



Niigani

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Special points of interest:

- NWMO Annual Report is available
- Next Elders' Forum Meeting to be held on June 4, 5 and 6th, 2008 in Northern Saskatchewan
- Communications Project will create a brochure and DVD

The Elders' Forum—Who We Are?



The NWMO Aboriginal Dialogue regarding the long-term care of Canada's used nuclear fuel began in 2003 with the creation of NWMO. During the study phase of the NWMO's work, agreements were formed with 15 national, regional and local Aboriginal organizations engaging several thousand Aboriginal people across Canada. One recurring theme of the dialogue was a call to bring Aboriginal Traditional

Knowledge together with "western science" when considering the long term management approach that would be used to care for used nuclear fuel. As a result

the NWMO convened the first Elders' Forum in Ottawa in August 2005. It brought together participants from across the country and included a wide spectrum of Canada's Aboriginal community. The invitation protocol involved asking the local, regional, and national organizations who had received support from the NWMO, to suggest Elders who would participate, not as representatives of organizations, but as

holders of traditional knowledge and wisdom to help guide the NWMO in its work. Elders were then invited and they were given the opportunity to name a young person to accompany them in a support role. The Elders' Forum meetings are held yearly (August 2005, October 2006 and August 2007). The next meeting will be held in June 2008. Elders have identified a number of ongoing themes to guide NWMO's work with Aboriginal peoples. The focus of their work is to identify how meaningful involvement and engagement of Aboriginal peoples can help protect Mother Earth, now and in the future.

Niigani - The Elders' Forum Working Group

Niigani was formed in early 2007 as the Working Group of the Elders' Forum. All Niigani members are selected from the Elders' Forum. Niigani works with the NWMO between meetings of the Elders'

Forum to foster a greater understanding of Canada's Aboriginal peoples in the spirit of building healthy, respectful relationships.



Message from Chairperson—Gordon Williams



Fiscal year 2007-2008 has been filled with new challenges for the Elder's Forum and Niigani. The Elders' Forum met once in Garden River which is a First Nation Community just outside of Sault St. Marie, Ontario.

This was a first for the Elders' Forum and the meeting went very well. Niigani met five times in 2007/8 in various areas from the east coast to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The meetings included face to face meetings with the Board of NWMO and the Advisory Council of NWMO in November, 2007. Those meetings were

very well received by all and indicated that the role of Niigani and the Elders' Forum is an integral part of NWMO's commitment to developing good working relationships with Aboriginal People in the four provinces that are involved in the nuclear fuel cycle. Niigani continues to refine its mandate and a final draft will be presented to the Elders' Forum in June of 2008. Niigani is in the process of creating a communication strategy that will keep the Elders' Forum, Niigani and NWMO informed on a regular basis. This newsletter is the first attempt at promoting the new strategy. Other venues will be explored in the future. NWMO has entered into a new phase with the selection of the government in June of 2007 of Adaptive Phased Man-

agement for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel. This has resulted in more activities by Niigani members in the four provinces that are involved in the nuclear fuel cycle in providing advice to the NWMO on building relationships at the national and provincial levels with Aboriginal groups. These activities will continue as NWMO develops and implements the site selection process. This is still in the distant future. However, Niigani and the Elders' Forum advice on working with Aboriginal peoples is an integral part of implementing this process. Keep tuned in for the next edition of this news letter.

Gordon Williams
Chairman of Niigani

Niigani Logo



Niigani chair Gordon Williams and NWMO President Ken Nash with artist Kevin Belmore.

The Niigani logo depicts geese in flight. Artwork to represent this logo was com-

missioned through Kevin Belmore, an Ojibwe artist from Thunder Bay, Ontario. "The word Niigani means 'leading the way' and represents all people working together and our wish to work collaboratively with the NWMO incorporating both Aboriginal and western world views in the long-term management of used nuclear fuel," said Niigani chair Gordon Williams. "Our logo, which depicts geese flying in formation behind a lead goose represents all people working together to find solutions."

The word Niigani means 'leading the way' and represents all people working together in collaboration to find solutions."

Niigani Mission Statement

"... protect and preserve all creation: air, land, water, plants, medicines, animals and human kind—guided by the seven universal teachings of love, trust, sharing, honesty, humility, respect and wisdom.



Message from the President of NWMO—Ken Nash



Welcome to this first edition of the Niigani Newsletter. It is the result of advice given to the NWMO by the members of the NWMO Elders' Forum and Niigani, the Aboriginal Working Group. It highlights the important

work we are pursuing together. We have embarked on a new phase of our mandate as we assume responsibility for implementing the Government's decision to accept the NWMO's recommendation of Adaptive Phased Management (APM) for the long-term care of Canada's nuclear fuel waste. Immediately following the decision, we began a process of reconnecting with people and organizations who had been involved in the study, and meeting others who may have an inter-

est in the implementation of APM. We know that the successful long-term management of nuclear fuel waste is dependent on the NWMO moving forward together, in collaboration with Canadians and Aboriginal peoples. Our meetings, briefings and presentations have been focused in the four nuclear provinces, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario and Saskatchewan as we began to introduce the organization and its Vision, Mission and Values and review the Government decision. People have told us to continue our work and move forward to the next phase of engagement. We consider our work to date to be only initial steps to reconnect and engage with citizens. Our efforts will build upon these early activities through subsequent work as we encourage public review of our draft implementation plan and engage and collaboratively develop the process for selecting a repository site. Following the advice of the Elders' Forum and through the assistance of Niigani we are meeting with

