



NUCLEAR WASTE SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION  
MANAGEMENT DES DÉCHETS  
ORGANIZATION NUCLÉAIRES

# Preliminary Assessment of Potential Suitability: Phase 2

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT ENGAGEMENT OF INTERESTED  
COMMUNITIES IN THE NWMO SITE SELECTION PROCESS



**DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION WITH COMMUNITIES**

**FEBRUARY 2014**

## I. Introduction

In May 2010, the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) launched a process to identify a safe site in an informed and willing community to host facilities for the long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel. The principles and decision-making framework to guide the selection of a site were developed collaboratively through a two-year dialogue involving a broad cross-section of Canadians and Aboriginal peoples.

Canada's plan for the long-term care of used nuclear fuel is called Adaptive Phased Management (APM). The ultimate goal of APM is to safely contain and isolate the used fuel in a single Deep Geological Repository (DGR) in a suitable rock formation. The objective of the site selection process is to arrive at a single location for the DGR and associated centre of expertise through several phases of progressively more detailed technical, scientific and socio-economic assessment.

The process is advancing through a multi-year series of steps to ensure that, above all, the site selected is safe and secure, and meets the highest scientific, professional and ethical standards. Since launching the process, the NWMO has been working collaboratively with communities interested in learning to begin exploring their potential to meet site selection requirements. In 2013, Creighton in Saskatchewan, and Hornepayne, Ignace, and Schreiber in Ontario, were identified for further study and advanced to the second phase of the preliminary assessment step (Step 3, Phase 2). Upon the completion of Phase 1 assessments with other communities, additional communities may be identified as warranting further study by advancing to Phase 2.

The second phase of Preliminary Assessment work involves more intensive community learning and engagement. Work will take on a broader focus to include First Nations and Métis peoples, and surrounding communities. Preliminary fieldwork will begin, including airborne surveys, and at a later date, limited borehole drilling, to further assess geology and site suitability against technical safety requirements.

Engagement activities in the second phase of preliminary assessment are designed to be implemented through a partnership involving interested communities, First Nations and Métis peoples, surrounding communities and the NWMO in a process based on trust, fairness and mutual understanding.

The NWMO is committed to the active and meaningful participation of interested communities, Aboriginal communities and surrounding communities. From its inception in 2002, the NWMO has sought to develop its processes and plans with the involvement of interested communities and Aboriginal peoples, laying a foundation for ongoing engagement and partnership.

Throughout the site selection process, the NWMO seeks to define the suitability of sites through engagement of the community and those in the surrounding area, and through interweaving scientific and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge. Ultimately, the project will only proceed with the involvement of an interested community, potentially affected Aboriginal peoples and neighboring communities working in partnership to implement the project.

## II. Moving Towards Partnership

Building the relationships that would be required to support implementation of the APM Project will necessarily involve many steps over an extended period of time. The NWMO understands that early on, trust and understanding needs to be established to achieve mutual learning. As work advances, envisioning the project together and planning for its implementation is important. Planning for the project's implementation may include discussion about:

- the potential for strategic hiring and strategic procurement;
- planning and implementation of education and training programs in the area over the extended planning and operation lifespan of the project;
- business incubation support to assist local businesses to position themselves to participate in the project;
- investments in infrastructure that may be required to foster well-being beyond what may be required for the project; and
- business and ownership opportunities associated with the project.

## III. Phase 2 Preliminary Assessments

Preliminary assessments, which take place in Step 3 of the site selection process, are designed to assess in a preliminary way the potential suitability of an interested community and area to host a deep geological repository as part of Canada's plan for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel.

Preliminary assessments are implemented through a two-phased process. Phase 1 focuses on exploring the potential for the interested community to meet the robust requirements for the project. Phase 2 focuses on deepening this learning and exploration of potential suitability within the community, and broadening learning and reflection to include First Nations and Métis peoples in the area and surrounding communities. The project will only proceed with the involvement of the interested community, Aboriginal peoples in the area and surrounding communities working in partnership to implement the project.

## IV. Resource Program Description – Interested Communities

### Purpose

This program is designed to provide resources to assist communities that are participating in Phase 2 Preliminary Assessment studies to support their efforts to explore interest in hosting the deep geological repository and centre of expertise, which are core components of Canada's plan for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel.

### Who are interested communities?

Interested communities are communities that expressed interest in learning more about the project. They have successfully completed an initial screening, have worked with the NWMO to complete Phase 1 preliminary assessment studies, and through these assessments, have been identified as having strong potential to meet the robust requirements associated with this project.

### Description

Phase 2 preliminary assessment studies involve more detailed technical and social studies, and intensive engagement within the community and with Aboriginal peoples. Neighbouring communities in the immediate vicinity will also be involved.

The resources provided to interested communities are intended to assist the interested community to build its understanding of the project, including raising questions, seeking information and advice on Adaptive Phased Management and its implementation in the area, seeking direct experience by visiting nuclear facilities, meeting with the Canadian regulator to understand the regulatory framework that will govern this project, and understanding the international context for the project.

