

# **Métis National Council Nuclear Fuel Waste Initiative Annual Progress Report**

**For the Period  
2004- 2005**



**Submitted to  
Natural Resources Canada  
Uranium and Radioactive Waste Division  
Ottawa, Ontario**

**Thursday, May 5, 2005**

**NOTE:**

The views expressed in this report are those of the Métis National Council.

This report has been prepared by the Métis National Council for the  
Government of Canada.

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# Annual Progress Report

## I. Introduction

### *A. The Métis National Council*

The Métis National Council is the national body which is mandated by the Governing Members collectively coming together. It was created to provide a national and international voice for the Métis Nation within Canada. In this capacity, the MNC has represented the Métis Nation within all constitutional processes since 1983, is recognized by the Government of Canada as the governance structure representing the Métis Nation within Canada, intervenes on behalf of the Métis Nation within on-going litigation involving Métis rights and represents the Métis Nation at an international level within the United Nations and the Organization of American States. The MNC is also responsible for developing national policy to move forward the self-government vision and aspirations of the Métis Nation. ; This is achieved through on-going bilateral processes with the Government of Canada. The MNC does not undertake direct program and service delivery initiatives to Métis individuals, which is the responsibility of the Governing Members, but acts as a facilitator for the implementation of Métis self-government through its national structure and the Governing Members.

### *B. The Métis National Council: Ministry of Environment*

The Métis National Council Ministry of Environment exists within the mandate and operation of the Métis National Council. Mr. Dwayne Roth is the appointed Minister of Environment, responsible to the Métis National Council Board of Governors and the Métis citizens of Canada for environmental issues. The Métis National Council Environment Committee consists of the Minister of Environment for the Métis National Council, and/or a designated Chairperson, MNC officials, and a political and technical representative from each of the Governing Members (GM). This committee is mandated to give advice to the Minister, to consider potential environment directions for the Métis Nation, to coordinate activities and discuss issues of common concern across the Métis Homeland. This committee is an

important element of the success of the initiatives undertaken by Environment in this year.

The MNC and the GMs indicate the importance of working collectively to deal with issues, and also in planning and designing the direction of the Métis Nation on environmental issues. Our voice needs to be included in all national dialogues in Canada. Challenges in this fiscal year included recognition that a significant portion of the MNC's work is pursued in response to the Government of Canada's agenda, rather than by an agenda identified by the Métis Nation. While the MNC engages with the government on many worthwhile projects incorporating Métis-specific priorities, the process is currently more externally driven than desirable, and than it could be, if core MNC environment capacity were established.

### ***C. Traditional Environmental Values***

As Métis people, our origins are steeped in a close bond with the natural world. Our cultural heritage taught us values and behaviors respectful of the gifts of the earth. Born of First Nation's mothers and European fathers, our mixed-blood ancestors learned the teachings of two very different cultures and blended them into a unique Métis culture. The polarity of values of our maternal teachings and our paternal resource demands meant that our ancestors had no choice but to adapt to the rapidly changing environment around them if they were to survive. Drawn together with common histories, needs and aspirations, our Métis ancestors worked as guides for the fur traders, interpreters, provisioners, freighters and domestic laborers. Our Métis ancestors built a lifestyle that required hard work, skill and tenacity as well as knowledge of multiple languages, diverse cultural practices and an ability to forge good relationships with people. In order to support them and their families, while being actively involved in the commercial activities which emerged during and after the fur trade, our Métis ancestors utilized their traditional environmental values to ensure sustainable use of the land. From those early beginnings, through the fur trade, the formation of Canada as a country, and into the present day, we have continued to be a people fiercely proud of our Métis history, culture and identity. Métis traditional environmental values are built from ancient knowledge, practical use and a sense of responsibility for future generations.

### ***D. Ministry of Environment: 2004-2005 Work Plans***

The formation of a work plans for the 2004-2005 fiscal year laid the framework for activities that are designed to meet the needs of Métis citizens throughout the Homeland. Supported by the Director of Environment, Ms. Yvonne Vizina, the work plan is currently being implemented and will conclude on March 31, 2006.

### ***E. Long-term Management of Nuclear Fuel Waste Initiative***

This is the largest environment project taken on by the MNC. It is funded by the industry-based Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) as well as Natural Resources Canada. Letters of agreement with the Governing Members (GMs) provide for flow-through funding to facilitate and report on Métis community dialogues on the options being considered for the long-term storage of nuclear fuel waste. The MNC's main role is project management and coordination, as well as roll-up reporting on the projects and of the dialogue results to the funders.

**Annual Activity Report  
Métis National Council Nuclear Fuel Waste Initiative  
Natural Resources Canada  
For the Period December to April**

## **II. Introduction**

This Annual report provides NRCan with a summary of the activities of the MNC and its Governing Members on this initiative during the **Final quarter of the 2004 2005 fiscal year**. The First, second and third quarters activities report should be added to this reporting and should be considered the Annual report

### ***A. Long-term Management of Nuclear Fuel Waste Initiative***

The Métis National Council engaged to identify and carry out a culturally appropriate process of information sharing and dialogue with the Métis Nation concerning long-term management of nuclear fuel waste in Canada. In the 2004-05 fiscal year, the focus of the workplan in this three-year funding agreement is on conducting dialogues on with Métis communities in order to inform about the current Nuclear fuel Waste issues, understand the long-term storage options and, discuss and bring the Nation's views forward, including use/application of Métis traditional knowledge.

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As reported, in December 2004, The Environment Committee held a training session to ensure a common information base and allow GMs to discuss the

information dissemination, collection, and dialogue process. GMs have completing their dialogues across the Homeland and will report results to the MNC by March 31, 2005. While the main portion of this project will be completed shortly, a smaller portion will continue into the new fiscal year with follow-on activities, including review of the NWMO's draft report on Canadians' recommendations regarding which option to use for the long-term storage of nuclear fuel waste in Canada.

### ***B. First Second and Third Quarter Overview***

- As NRCan is made aware first quarterly report, activities in this project encountered some challenges in commencing activities in the first quarter of this fiscal.
- Further during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> reporting period MNC faced again challenges with the resignation of the Director of Environment, then replaced by contracted professional services through until the early days of December.
- Due to this change over in the MNC office, and at the decision of the Board of Governors, the MNC contracted a number of the work plan activities to its Governing Member in Ontario, the Métis Nation of Ontario.
- Research and compilation of a comprehensive background and reference binder on the nuclear fuel waste initiative, related law, the long-term options and other materials provided by and available through the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO);
- Training provided to MNC environmental committee technical representatives, to review the reference materials.
- MNC entered into letters of agreement and began to flow funding to the Governing Members to plan and implement their community dialogues.



- Governing Members in BC, Ontario and Manitoba established plans to conduct their nuclear fuel waste dialogues during the fourth quarter.
- Meeting with MNC/NRCan officials took place at MNC to identify the CA details, identify project status to date, and anticipated reporting timeframes.

### ***C. Governing Member Activities***

- British Columbia
  - o The Métis Provincial Council of BC identified a representative for the planning in implementation of the nuclear fuel waste Initiative in their province, and participated in the training day in December. Their plans for the fourth quarter include detailed planning and development of their dialogue format and conducting the requisite two workshops they will complete.
- Manitoba
  - o The Manitoba Métis Federation modified its original proposal to the MNC to accommodate the actual amounts of funding in its letter of agreement with the MNC completed this period; Plans were established to conduct a minimum of six dialogues in the fourth quarter,
  - o Engaged a contract consultant to assist with the consultation process.
- Ontario
  - o The Métis Nation of Ontario which as earlier noted completed some of the national level duties on behalf of the MNC, also made significant progress in planning its nine community dialogues which will take place in the fourth quarter throughout the province. (See Appendix B for the MNO Report)

#### ***D. Fourth Quarter Planning***

- GMs will implement their dialogues,
- MNC will make its best efforts to move the project forward with Alberta and Saskatchewan.
- The work plan for next fiscal year should be revisited and/or modified in order to include lessons learned and appropriate objectives and deliverables for the coming year.
- A meeting with NRCan officials to present the current status and review and present the progress during the second and third quarters will also be scheduled.