Aboriginal groups and leaders to better understand the important issues facing Aboriginal peoples today, in particular as they relate to the implementation of APM. Through the assistance of Niigani we have developed training programs for NWMO staff in Aboriginal culture, protocols and governance, and are working to understand the interweaving of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge and western science. Through advice from Niigani, the Elders' Forum and throughout the dialogue with Aboriginal peoples, we are also developing culturally appropriate communication materials for use in our work with Aboriginal peoples. We look forward to the continued development of our relationship with the members of the Elders' Forum and Niigani and to the valuable ideas and advice which we receive from them.

Introducing Dr. Marlyn Cook - NWMO Advisory Council Member

Dr. Marlyn Cook was appointed to the NWMO Advisory Committee January 1, 2008. Dr. Cook is a family physician with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Department of Health in the Mohawk community of Akwesasne, Ontario. She is Cree and a member of the Grand Rapids First Nation in Northern Manitoba. Dr. Cook is known for her work blending Western and Traditional medicine, and has been involved with sharing the

knowledge with medical students and doctors throughout Canada.

The Advisory Council provides independent comment on NWMO's work as required by the Nuclear Fuel Waste Act.

"...Dr. Marlyn Cook is known for her work blending Western and Traditional medicine"



Communications Project Prepare Work for Pamphlet and DVD

Cynthia Jourdain, Engagement & Communications Trainee, is leading an Aboriginal Communications Project Group on behalf of Niigani. Acting on the advice of Aboriginal organizations, communities and individuals that "...effective communication with Aboriginal peoples and communities will require culturally appropriate communication materials,"

Niigani and NWMO established a committee of Aboriginal communication experts to assist with the development of a pamphlet and DVD. The 2008 project will focus on two products, an adapted NWMO Brochure and a DVD. The committee includes: Cynthia Jourdain, Chairperson; Chris Lafontaine, Niigani NWMO Aboriginal Working Group; Sky Bridges,

Director of Marketing, Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN); and Paul Macedo, Director of Marketing, Aboriginal Multi Media Society (AMMSA) / Windspeaker. The project will be completed and ready for distribution later this year.

NWMO Elders Forum

You can reach the NWMO in many ways.

Website www.nwmo.ca
Webmaster Email info@nwmo.ca

Toll Free 1.866.249.6966 (within Canada)

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nwmo

NUCLEAR WASTE
MANAGEMENT
ORGANIZATION

SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION
DES DÉCHETS
NUCLÉAIRES

Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO)

In 2002, the federal government passed the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act (NFWA)*. The *NFWA* required the nuclear energy corporations within Canada (Hydro-Quebec, Ontario Power Generation and New Brunswick Power) to establish a new corporation, the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO).

The Act required that that the NWMO recommend an approach for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel. The Act further required that the NWMO consult broadly with the general public and with Aboriginal peoples. In November 2005, the NWMO tabled its recommended approach, Adaptive Phased Management (APM), with the Minister of Natural Resources Canada. In June 2007 the Government of Canada selected the NWMO recommendation, Adaptive Phased Management.

The NWMO is committed to working collaboratively with Canadians to develop and implement a management approach for the long-term care of Canada's used nuclear fuel that is socially acceptable, technically sound, environmentally responsible and economically feasible. Our vision is to fulfill our mandate in a manner that safeguards people and respects the environment now and in the future. The NWMO is committed to engaging citizens and Aboriginal peoples through all phases of the implementation of Adaptive Phase Management.

Adaptive Phased Management

Adaptive Phased Management is a technical method and a management system. The method is implemented in stages with the end goal of centralizing all of Canada's used nuclear fuel in one location, and isolating and containing it deep underground in a suitable rock formation. The management system is phased and adaptive, with explicit decision-points to incorporate new social learning and technological innovation as it is implemented. At each stage options, including a contingency for temporary shallow underground storage, can be evaluated and the plan modified before proceeding. A future society will decide whether and when there is sufficient confidence in the safety of the approach to seal and backfill the repository

Frequently Asked Questions

Is the NWMO involved in International Research?



NWMO is involved in a number of international research projects. An important component of the NWMO's

approach to research is their interaction with national waste management organizations in other countries. The NWMO has co-operation agreements with SKB (Sweden), Posiva (Finland), Andra (France) and Nagra (Switzerland) to facilitate an exchange of information and to enable the NWMO to participate in joint research & development pro-

jects of mutual interest. These agreements cover all fields of long-term radioactive waste management study. These studies range from management options, site investigation, characterization, engineering designs to public communication and involvement.

Are There Any Aboriginal People on the NWMO Board of Directors?

Yes, Mr. Ron Jamieson, is Mohawk from Six Nations is a Board Member and there are two Aboriginal people on the NWMO Advisory Council.

Dr. Marlyn Cook is Cree from northern Manitoba and Donald Obonsawin is from Ontario. Dr. Cook is a Cree family physician and Donald Obonsawin is a business man.

Future Issues

Newsletter is a Quarterly Publication

The Elders Forum Newsletter is published three times per year. The next issues will be available in September and a Christmas Issue.

