NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION
SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION DES DÉCHETS NUCLÉAIRES

Invitation to Learn More

Focus on Early Steps

MAY 2010

Purpose of the Learn More Program – Focus on Early Steps

Interested individuals, organizations and communities may contact the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) to learn more about Canada's plan for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel, the activities of the NWMO, and the process the NWMO will use to select an informed and willing community to host this project.

The NWMO's *Learn More Program* makes available resources (information and funding) to support participation in early steps of the siting process, as described in *Moving Forward Together: Process for Selecting a Site for Canada's Deep Geological Repository for Used Nuclear Fuel*. Other programs of support will be developed as the process unfolds.

Background

The NWMO is responsible for implementing Canada's plan for the long-term care of used nuclear fuel produced by Canada's nuclear reactors. The plan is called Adaptive Phased Management, and it ensures that the generations that benefit from nuclear energy will have a plan in place for the responsible care of the used fuel arising from electricity production, ensuring long-term safety and security. Adaptive Phased Management is both a technical method and a management system. It is the approach that emerged following the NWMO's three-year national dialogue with citizens, specialists and Aboriginal peoples. It has as its end point the containment and isolation of used nuclear fuel in a deep geological repository constructed in a suitable rock formation. It was developed in dialogue with Canadians and chosen as Canada's approach for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel by the Government of Canada in June 2007.

The NWMO wishes to support the interest and involvement of Canadians in implementing Canada's approach for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel. Our current focus is on selecting an informed and willing community to host this important national project. This *Learn More Program* makes available resources on request (information and funding) and is designed to support participation in the early steps of the site selection process.

Program Components

The five program components outlined below are offered as a set of resources that interested individuals, organizations and communities may find helpful in supporting their early consideration of Adaptive Phased Management, Canada's plan for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel.

Learn More About Adaptive Phased Management

We encourage all interested individuals, organizations and communities to learn about how Adaptive Phased Management will safely and securely manage used nuclear fuel over the long term and the basis for confidence.

- We invite interested individuals, organizations and communities to learn more about Canada's plan and the process that will guide selection of a safe site in an informed, willing community.
  - The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) will meet with any group of individuals to provide information about Adaptive Phased Management and the nature of the project that the NWMO has been mandated to implement. The NWMO will provide funding to cover travel expenses for individuals representing organizations and geographically defined communities to meet with the NWMO at the NWMO offices in Toronto or other location as determined by the NWMO, consistent with the NWMO's participant expense guidelines.
  - A package of materials designed to help build awareness of the project and support small group conversations among interested citizens will be available on the NWMO website or will be mailed upon request.
- Safety, security and protection of people and the environment is the overriding focus of the process that will lead to selection of the location for the deep geological repository for used nuclear fuel. For those interested in potentially considering hosting this project in their community, we suggest a good starting point is understanding the technical design and scientific site evaluation factors that will protect present and future generations and the environment.

  Upon request, the NWMO will provide small amounts of funding to geographically defined communities to assist in the hiring of independent expert advice in order to help build their understanding of Adaptive Phased Management and the project that is planned. The NWMO will provide funding to assist a community to build its understanding of the technical safety dimensions of the project as follows:
  - Hire a third-party expert to review material published to date, in order to answer questions the community representatives may have about the s afety of the project and the basis for confidence at this early stage.
  - The scope of the review may vary depending on the particular needs and interests of the community although is likely to include:
    - Meeting with community representatives to learn their questions, which will direct the work.
    - Review of a list of documents published by the NWMO, which describe Adaptive Phased Management and how safety is to be assured through the design of the facility and the nature of testing and safety demonstration that will take place through the siting and licensing process.
    - Other materials as deemed appropriate by the contractor.
    - Preparation of a brief report that describes the safety dimensions using language accessible to the broad public and that addresses the questions posed at this initial stage of work.

Proposals for projects to learn more about Adaptive Phased Management of $15,000 or less will be considered. Proposals of larger value will be considered on an exception basis. In order to be qualified, third-party experts must be recognized as experts in their field, as demonstrated by teaching in a relevant area at a Canadian university and/or through working in an established Canadian consulting firm with a demonstrated track record in this area.

Learn More About the Potential Suitability of the Community to Host the Project

As outlined in *Moving Forward Together: Process for Selecting a Site for Canada's Deep Geological Repository for Used Nuclear Fuel*, at the request of a community, the NWMO will complete an initial screening of the geographic area (Step 2) against a short list of criteria. This preliminary assessment is designed to help a community understand, at a very early stage, whether they are likely to have a potentially suitable site(s). As a support to the community and at their request, the NWMO will provide funding to geographically defined communities, as represented by accountable authorities, to:

- Hire a third-party expert to review the NWMO's screening of the suitability of the community at this Step.

Proposals for independent expert advice at Step 2 of the siting process of $15,000 or less will be considered. Proposals of larger value will be considered on an exception basis. In order to be qualified, third-party experts must be recognized as experts in their field, as demonstrated by teaching in a relevant area at a Canadian university and/or through working in an established Canadian consulting firm with a demonstrated track record in this area.

Support for Visit to Interim Storage Facility Site

The NWMO will cover travel expenses for a small representative delegation from a community to visit an interim waste storage facility in Ontario or other nearby facility, consistent with the NWMO's participant expense guidelines.

- Should initial screening suggest the community has potential to be suitable for the project, the community – as represented by accountable authorities – may request and receive travel expenses to visit an interim storage facility.

Travel expenses to be covered at cost for a representative delegation of 3 to 5 individuals, including at least 2 municipal councillors (or similar accountable individuals).

Support for Development and/or Refinement of a Long-Term Vision for Sustainability

Early in the site selection process, communities may wish to consider this project in the context of their long-term interests. Such a broad approach would help highlight the resources (social, economic, environmental) of the community and pave the way for thinking about how the project may affect the community on a variety of dimensions.

Ultimately, the vision for the community and the extent to which the project contributes to this vision in an acceptable way is a matter for the community to discuss and assess.

- Should initial screening suggest the community has potential to be suitable for the project, the community – as represented by accountable authorities – may request and receive resources to develop and/or augment an existing long-term vision for community sustainability.

Proposals for this work of $40,000 or less will be considered. Proposals of larger value will be considered on an exception basis. The nature of resources provided is to be outlined in a memorandum of understanding between the community and the NWMO, with the community's use of funds subject to third-party audit upon completion.

Support Activities to Build Awareness and Understanding of the Project Within the Community

The NWMO will provide resources (information and funding) on request to support accountable authorities to engage citizens in the community to learn about the project and begin to explore interest in it.

- Should initial screening suggest the community has potential to be suitable for the project, the community – as represented by accountable authorities – may request and receive resources to cover the costs of beginning to engage citizens in the community.

Proposals for this work of $20,000 or less will be considered. Proposals of larger value will be considered on an exception basis. The nature of resources provided is to be outlined in a memorandum of understanding between the community and the NWMO, with the community's use of funds subject to third-party audit upon completion.

Further Support

This *Learn More Program* makes available resources and is designed to support participation in the early steps in the siting process. A program outlining support for participation in subsequent steps in the site selection process will be outlined as the process proceeds.

At this time, the NWMO also encourages any community, interested individual or group to contribute to shaping the knowledge platform on which this project will proceed. For details of program offerings in this area, please review our *Research Support Program.*

For more information or to submit requests and proposals, please contact:

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