### **III. Fourth Quarter Reporting**

#### ***A. Activities***

- Initiated a Metis Homeland Survey/communication initiative Nuclear fuel Waste survey engaging 12 aboriginal and non aboriginal newspapers
- Participated and assisted MNA and MMF in their community consultations

#### ***B. Homeland Consultation to April 30 /2005***

The following is in response to our requirement to report on the progress of consultations held by the Métis Nation regarding Nuclear Fuel Waste Management in Canada. Workshops have been held and four of the five Provincial Councils have reported. A report from the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan is still pending, understanding that the end of June is the deadline for submission of the report. In addition, a meeting of the (MNC) Environment Committee was held 21-22 March 2005 in Calgary, AB where progress was discussed.

The information provided during this consultation was obtained via workshops, focus groups and questionnaire. The survey questionnaire was

sent to various newsletters and aboriginal newspapers and also appears on our website. A detailed analysis of the results of the survey will appear in our final report.

The following is brief summary of what has been reported during this period. Reports from each of the Governing Members are found in the appendix.

### ***C. Consultations Summaries***

#### **1. Métis Nation of Alberta:**

A workshop was held March 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, 2005 in Edmonton, Alberta, attended by a total of 60 delegates from all six regions.

It was generally recognized that consultations with the Métis Nation are important as traditional knowledge can be of assistance to the government concerning land use and environmental protection. The participants voiced a desire to remain involved in these consultations and confirmed that this process is a start of a continued presence for the Métis. Concern was expressed about the long-term impact of technology on the environment and human health and that in the past many costly mistakes had been made in the handling of industrial waste. To prevent this from happening again, it was considered important that baseline studies be conducted, impact assessments made available and continuous monitoring conducted so that any adverse effects on the environment or culture can be detected early and corrective action taken. This should apply equally to existing operations as well as planned activities. In other words, in the case of nuclear fuel waste management, the Métis need to be involved in all stages of the process from mining, to power generation, to final disposal of fuel waste.

Discussions also focused on what appears to be an educational gap on this issue. Is the information provided too complex, and how do we present the issues to the general public in a manner that is understandable? Also, is there a governmental willingness to identify resources for greater involvement like creating the capacity to monitor?

Questions were raised regarding raw uranium transport and the current health status of workers involved in the nuclear industry. As for nuclear fuel waste management, three questions were raised:

- Are there any long-term impact studies - are there greater environmental impacts that we are not aware of yet?
- What happens with the long-term infrastructure issues - effects on containment?
- What are other countries doing about this issue?

Survey results are also summarized in this report.

## **2. Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia**

A Métis Provincial Council Captain's meeting was held on April 2-3, 2005 in Kelowna, British Columbia.

There should be an ongoing source of Aboriginal opinion and direction by developing a long-term Board made up of representatives of the three Section 35 Aboriginal Governments (MNC, AFN and the ITK). Any documentation provided should be easily understood by Métis Elders and traditional knowledge holders and funds should be made available for an independent collaborative review of the issues. Although deep geological storage seemed to be the best option, it was generally accepted that there would be short-comings to any method proposed. There was a general mistrust of nuclear energy.

## **3. Manitoba Métis Federation:**

Three regional workshops were held in locations that are part of the Canadian Shield, have mining operations and could be possible locations for future deep geological disposal. These include Flin Flon, April 16<sup>th</sup> ; Thompson, April 17<sup>th</sup> ; and Lac du Bonnet, April 21<sup>st</sup> , 2005. Focus groups were held in Winnipeg on April 22<sup>nd</sup> , 2005 with participants from all seven MMF Regions in Manitoba.

Workshop conclusions are summarized as follows.

- Nuclear energy should not be relied on as a future source of energy;
- All three options for the management of nuclear fuel waste (storage at reactor sites, deep geological disposal, and centralized storage) have serious risks;

- Nuclear waste should not be stored in Manitoba.

Research should be intensified on finding alternative sources of energy. Conservation was frequently suggested as the best solution for escalating energy needs. It was questioned that if a nuclear fuel waste site was constructed, would this justify an increase in nuclear energy production? Other concerns included health risks, socio-economic and social justice issues, future impact on health and the environment and the possibility of Canada becoming a dumping ground for foreign nuclear waste if a centralized facility was built.

#### **4. Métis Nation of Ontario:**

During the months of January and February 2005 discussions were held in five community venues in: Ontario: Midland, Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>, 77 participants; Hamilton, Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup>, 43 participants; Ft. Frances, Jan. 30<sup>th</sup>, 38 participants; Timmins, Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>, 67 participants; and, Sudbury, Feb 11<sup>th</sup>, 86 participants.

Comments from the dialogue sessions focused on the following and are summarized in their report:

- Storage at reactor sites (advantages/ limitations/ other comments)
- Deep geological disposal (advantages/ limitations/ other comments)
- Centralized storage concepts (advantages/ limitations/ other comments)
- Questions and comments

In general, those who participated in the consultation indicated the importance and desire to be involved fully in dialogue with government. Most felt that waste resulting from nuclear power generation should remain where it is produced or go back to where it was mined. However, the general consensus was that Canada should seek alternative environmentally friendly sources of energy and phase out the nuclear option.

Other concerns expressed were: leaching into the water table; and subterranean shifting, temperature changes and unexpected faults that could present hazards over the long term. Transportation risks was another concerned discussed.

## **5. Consensus:**

There appears to be a consensus that:

- No one wants Nuclear waste in their back yard. Nuclear free Provinces want to stay that way.
- There is a desire for more information/ greater public awareness on the problem and solutions.
- The long-term implications of nuclear waste management are a concern.
- More research is needed to find eco-friendly alternative sources of energy.
- There is a fear that the "South" will dump its waste on the "North".
- Traditional knowledge can benefit all parties and should be tapped.
- Health and safety should be considered first and foremost when considering an option.
- Security, facilities management and upkeep, and transportation risks are concerns that need to be dealt with and shared with the public.

## **2. Financial Reporting**

Additional materials provided in tandem with this progress report are:

- MNC Invoice
- MNC Project Financial Statement
- Financial Vouchers to December 31, 2004

## **3. Contact and Further Information**

A contract consultant currently works as project manager for the MNC's NFW Initiative. Questions and requests for further information may be directed to:

Dr. Donald Sharp  
Director of Environment  
Métis National Council  
350 Sparks St., Suite 201  
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# Nuclear Fuel Waste Highlight Report

*Submitted by the*  
Manitoba Métis Federation

April 25, 2005

## INTRODUCTION

Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) and the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) approached the Métis National Council (MNC) to conduct workshops on Métis perspectives for long-term storage of nuclear fuel waste. The Manitoba Métis Federation, the MNC governing member in Manitoba, developed a workshop work plan that was submitted to, and accepted by, NRCan and NWMO. The MMF in its funding agreement was to conduct at least 4 workshops. The MMF has conducted 6 workshops with 115 Metis Nation members residing in 30 villages, towns and cities throughout the province.

The workshops focused on 3 options for storage: at-reactor site (above and below ground), deep geological disposal, and centralized storage (above and below ground). Two discussion topics were fundamental to the workshops:

1. Should we produce nuclear fuel waste into the future?
2. What is the best option for disposal of nuclear fuel waste from existing reactors, if any?

## METHODOLOGY

The Manitoba Métis Federation conducted regional and focus group workshops (refer to Table 1). Three regional workshops were held in locations that are part of the Canadian Shield, have mining operations and could be possible locations for future deep geological disposal.