These resources are also intended to assist the community in reflecting on the potential for the project to foster the well-being of the community, and to participate in discussions within the community and with Aboriginal peoples to develop a deep understanding of the project and explore how the project could be implemented together in partnership. Neighbouring communities in the immediate vicinity will also be involved.

Resources available to interested communities are outlined in the following table. This program will be regularly reviewed and refined as experience evolves and needs are refined.

## RESOURCES FOR INTERESTED COMMUNITIES

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1. **Funding for administrative expenses associated with working with the NWMO and communicating with community members**
- Detailed technical and social studies will require planning, and ongoing discussion and collaboration between the NWMO and the community, and also surrounding communities and Aboriginal peoples. It is expected that regular meetings with a community liaison committee will be helpful for planning and advancing the studies, as will ongoing communication with community members.
- Resources are available for expenses incurred through participating in Phase 2 feasibility studies which will be covered at cost. This includes costs associated with:
- Dedicated support staff
  - Administrative expenses of a community working group and its regular meetings, including newsletter, website, advertising
  - Aboriginal cultural awareness training within the community
  - Learning through conference attendance, including conference fees and travel expenses (up to \$10,000 for each 12-month period)
  - Community youth initiatives to support science learning and learning about Canada's plan for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel (maximum \$5,000 for each 12-month period)
- This also includes costs associated with expenses of Council and of municipal staff associated with communications among staff and Council, payroll, accounts payable, tracking receipts, phone, fax, email, etc., related to the NWMO process, and expenses associated with meetings with Aboriginal peoples in the area and surrounding communities or region.
- Expenses in this category to be covered at cost. An accounting must be kept of activities and money spent suitable for third-party audit and submitted to the NWMO every six months for the duration of participation in this program.
- Up to \$125,000 for each 12-month period for the duration of the Phase 2 assessments is available
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2.	<p><b>Support for strategic planning activities</b></p> <p>Detailed studies will be conducted during Phase 2 assessments of the potential social, economic and cultural effects associated with the project. These studies will be conducted in close collaboration with the community and may include economic modelling, market and other studies.</p> <p>The community may wish to enhance or augment an existing long-term vision for community sustainability, integrated community sustainability plan and/or strategic plan during this process to support its participation in the planning and implementation of these other studies with the NWMO.</p> <p>Funding is available for a community to contract with an outside expert to enhance or augment an existing plan to support community participation in the process.</p>	<p>Up to \$40,000 for each 12-month period for the duration of the Phase 2 assessments is available</p>
3.	<p><b>Understanding key topics such as radiation, geosciences studies, protecting the environment, multiple barriers</b></p> <p>The NWMO acknowledges the importance to communities of developing a deep understanding of key topics from NWMO specialists and academics working in the field by organizing a series of learning events and workshops which will bring community representatives and these academics and specialists together.</p> <p>Modest participant expenses will be covered by the NWMO for community representatives to participate in these learning events and workshops.</p>	<p>Costs covered</p>
4.	<p><b>Visit an interim storage facility</b></p> <p>Community members may be interested in seeing how used nuclear fuel is currently managed on an interim basis.</p> <p>The NWMO will cover travel expenses for a small delegation of community representatives to visit an interim nuclear waste storage facility in Ontario or other nearby facility.</p>	<p>Costs covered</p>

5.	<b>Meet with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC)</b>	Costs covered
<p>Community members may be interested in learning about the regulatory framework that governs the NWMO project.</p>		
<p>The NWMO will cover travel expenses for a small delegation of community representatives to learn more about the regulatory framework governing the long-term management of used nuclear fuel by meeting with the CNSC.</p>		
<p>The timing and agenda for the meeting is established directly by the CNSC in concert with the delegation, in order to ensure the delegation's areas of interest and questions are addressed.</p>		
6.	<b>Understanding the international perspective</b>	Costs covered
<p>The NWMO encourages communities to keep abreast of international programs and best practices.</p>		
<p>The NWMO will facilitate opportunities for community representatives to learn from those involved in the implementation of used fuel management programs in other countries by organizing a series of learning events or workshops which will bring together community representatives and these international leaders.</p>		
<p>Modest participant expenses will be covered by the NWMO for community representatives to participate in these workshops</p>		
<p>Community members may be interested in seeing how nuclear material is being managed over the long term. In the second or third year of Phase 2 assessments in a community, the NWMO will cover travel expenses for a small delegation of community representatives to visit an operating waste management facility, and meet the host community, in the United States or Europe as organized with the NWMO.</p>		
7.	<b>Community learning centre</b>	Costs covered
<p>The NWMO community office will be expanded to house exhibits and other learning material, and will be staffed to support learning within the community as Phase 2 assessment studies are planned and implemented and findings are shared.</p>		
8.	<b>Open houses and community discussions</b>	Costs covered
<p>A regular schedule of open houses will be planned and organized with the community to seek community involvement in the conduct of the studies and to share study findings as they become available.</p>		