Chestnut Ridge Security Pits K-1004 Area United Nuclear Corporation Disposal Site	9 8 5 4 5	5 3 5 3 1	6 3 3 3 2	11.4 8.0 7.4 5.7 4.6	7.5 7.5 7.5 7.5 7.5	5 5 5 5 5 5	12.5 12.5 12.5 12.5 12.5 12.5	24 21 20 18 17
ETTP-7 CR-1 ETTP-8 CR-2 ETTP-10	Nolichucky and Maynardville K-1200 Area Chestnut Ridge Security Pits K-1004 Area United Nuclear Corporation Disposal Site K-1064 Peninsula	9 8 5 4 5 2	5 3 5 3 1 1	6 3 3 2 3 2 3	11.4 8.0 7.4 5.7 4.6 3.4	7.5 7.5 7.5 7.5 7.5 7.5 7.5	5 5 5 5 5 5 5	12.5 12.5 12.5 12.5 12.5 12.5 12.5	24 21 20 18 17 16
ETTP-7 CR-1 ETTP-8 CR-2 ETTP-10 BV-1	Nolichucky and Maynardville K-1200 Area Chestnut Ridge Security Pits K-1004 Area United Nuclear Corporation Disposal Site K-1064 Peninsula Main Plant, <sup>90</sup> Sr, <sup>3</sup> H, mercury	9 8 5 4 5 2 13	5 3 5 1 1 3	6 3 3 2 3 2 3 2	11.4 8.0 7.4 5.7 4.6 3.4 10.3	7.5 7.5 7.5 7.5 7.5 7.5 7.5 5	5 5 5 5 5 5 7	12.5 12.5 12.5 12.5 12.5 12.5 12.5 12.5	24 21 20 18 17 16 22



Fig. G.22. Hydrofracture waste injection zone showing relationship to other MV waste units, geology and associated risk.

### **Take Home Messages**

Team used an explicit multi-step process to rank plumes. However, any ranking process is unavoidably subjective. Final Rankings heavily weight the Pathway Score.

ORSSAB could consider recommending that DOE adopt the plume rankings for management of site-wide groundwater remediation.



### **Take Home Messages**

Hydrofracture disposal has highest **Overall Plume score (31), but Pathway** score 0.5 points below "High" rank. ORSSAB could consider recommending that DOE collect, review, and archive records associated with hydrofracture disposal to support long-term stewardship.

Can experience at ORR inform national debate on hydraulic fracturing?

# Outline

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### Recommendation 4: Off-site Groundwater Use

"Utilizing a portion of the annual funding to be budgeted for the ORR Groundwater Program, continue to evaluate and track groundwater use at properties adjacent to and downgradient of the **ORR.** Set up a DOE interface with TDEC to allow DOE to be notified of new well installation activity. If potential unacceptable risk is identified, consider additional groundwater use restrictions/policies for interim protectiveness until final decisions are reached."

Source: Sep 2013 ORR Groundwater Strategy D1, V. 1, p. 7-2 (DOE/OR/01-2628/V1&D1)





Fig. 5.3. Areas with groundwater use restrictions on and around the ORR.

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