Regional workshops were conducted in:

1. Flin Flon: April 16, 2005
2. Thompson: April 17, 2005
3. Lac du Bonnet: April 21, 2005

Focus group workshops were conducted in Winnipeg on April 22, 2005 with participants from all seven MMF Regions in Manitoba: Interlake, Northwest, Southeast, Southwest, The Pas, Thompson and Winnipeg. The focus group workshops had participants chosen based on three age and gender categories:



1. Elders
2. Women
3. Youth

Table 1. Nuclear Fuel Waste Workshops.

| <b>Nuclear Fuel Waste Workshops</b> |                |                                   |          |            |          |                          |                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|----------|------------|----------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Location of Workshop</b>         | <b>Dates</b>   | <b>Participants in Attendance</b> |          |            |          | <b>Survey's Returned</b> | <b>Residence of Participants</b>                                                                                                      |
|                                     |                | <b>E</b>                          | <b>W</b> | <b>Y</b>   | <b>M</b> |                          |                                                                                                                                       |
| Flin Flon                           | April 16, 2005 |                                   | 9        |            | 10       | 15                       | Sherridon, Flin Flon, The Pas, Snow Lake, Cranberry Portage                                                                           |
| Thompson                            | April 17, 2005 |                                   | 6        |            | 9        | 15                       | Thompson, Norway House, Thicket Portage, Pitwitonei, Wabowden, Lynn Lake, Split Lake                                                  |
| Lac du Bonnet                       | April 21, 2005 |                                   | 10       |            | 8        | 18                       | Grand Marais, Manigotagan, Beaconia, Traverse Bay, Powerview, Rennie, St. Malo                                                        |
| Elders (Wpg)                        | April 22, 2005 | 21                                |          |            |          | 18                       | Binscarth, Grand Marais, Cranberry Portage, Brandon, Thicket Portage, Thompson, Winnipeg, Teulon, St. Ambroise, St. Laurent, St. Malo |
| Women ( Wpg)                        | April 22, 2005 |                                   | 21       |            |          | 14                       | Thompson, Winnipeg, The Pas, Binscarth, Teulon, Dauphin, Cayer, Woodridge                                                             |
| Youth (Wpg)                         | April 22, 2005 |                                   |          | 21         |          | 11                       | Winnipeg, St. Laurent, Grand Marais, The Pas, St. Eustache, Brandon                                                                   |
| Total participants per category     |                | 21                                | 46       | 21         | 27       |                          |                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Overall total</b>                |                |                                   |          | <b>115</b> |          | <b>91</b>                | <b>30</b>                                                                                                                             |

These focus group categories were selected because women and youth are usually less engaged in discussions when Elders and men are present. Separating the groups was successful, as all three appear to have some differing opinions on nuclear fuel waste.

The workshops had similar agendas: the workshops commenced with Dan Benoit, the Natural Resources Coordinator, providing a brief introduction to the topic; the video, *Understanding the Choices*, was shown; there was

discussion and questions from the participants; and the participants filled out and submitted the questionnaire.

## RESULTS

The results are comprised of comments that highlight recurring themes throughout the workshops and do not represent the complete findings, as the questionnaires need to be tabulated and results analyzed. It appeared during the workshops that the participants' thoughts generally converged on three topic areas:

1. Nuclear energy should not be used into the future;
2. All three options for the management of used nuclear fuel waste have serious risks;
3. Nuclear waste should not be stored in Manitoba.

The following seven sections report on recurring themes voiced throughout the workshops:

1. Alternatives to nuclear energy;
2. Environmental impacts;
3. Future considerations;
4. Health risks;
5. Impacts of creating a used nuclear fuel site;
6. Social justice issues, and;
7. Socio-economic concerns.

### 1. Alternatives to nuclear energy

Conservation was frequently suggested as the best solution for escalating energy needs. It was often commented that current energy consumption rates are not sustainable; instead of creating new nuclear energy plants, we should strive to reduce our energy consumption.

To complement energy conservation, it was repeatedly suggested that Eastern Canada should use alternative energy sources including wind turbines and hydroelectric. Further research should be conducted on other alternative sustainable energy sources. Although sustainable energy was suggested as a solution, many participants were concerned with replacing coal energy with nuclear energy, as proposed by the

Ontario Government. They questioned why should we replace one unsustainable energy source with another?

The practice of selling our energy to the United States was questioned especially when Eastern Canada relies on nuclear energy. It was suggested that we discontinue the sale of energy to the United States and sell our hydroelectric generation to Ontario instead.

## 2. Environmental impacts

Environmental impacts were raised concerning all three used nuclear fuel waste management options and uranium mining.

Concerns on the 3 management options were:

1. Deep geological repository:
  - a. Water
  - b. Earthquakes and shifting rocks
  - c. Transportation
  - d. Lack of visibility
2. At-Reactor storage:
  - a. Resealing
  - b. Terrorism
3. Centralized storage:
  - a. Resealing
  - b. Terrorism
  - c. Transportation

Many participants were apprehensive about the used nuclear fuel waste leaching and contaminating groundwater. They mentioned the issue of flooding, as often mines will eventually flood. It was questioned what measures would be taken to ensure that the deep geological repository never floods and what would be the result if it did flood?

Participants mentioned earthquakes and the shifting of rocks as concerns. They were concerned that we do not know what geological changes will occur over the next thousand years.

Participants questioned the security of transporting used nuclear fuel to the deep geological repository and centralized storage. The polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) spill in Ontario was frequently mentioned and it was questioned what would happen if there were an accident with the truck carrying the nuclear fuel waste?

Participants living in Northern mining communities shared their experiences with 'orphaned' and abandoned mines that were deserted by companies and ignored by government; they fear the same could happen with the deep geological repository. It was feared that used nuclear fuel waste stored underground would be ignored after construction. Participants commented that it would be "out of sight, out of mind".

At-reactor and centralized storage both raised the same two concerns about resealing the used nuclear fuel and the threat of terrorism. Participants questioned the safety of resealing the used nuclear fuel every 300 years. Terrorism was viewed as a threat to storing the used nuclear waste above ground. Many participants commented that terrorists could easily bomb or attack an above ground site.

Environmental concerns arose relating to the impacts of mining for uranium. One participant from Thompson questioned why the impacts of uranium mining were not discussed. The participant found it offensive that the government was impacting the environment and health of Northern Saskatchewan Metis and others with uranium mining, then potentially asking them to repatriate and store the used nuclear fuel waste: "you wouldn't allow your neighbor to slop their mess in your yard. Saskatchewan has already gone through it and now they are being asked to store it."

### 3. Future considerations

There were concerns that the project is not looking at the whole picture. It was mentioned that long-term storage research has only been conducted for thirty years for a project that could have significant impacts for thousands of years. They questioned the possible impacts of a spill or leaching and whether it would impact Canada similarly to Chernobyl in the former USSR? An Elder from the Elder workshop in

Winnipeg questioned, "Do we want to take a chance on a Chernobyl incident happening here?"

#### 4. Health risks

Participants questioned the benefit of receiving money for storing used nuclear fuel waste considering it might impact their health. They were concerned that if used nuclear fuel waste contaminates where they live, it will impact their children and grandchildren. They fear that future generations will suffer from their shortsighted decisions to store the waste in return for economic growth from a compensation fund. A participant from Thompson commented, "money will not compensate future generations; their lives will be terrible. The people that produce nuclear energy will never have to see the damage." Participants also questioned whether there would be health risks for employees at the site.

#### 5. Impacts of creating a nuclear fuel waste site

It was questioned whether the construction of a nuclear fuel waste site would result in an increase in nuclear energy production. A participant from Lac du Bonnet commented, "If you build a place to dispose of it they (the government and industry) have the excuse to make more and won't look at alternatives."

Participants repeatedly mentioned that they do not want Canada to become a dumping ground for foreign nuclear fuel waste. A participant from the women's workshop in Winnipeg stated, "I think Canada needs to take responsibility for what we have produced but we don't want to accept international waste." Again, most of the participants said that nuclear fuel waste must not come to Manitoba.

#### 6. Social justice issues

Two significant social justice concerns were raised during the workshop:

1. Why should marginalized communities in the North be asked to store nuclear fuel waste that is being produced in Eastern Canada?
2. Northern Manitobans have already faced the consequences of Hydro development in the North for the profit of the South; why should they allow a used nuclear fuel site as well?

Many participants were upset with the idea of having more waste from the South and the East. A participant from Thompson commented, "They want us to store their nuclear fuel waste and dam our rivers. It is beyond unreasonable. They want us to store their garbage and ruin our environment. This is ridiculous." Marginalized people, especially in the North, often have to face undesirable development for the benefit of the South. It was often commented that Manitoba does not produce nuclear energy so why should it be stored here?

Northern Manitobans, especially Aboriginal peoples, have already been highly impacted by the hydro and other developments in Manitoba and many are not willing to have more detrimental development for the benefit of the South without significant compensation and economic spin-offs.

#### 7. Socio-economic concerns

Participants shared socio-economic concerns relating to employment at the nuclear fuel waste storage site and the level of economic spin-offs relating to the project. Participants inquired about employment at the site. Without significant economic spin-offs and compensation, participants questioned whether any community would want to site.

#### SUMMARY

Again, this is simply the highlights report and is not the full report that will include the questionnaire results, analysis, conclusions and recommendations. This highlights report simply identifies where the workshops were held, who attended, how the workshops were conducted; what was discussed and some general comments on what we heard.



NUCLEAR WASTE  
MANAGEMENT  
ORGANIZATION

SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION  
DES DÉCHETS  
NUCLÉAIRES

**Métis National Council:**  
**Métis Nation of Alberta**  
*Nuclear Waste Dialogue*

(i) Consultation Report

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*Opening Message, President Audrey Poitras,  
Métis Nation of Alberta*

Good Afternoon,

The Métis National Council has been working with Natural Resources Canada and the Nuclear Waste Management Organization to undertake series of community based dialogue that will feed into the formulation of Canada's policy on Nuclear Fuel Waste Management.

These community meetings are being undertaken with each of the Governing members of the MNC. It is important that we all have our input regarding the method of storage of Canadian Nuclear Fuel Waste.

Today, our role is to discuss, First, the long term management of nuclear fuel waste, including a discussion of various options laid out in the Nuclear Fuel Waste Act, as well as other options proposed by the NWMO. We have come together to look at these issues and to provide wisdom that will assist in guiding Canada, and to provide our traditional Métis knowledge to the issues. Canada and NWMO are very interested in hearing our thoughts and where possible to add input and our knowledge.

The Métis National Council, in keeping with its mandate, has founded an environment committee that has been meeting to identify and discuss the broad range of environmental issues that affect our people and our rights. At the conclusion of this meeting and the meetings across the homeland, the MNC will prepare a comprehensive report based on the dialogue and feedback received by our people. The report will be submitted to Natural Resources Canada for review and follow up.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all you who have come in today, we are grateful for your attendance and as always, your valuable input. Also I would like to thank Dale LeClair, CAO, and the MNC for facilitating the session.

Thank you.

## **2. Overview**

"The Government expects that a waste management organization, once it is established, will continue the consultation process with Aboriginal communities. The related activities should be funded by the producers and owners of nuclear fuel waste"

The goal and commitment as stated by the NWMO is to ensure that the organization will continue to recognize:

- The importance of a collaborative arrangement with Métis people
- Métis perspectives & knowledge are reflected in the study
- Guide the direction for Canada
- Provide and receive direction on governance, decision-making, ethics, values, responsibilities
- Ensure that these responsibilities are recognised in our generation and future generations
- Ensure that the role of communities and governments are inclusive, responsible and transparent.
- Ensure knowledge and education are maintained over time

## **3. Processes**

In the discussion regarding the purpose and reasoning behind the consultation processes, a number of participants expressed a several concerns regarding the process itself. While, it is true that Governments are more aware of the requirements to consult with Aboriginal peoples, there was recognition that there are a number of reasons why the consultations are important. Firstly, that the traditional knowledge and wisdom of the Métis can be of assistance to the government regarding land use and more specifically the importance of continued protection of Canadian lands.

As a meaningful start, many participants voiced their desire to remain involved and expressed their wishes that government and its agencies hear the Métis voice. Moreover, that continuing dialogue is an important component for action and policy development. It was clear that an expectation was created and confirmed that this process was the start of a continued presence for the Métis, and a long time coming.

#### 4. Historical Issues/ Lessons Learned

In the course of the presentation and discussion there was a considerable amount of time spent on dealing with environmental issues that have affected the Metis people throughout the decades. Much like the Canadian scientific and government community, participants asked many of the same questions; such as: why do we develop the technologies and processes without knowing, or caring in some cases, what the potential long-term impacts will be on our environment and our health.

A number of participants discussed specific examples, such as the Swan Hills Waste Treatment Facilities in Northern Alberta. A number of people shared anecdotal stories with the group. For example, besides the issue of non-consultation with residents in the region, there is a feeling from many members living near the facility that death rates and health impacts have increased but have not been monitored or studied. Furthermore, when formal Monitoring Agreements were struck with the Treaty 8 reserves in the area, the same was not accorded to the Métis population in the same region.

A specific example of these impacts centered on a toxic release that occurred at the plant in the 1990's. The incident has had a very detrimental impact on the culture and everyday way of life in the area, as many Elders and members are no longer consuming the wild game traditionally hunted in the area. In addition there has been a sharp decline of members spending time in those traditional areas. There is a very important lesson to be learned here which speaks volumes on the need to address traditional losses attributable to modern encroachments.

The theme is therefore best expressed by the need to view these issues from a global perspective, i.e. that we need a commitment by government to continually study and monitor the impacts where these projects are presently located or proposed. One recommendation included a requirement that complete documentation of area impacts be required in order to establish benchmarks both environmentally and culturally. One participant went further and suggested consideration be given to establish mandatory, and ongoing, toxicological study of residents when they pass away to ensure that risks do not overtake the projects intended purpose.

As a result of this discussion, there was a feeling that whenever and wherever these projects take place, that at the very minimum, an inclusive approach is required in the monitoring, and that transparency in reporting and cooperation are made absolute requirements. This should apply equally to existing operations and any planned activities of this nature.

## Raw Uranium Transportation

Another point of discussion from the far northern participants to the meeting covered the historical transportation of the raw uranium across the Athabasca. A number of questions arose regarding whether there was ever a record of contamination or a study that dealt with from the transport of the Uranium -via Rail car and on the boats.

A question was asked whether there had been any tests on the lines that were used 40 years ago? What are there risks today considering the half-life - If there was some contamination - Was there reclamation? What was done with the contaminated soils? Where do we go to find this out? What happened to the labor and primary workers - Métis had very extensive involvement in those initial activities. Have there been any exposure studies?

In any case, individual sites need to be documented and cross-referenced to an expanded health and traditional use study of areas to ensure that people are not adversely affected; further that this should be undertaken at historical extraction sites and future storage sites.

## 5. Emerging Issues - Environment

### **Concerns Expressed – Global perspectives**

Extraction vs. Reclamation - what are the viable options?

A number of questions were raised regarding the operations at Uranium City? Is the old site safe? One participant raised the issue whether the rods could be returned to where the uranium was extracted. Considering the lengthy half-life of processed rods, it confirmed that the options are not that simple and require careful consideration.

A discussion ensued regarding the options that were presented in the video produced by the NWMO. Participants discussed some of the options that are being presented as viable; however there was no consensus from this group on any particular method. Most participants agreed that more education is required to have a full discussion on some of the options presented in the video package.

On a more global note, some participants relayed concerns that Nuclear Waste presents more of a risk outside of our borders than within. There were a number of comments and questions regarding the disposition of nuclear materials from the

former Soviet Union and a sense of worry regarding the emerging Nuclear powers in Asia and the Middle East (North Korea, Iran respectively). Specifically, how can we be assured that their waste is being treated properly, and how can Canada ensure that it will be treated properly (This was not expressed as a desire to have it imported to Canada). Are there options or common approaches globally to deal with these concerns?

## **6. Education**

A number of the participants spent time discussing the educational gap that exists on this issue. Specifically questions were raised regarding the adequacy of the information provided as being too dense for the layperson. It would require further work to find a more meaningful way to present the information to the public. The obvious follow-up to this question was whether there was willingness to identify additional resources for greater involvement. This would be facilitated via direct involvement by creating the capacity to monitor, and be a part of these processes as they move forward.

A very important question was raised regarding quantification of the costs for these storage initiatives long-term. In real terms, is there a process in place to ensure that cost will not impact the long-term stewardship over spent rods and other byproducts? What are the measures in place to protect us from ourselves and this form of energy? These issues were not covered in great depth in the presentation videos. In follow-up this needs to be identified and reported.

Finally, as it stands today we, collectively, have very little in the way of benchmark/baseline data to be able to make comparisons or an informed decision on which way the policy should be implemented. It was concluded that the Métis could move forward on educational activities that involve our people. Thus, the creation of a long-term partnership that would enable the Métis to study and report on these initiatives as they move forward.

## **7. Recommendations / Next Steps/ Conclusions**

### **Dialogue and Consultation**

- In order to provide meaningful input, the Métis need to be involved up front and not after the fact.
- What is missing is inclusion into the entire processes - We need to be included in all stages - from mining to processing to rod storage

- Monitoring and Participation on any waste management issues in Alberta and Nationally is not a dream but a reality
- We need to ensure that the values that we bring to the table translates into impact: stewardship, respect, elders' wisdom, our past and our future.
- There needs to be a sharing of responsibilities between all Canadians
- Our numbers are growing and will have a greater impact in the future - we will be impacted in a greater capacity, and should have increased participation in the same proportions.
- Canada should not be planning to build or restart additional nuclear sites, until all other options are studied, both for Nuclear Waste Management and alternative forms of Energy.

### **8. Follow-up Questions for NWMO**

Are there any long-term impact studies - Are there greater environmental impacts that we are not aware of yet?

What happens with the long-term infrastructure issues - effects on containment?

What are other countries doing on this issue?

### **Conclusion**

Like many Canadian policy makers, we could not provide any specific answers to these questions, however, as Canadians we must collectively continue to work towards answers in a collaborative and inclusive manner. The Métis are interested in remaining involved in the processes and are pleased to be consulted on these issues, however a greater role, including education initiatives are an important first step towards meaningful and informed input.

### Overview of Questionnaire Results

Note: not all participants answered each and every question. In case where a rating was involved, no rating was assigned or weight attributed.

1. *In your opinion, are you agreement with nuclear energy providing Ontario or Canada with its energy needs into the future? - Please circle one*

yes      -      agree somewhat      -      not sure      -      no

| Yes | Agree somewhat | Not sure | No |
|-----|----------------|----------|----|
| 1   | 6              | 8        | 13 |

***Total Responses: 28***

Additional Comment:

- What about alternative sources of energy generation?
- Only if a viable solution is found to deal with the waste
- No expansions - do not raise the reliance on the source of energy, find alternatives

2. *How familiar are you with the issue of nuclear fuel waste, either through the media or your own observations? (check one)*

- Do not know anything on the issue
- I know a little about the issue
- I am very familiar with the issue

| Do not know anything on the issue | I know a little about the issue | I am very familiar with the issue |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 3                                 | 19                              | 7                                 |

***Total Responses: 29***





**Additional comment**

- Is this all of the information; is there an alternative view which is not being provided?

5. *If you said yes or agree somewhat - what are your thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of each management approach? (Space for comments on next page)*

**Please provide any initial comments on the proposed concepts that follow**

| <b><u>A. Storage at reactor sites</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Advantages                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Limitations                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintenance and testing of cells</li> <li>▪ No need to transport it</li> <li>▪ Experts on hand to deal with it</li> <li>▪ Find a way to harness the waste for useful purposes</li> <li>▪ Not putting new areas in harms way</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Space – is there enough to expand for holding</li> <li>▪ Are there issues related to site radioactivity</li> <li>▪ Terrorism is an issue</li> <li>▪ Human Error?</li> </ul> |

| <b><u>B. Deep Geological Disposal</u></b>                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Advantages                                                                                          | Limitations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Less chance of human error – not managed by man</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Potential leakage into the water sources underground – without maintenance There are risks that are unknown if containment fails</li> <li>▪ Potential of further ignorance or long-term effects</li> <li>▪ Earthquake issues</li> </ul> |

| <b><u>C. Centralized Storage</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Advantages                                                                                                                                                                                               | Limitations                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can deal with the issue in one place</li> <li>▪ Can be accessed if other purposes are found for its use</li> <li>▪ Can be safely watched and managed</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is the right location, Is there a right location, environmentally and safety</li> <li>▪ Must ensure maintenance by future generations which we cannot control</li> <li>▪ Where?</li> </ul> |

6. *In your view, do you feel there are any concepts that are not present that should be part of the discussion (where do you think it should be stored?);*

Comments

- Health Impacts are not identified in any great detail
- Greater consultation efforts
- Are there further reactors in the works?

7. *What issues are you most concerned with in relation to nuclear fuel waste once a concept and potential site are chosen? Please number from 1 (most important) to 6 (less important)*

|                      |       |                                 |
|----------------------|-------|---------------------------------|
| Security of the site | _____ | Is it environmentally secure    |
| Transportation       | _____ | Who is responsible for the site |
| Human Health         | _____ | Cost efficiency of concept      |
|                      | _____ |                                 |

|                                 | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6  |
|---------------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|----|
| Security of the site            |    | 3 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 2  |
| Transportation                  |    | 1 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 3  |
| Human Health                    | 12 | 5 | 1 |   |   |    |
| Is it environmentally secure    | 6  | 5 | 3 | 4 |   |    |
| Who is responsible for the site |    | 4 |   | 8 | 6 |    |
| Cost efficiency of concept      |    |   | 3 |   | 2 | 13 |
| No response                     | 11 |   |   |   |   |    |

(a) Total Responses: 29

8. *If there were economic benefits to your community, would you support nuclear storage in your region? (Circle One)*

(yes) (no) (not sure)

| Yes | No | Not Sure |
|-----|----|----------|
| 1   | 26 | 2        |

**Total Responses: 29**

Comments:

- More study must be undertaken to ensure that the environment can handle this task.
- Not in my back yard - certainly not without better study
- Economic benefits cannot outweigh the potential long-term hazards - cost benefit analysis would not wash
- Monet is not as important as health and well being

*9. To your knowledge, have aboriginal perspectives and insights informed the direction, and influenced the development of the management approaches identified?*

Comments:

- More study must be undertaken to ensure that we are heard and understood. I.e. importance of responsible stewardship of land and our environment
- Better understanding of an issue - will enable more thought and how wisdom can be applied (next round?)

*10. Could Métis traditional knowledge play an important part in the recommendation or decision-making process for a preferred management approach?*

Comments:

- Honest discussion with clear rules of engagement that respect that we have value to bring to the table, a feeling that we are involved because we are now being recognized by the courts.
- Specific sessions with Métis Elders is advisable to ensure that wisdom, knowledge and concepts work together

*11. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?*

Comments:

- What are other countries doing about this issue - Is there a coordinated Global Approach to address this issue?

- Canada should be exploring all forms of generation to ensure that nuclear issues do not increase the burden on future generations unnecessarily.
- Very pleased that the Government of Canada has finally realized the positive impacts that Aboriginal people can have and this will only lead to a better relationship and more success.
- Communication and transparency need to be addressed as a requirement not as an exception.
- Good first engagement, keep us involved

**Métis Nation of Alberta**  
**Consultation on Nuclear Waste Management**  
**West Harvest Inn. Edmonton, Alberta**  
**March 23, 2005**  
**1:00 pm**

**Agenda**

1. Opening Prayer, Francis Dumais
2. Opening Comments, President Audrey Poitras, George Quintal,
3. What do we know?
  - Waste Management Generally
  - Nuclear Fuel
  - Impact On Our Lives

**Environment Meeting - In  
Attendance  
March 23 & 24, 2005  
Edmonton, Alberta**

**Head Office/Others**

**Environment**

- 1 Audrey Poitras, President
- 2 Trevor Gladue, Vice President
- 3 Lynda Olson, MNA
- 4 James Norris, MNA
- 5 Dale LeClair, MNC
- 6 Valerie Nicols, MNC
- 7 Cindy Bertolin, MNA
- 8 Tracee McFeeters MNA
- 9 Marilyn Underschultz

**Region 1 Delegates**

**Environment**

- 1 George Quintal, Lac La Biche
- 2 Rick Boucher, Lac La Biche
- 3 William Boucher, Lac La Biche
- 4 Glen Tremblay, Ft. McMurray
- 5 Pat Beacon, Athabasca
- 6 Margaret Quintal, Conklin
- 7 Richard Quintal, Lac La Biche
- 8 Gerry Gionet, Ft. McMurray
- 9 Linda Ward, Conklin
- 10 Conrad Boucher, Lac La Biche
- 11 Brian Fayant, Ft. McMurray

**Region 2 Delegates**

**Environment**

- 1 Karen Collins, Elizabeth
- 2 Homer Poitras, Elk Point
- 3 Roy Dumais, Bonnyville
- 4 Francis Dumais, Bonnyville
- 5 Donna Rae Paquette, Bonnyville
- 6 Annette Ozirny, Bonnyville
- 7 Robert Cardinal, Bonnyville
- 8 Wade Cardinal, Bonnyville

- 9 Marlon Cardinal, Bonnyville
- 10 Destiny Ozirny, Bonnyville
- 11 Peter Desjarlais, Elizabeth

### **Region 3 Delegates**

#### **Environment**

- 1 Alice Bissonette, Lethbridge
- 2 Marlene Lanz, Calgary
- 3 Ephram Bouvier, Calgary
- 4 Donna Kennedy, Medicine Hat
- 5 Arlene Fraser, Calgary
- 6 Joe Chodzicki, Red Deer
- 7 Paul Bercier, Calgary
- 8 Gail Akitt, Pincher Creek
- 9 Dee Johnston, Rky Mtn House

### **Region 4 Delegates**

#### **Environment**

- 1 Gary Gairdner, St. Albert
- 2 Brenda Blyan, Edmonton
- 3 Melanie Omeniho, Edmonton
- 4 Robert Lee, Edmonton
- 5 Darrold Dahl, Drayton Valley
- 6 Al Findlay, Grande Cache
- 7 Cecil Bellrose, Edmonton
- 8 Maryann Stepien, Stony Plain
- 9 Dale Friedel, Wabamun
- 10

### **Region 5 Delegates**

#### **Environment**

- 1 Esther Auger, High Prairie
- 2 Elmer Gullion, Trout Lake
- 3 Lloyd Norris, Slave Lake
- 4 Herb Anderson, Gift Lake MS
- 5 Solomon Auger, Slave Lake
- 6 Peter Campion, Faust
- 7 Jim & Matilda Thomas, Faust
- 8 Crystal Chalifoux, McLennan
- 9 Nora Chapdelaine, Faust

### **Region 6 Delegates**



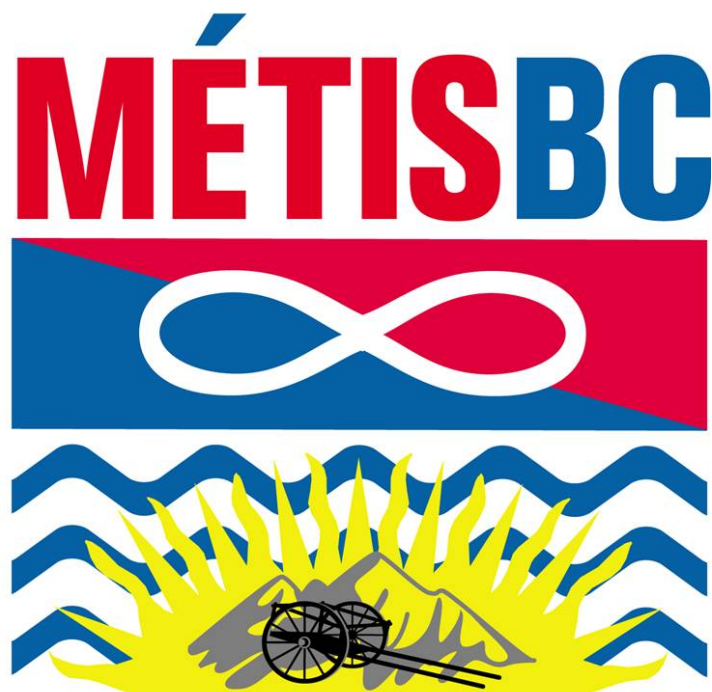
## **Environment**

- 1 Louis Bellrose, Peace River
- 2 Angie Crerar, Grande Prairie
- 3 Bill Descheneaux, Valleyview
- 4 Odell Flett, Fort Vermilion  
Margaret Northey, Grande  
5 Prairie
- 6 Ms. Ursel Flett, Grande Prairie
- 7 Debbie Langford, Valleyview
- 8 Shirley Descheneaux, Valleyview
- 9 Ms. Jean Johnson, Valleyview
- 10 Carol McCallum, Valleyview

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# Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia

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## **Nuclear Fuel Waste Consultation For Métis Provincial Council of B.C. Citizens**

Submitted by:

*Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia*  
Suite 1000 - 789 West Pender Street  
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada  
VOC 1H2

Submitted to:

*Métis National Council*  
350 Sparks Street  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada  
K1R 7S8

May 17, 2005

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## 1.0 Introduction

Throughout 1996 and 1998, the Government of Canada started the development of the Nuclear Fuel Waste (NFW) Act. Several policy communications by the Government of Canada was held with the public and other stakeholders. As a result, the Nuclear Fuel Waste (NFW) Act was established on November 15, 2002. An <sup>1</sup>Environmental Assessment Panel then recommended, which was supported by Canada that "federal government should immediately initiate an adequate funded participation process with <sup>2</sup>Aboriginal people, who should design and execute the process". The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) then contacted Métis National Council (MNC) to initiate a process that would bring forward Métis opinion, views and concerns to the Department of Natural Resources Canada for consideration in regards to the long-term storage of nuclear fuel waste and the Nuclear Fuel Waste Act in Canada. The MNC then has designed, in conjunction with the (5) five <sup>3</sup>governing members, a culturally specific dialogue program.

Through a series of meeting with the MNC's environmental technical committee the information collection was to have two levels. Firstly was to develop some common dialogue (presentation materials) and data collection tools (questionnaire) to ensure consistency across the Métis homeland. Second was to have each governing member establish regionally specific methodologies to provide unique information and concerns tailored to that province. The following work plan has been submitted to indicate the procedures being implemented by the Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia (MPCBC).

### *1.1 NWMO Aboriginal Dialogue Objectives*

The overall goal of the NWMO Aboriginal Dialogue is to create the needed foundation for a long-term, positive relationship between the Nuclear Waste Management Organization and the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada.

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<sup>1</sup> Refers to the "Government of Canada Response to Recommendations of the Nuclear Fuel Waste management and Disposal Concept Environmental Assessment Panel".

<sup>2</sup> Aboriginal as defined by Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution being: Métis, Inuit and First Nations

<sup>3</sup> The Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia, Métis Nation of Alberta, Métis Nation – Saskatchewan, Manitoba Métis Federation and Métis Nation of Ontario.

### 1.1.1 Specific Objectives

- ∞ To build effective working relationships with the National Aboriginal organizations by supporting and working with them as they conduct their dialogue processes on the long-term management of used nuclear fuel; and integrating the results of their work into NWMO deliberations;
- ∞ To build effective working relationships at the local and regional scale by supporting and facilitating local dialogue processes should they be desired and in a way that is coordinated with activities being led by the national organizations;
- ∞ To generate specific commentary from an Aboriginal perspective on the deliberations of the NWMO as summarized in the three milestone discussion documents: (1) *Asking the Right Questions?* - Fall, 2003; (2) *Understanding the Choices* - September, 2004; and (3) *Choosing a Way Forward* - Draft Final Report - Spring, 2005 within a time frame that ensures Aboriginal ideas, insights, wisdom and values are factored into the final NWMO recommendation to government;
- ∞ To document the input of Aboriginal peoples to NWMO deliberations as a means of ensuring: (1) that Aboriginal ideas, insights, wisdom and values have contributed to the development of NWMO's final recommendation to government; (2) that they are available over the long term as part of the foundation needed for continuous learning.

## 2.0 Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia

The MPCBC is the democratically elected Métis political representative and governing organization in BC. The Métis Provincial Council of BC represents the political, legal, social and economic interests of the Métis people in BC with local, provincial and federal levels of governments, funding agencies and other related bodies. In addition, the MPCBC undertakes an advocacy, coordination and policy-making role on behalf of the Métis people in BC on matters related to provincial and federal programs and services. The MPCBC also acts to protect and preserve Métis history, promote and develop Métis culture, ensure Métis rights are understood and protected, and coordinate and facilitate local activities in Métis communities.

As the Government for the Métis in British Columbia, MPCBC is committed to the protection of Métis culture and heritage, to the well-being and security of Métis families, and for the advancement of Métis rights.

## ***2.1 B.C. Métis Assembly of Natural Resources***

On September 19, 2003 the Powley decision created the need for the Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia to not only focus on the hunting and fishing rights of the Métis people, but the self-management and enforcement of these rights. The Powley case was not only about hunting and fishing but has inference to access to our land-based natural resources. The MPCBC recognized that with gaining our rights we mustn't lose the perspective of being responsible for ourselves through self-government (which includes resource management and enforcement).

The implementation of the British Columbia Métis Assembly of Natural Resources (BCMANR) is based in principle, on the success of the Métis people in the 1700-1800's. The "Buffalo Assembly" and the "Laws of the Prairies" were established by the "community" way of life. These communal commitments ensured the survival of the Métis people during tough times. The basic principles were; no "individual" way of thinking and that the strength was generated from the proletarian group. These principles were the basis of the Métis culture; therefore the present day infrastructure and principles honours the past.

BCMANR is the natural resource department for the Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia. The provincial BCMANR committee consists of seven regional Captains (appointed by the regional President's Councils) of Natural Resources, the lead MPCBC environmental technician or Director of Natural Resources and the political Minister or Minister of Natural Resources.

### ***2.1.1 Mandate***

To establish a natural resource policy to support the cultural and sustenance needs of the Métis people in British Columbia through the conservation and management of our environment using both traditional and educational knowledge.

### ***2.1.2 Vision Statement***

To help revitalize Métis culture and nationhood pride through the use of our natural resources.

## ***2.2 MPCBC NFW Consultation Objectives***

Under the direction of MNC the following are the objectives that were to be achieved for the NFW consultation sessions;

- ∞ The long-term management of nuclear fuel waste in Canada including options developed in the NFW Act, and others as proposed by the NWMO;
- ∞ Traditional Métis Knowledge (TK) in relation to nuclear fuel waste management; basis for utilization of TK and methods for doing so;
- ∞ Métis rights as related to nuclear fuel waste management;
- ∞ Other relevant topics as they arise, which are approved by the MNC Minister.

### 3.0 Expected Deliverables

According to the MNC Environment's work plan submitted to Natural Resource Canada in April 2004, the MPCBC will meet the following deliverables;

- ∞ Identify one representative to facilitate the culturally specific dialogue program
- ∞ Participate in a training workshop that will enable the representative to develop their presentation skills and materials
- ∞ Develop and provide a format conducive to the synthesis of data for interim and final reports
- ∞ Collect views and opinions of the B.C. Métis people regarding Canada's options for the long-term management of nuclear fuel waste
- ∞ Submit detailed descriptions of quarterly and annual activities and results of those actions
- ∞ Submit analysis of culturally specific dialogue program data (including who was consulted and when)
- ∞ Submit analysis of the culturally specific dialogue program results (# of people, outcomes, views and opinions)
- ∞ Submit financial reporting as required

#### 3.1 Deliverable Timelines

The following is a quick reference table that can be used to track MPCBC's progress on the NFW work plan commitments.



| Deliverable                                         | Completed |    | Estimated<br>Completion Date |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------|----|------------------------------|
|                                                     | Yes       | No |                              |
| Identify one representative                         | ✓         |    | April 01, 2004               |
| Participate in training workshop                    | ✓         |    | December 18, 2004            |
| Develop and provide a conducive format              | ✓         |    | February 15, 2005            |
| Consultation workshops                              | ✓         |    | April 02-03, 2005            |
| Submit mid-term report                              | ✓         |    | February 01, 2005            |
| Submit final report (analysis of data and dialogue) | ✓         |    | May 17, 2005                 |
| Financial report                                    | ✓         |    | May 17, 2005                 |

### 3.2 MPCBC's NFW Representatives

The MPCBC has appointed two levels of representatives, one technical and one political. The majority of the NFW will be conducted by the technical staff member. The representative for MPCBC will be the MPCBC's Director of Natural Resources, Dean Trumbley. If required, the political representative will be the Minister of Natural Resources, Dave Hodgson (MPCBC, Thompson/Okanagan Board Member). Contact information is located on the following page for Mr. Trumbley and Mr. Hodgson.

#### 3.2.1 Contact Information for Representatives

##### Dean Trumbley, RP Bio.:

- ∞ MPCBC, Director of Natural Resources
  - ∞ Registered Professional Wildlife/Fisheries Biologist
  - ∞ 15+ years of experience/education in Natural Resource Management
  - ∞ 10+ years of experience in Métis Specific Agenda
  - ∞ MPCBC National Métis Rights representative
  - ∞ MPCBC Multilateral Negotiation representative
  - ∞ MPCBC National Métis Environmental Technician representative
- Mobile: (604) 317-4175  
E-mail: [dtrumbley@mpcbc.bc.ca](mailto:dtrumbley@mpcbc.bc.ca)

##### Dave Hodgson:

- ∞ MPCBC, Regional Director for the Thompson/Okanagan



- ∞ MPCBC, Political Board Member
  - ∞ 5+ years Métis political experience
  - ∞ 30+ years Union experience
  - ∞ MPCBC Provincial Minister of Natural Resources
  - ∞ MPCBC Provincial Treasurer
- Mobile: (250) 319-0221  
E-mail: [dhodgson@mpcbc.bc.ca](mailto:dhodgson@mpcbc.bc.ca)

### Contact Information for both:

Suite 1000 - 789 West Pender Street  
Vancouver, B.C., Canada  
V6C 1H2

Phone: (604) 801-5853

Fax: (604) 801-5097

Website(s): <http://www.mpcbc.ca> or <http://www.bcmnr.ca>

### ***3.3 NFW Training Workshop***

The MPCBC NFW representative participated on the two-day workshop coordinated by MNC and presented by the NWMO and the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO). The workshop was held on December 18-19, 2004 in Ottawa, Ont., Canada. The session discussed the presentation materials and the standardized questionnaire to be utilized during all sessions throughout the Homeland. Requirements for this objective have been completed by MPCBC.

### ***3.4 Provincial Consultation***

#### ***3.4.1 Consultation Methodology***



The MPCBC plans conducted two workshops for the collection of views and opinions from the Métis citizens in B.C. The workshop provided the material supplied by the MNO and MNC; however the participant consistency was different. The first workshop conducted was with the seven MPCBC regional "Captains of Natural Resources". These individuals are appointed natural resources representative for their respective MPCBC region (*Figure to left*). They are appointed by the Regional President's Council and are the voice for the people of that region. The second session was conducted in Northeastern British Columbia. The MPCBC's

Director of Natural Resources toured to various small northern communities and discussed various issues relating to the topic of Nuclear Fuel Waste. The target of these personal meetings was to collect the Traditional Knowledge (TK) concerns of the Métis Elders in Northern B.C. The MPCBC feels that these two provincially coordinated meetings would satisfy the requested deliverables stated in the MNC's April 2004 work plan.

The course materials package was presented to the Captains and Elders upon commencement of the presentation. Standardized items included were the NFW questionnaire (created by MNO) and the DVD titled "*Understanding the Choice - the Future Management of Canada's Used Nuclear Fuel*" (developed by the NWMO).

### *3.4.2 Consultation Workshops*

#### *3.4.2.1 Provincial BCMANR Captains of Natural Resource Meeting*

The BCMANR Captains meeting was held on April 02-03, 2005 in Kelowna, British Columbia. The following individuals were in attendance (*Figure on top of following page*):

|                        |                               |                      |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Dean Trumbley, RP Bio. | Director of Natural Resources | Vernon, MPCBC        |
| Dave Hodgson           | Minister of Natural Resources | Ashcroft, MPCBC      |
| Rob Humperville        | Vancouver Island Captain      | Nanaimo, BCMANR      |
| Gary Biggar            | Lower Mainland Captain        | Abbotsford, BCMANR   |
| Ron Nunn               | Thompson/Okanagan Captain     | Penticton, BCMANR    |
| Mark Carlson           | Kootenay Captain              | Trail, BCMANR        |
| Gary Ducommun          | Northcentral B.C. Captain     | WilliamsLake, BCMANR |
| Mike Ballard           | Northwest B.C. Captain        | PrinceRupert, BCMANR |
| Ed Whitford            | Northeast B.C. Captain        | FortSt.John, BCMANR  |

Upon reviewing the materials, the discussion led to the conclusion that the Director of Natural Resources would summarize the opinion and views for the BCMANR committee. The materials provided to MPCBC indicated very minimal impacts to the Métis citizens residing in British Columbia. However, the following suggestions and concerns, as a result of the meeting in Kelowna were noted from the Captains and the individual research conducted under the official motion of BCMANR by the Director of Natural Resources.

**BCMANR Captains – Nuclear Fuel Waste Consultation, Kelowna, BC**



The following is a list of concerns and recommendations as an outcome of the Captains meeting and the independent review of the Director of Natural Resources;

- ∞ The NWMO should consider developing a long-term NFW Aboriginal Board that consists of representatives from the three Section 35 Aboriginal Governments (MNC, AFN and the ITK). The purpose of this board would be to supply an on-going source of aboriginal opinion and direction.
- ∞ Develop a "*Terms of Reference*" or similar document to identify the implementation of Aboriginal opinion or "Traditional Knowledge" when pertaining to NFW issues.
- ∞ That documents be developed that would be easily understood by Métis Elders and traditional knowledge holders.
- ∞ That resources are continued to be supplied to Métis National Council. This will assure that the capacity is affordable for Métis to monitor NFW issues that will affect their communities directly.
- ∞ Upon reviewing the various methods of NFW storage the BCMANR Captains indicated that "deep geological storage" seemed to be the best alternative. However, none of the proposed methods would be considered fool-proof or guaranteed.
- ∞ That funding should be immediately made available to the three aboriginal governments to initiate a third-party non-biased team consisting of both scientific and traditional knowledge peoples. This could even be a collaborative approach between all the Aboriginal peoples of Canada (AFN, MNC and the ITK).
- ∞ That this document simply be viewed as a "position paper" and not a proper consultation of the Métis peoples in British Columbia".

### 3.4.2.2 Northern B.C. Traditional Knowledge Tour

The biggest obstacle for the Director of Natural Resources was trying to simplify the wording of the materials for our Elders to understand. The documents in general are written from a science perspective which made it very difficult for our traditional knowledge holders to grasp. A lot of the concerns raised by the Elders were, even if they participate will their voices be heard or even acknowledged. One Elder stated "it is understood amongst our people that the Elder is the voice of wisdom and time; however outside our community (meaning the aboriginal community) we are simply viewed as old and should be placed in homes". Most traditional knowledge holders indicated that British Columbia is nuclear free and felt that the rest of Canada should follow the same idealisms. They had great concerns around "injecting poison into the heart of our planet", but also stated "leaving it on the surface will eventually poison the water, which is the blood of the earth anyways". Certain Elders felt that some of the wording used tried to minimize the impacts for urban people but seemed to forget that "we as aboriginal peoples still use and live off the lands, mostly the remote portions". Therefore, "this is going to impact us the most". One Elder stated "if the city people are using the energy from these nuclear devices, then store it in their backyard". Most Elders indicated that it was necessary for the government and the NWMO to talk with the traditional knowledge holders that are from the areas DIRECTLY impacted by the NFW issues. One Elder stated "I know everything that happens within the area I harvest, however I do not know Northern Ontario, but I guarantee the Métis land-users there do".

In general, the Elders interviewed were more concerned about NFW in general and would not comment on what they felt was the best method for storage. Basically, they felt nuclear energy was not natural. In closing one Elder stated it the best "why do we need nuclear energy when the Creator has supplied us with natural sources with no by-product, things like solar, wind and water". Despite attempts by the Director of Natural Resources, the Métis traditional knowledge holders interviewed would not make or supply recommendations on the preferred method of storage.

## 3.6 Reporting Requirements

The MPCBC submitted a mid-term report as required under the NFW agreement on February 01, 2005. This final report, submitted by MPCBC, will complete the requirements as per the NFW agreement with NWMO and the MNC.

## 3.7 Financials to Date

Métis Provincial Council  
STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES- NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT  
For the 12 Months Ended 31/03/2005  
(UNAUDITED)

|                                                              |               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| REVENUES - METIS NATIONAL COUNCIL - NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT | 15,000        |
| EXPENDITURES:                                                |               |
| Strategy and Final Report Preparation                        | 6,770         |
| Hotel Accommodation                                          | 2,203         |
| Travel, Meals and Incidentals                                | 6,027         |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>                                        | <b>15,000</b> |
| <b>EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>                      | <b>0</b>      |

## 4.0 Conclusion

Based on the levels of funding received by the Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia this document is simply a "*position paper*". It is by no means a full consultation of the Métis communities in B.C. To acquire full consultation the MPCBC would require funding for to consult all 39 of our active communities throughout British Columbia. It is understood why the Métis National Council has allocated minimal resources to MPCBC, as the nuclear fuel waste issue affects the Métis Nation of Ontario, Manitoba Métis Federation and the Métis Nation - Saskatchewan directly. However, this document simply supplies a cursory overview of appointed individuals that represent their respective MPCBC regions of British Columbia.

The highlighted concern is the capability for the Métis to have an active role or funds to conduct a third-party non-biased analysis of all the scientific materials being presented to the aboriginal peoples of Canada. This appears to be an industry and government driven process with consultation being a requirement as opposed to it being a part of the process itself. It is difficult to derive opinion when looking in from the outside. This entire process from its strategy stages should have had the <sup>4</sup>three identified aboriginal bodies involved (including the research components).

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<sup>4</sup> Métis National Council, Assembly of First Nations and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami