

# Report of

# Elders' Forum 3

**NWMO DR-2007-01**

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## **Nuclear Waste Management Organization**

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) was established in 2002 by Ontario Power Generation Inc., Hydro- Québec and New Brunswick Power Corporation in accordance with the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act (NFWA)* to assume responsibility for the long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel.

NWMO's first mandate was to study options for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel. On June 14, 2007, the Government of Canada selected the NWMO's recommendation for Adaptive Phased Management (APM). The NWMO now has the mandate to implement the Government's decision.

Technically, Adaptive Phased Management (APM) has as its end-point the isolation and containment of used nuclear fuel in a deep repository constructed in a suitable rock formation. Collaboration, continuous learning and adaptability will underpin our implementation of the plan which will unfold over many decades, subject to extensive oversight and regulatory approvals.

## **NWMO Dialogue Reports**

The work of the NWMO is premised on the understanding that citizens have the right to know about and participate in discussions and decisions that affect their quality of life, including the long-term management of used nuclear fuel. Citizens bring special insight and expertise which result in better decisions. Decisions about safety and risk are properly societal decisions and for this reason the priorities and concerns of a broad diversity of citizens, particularly those most affected, need to be taken into account throughout the process. A critical component of APM is the inclusive and collaborative process of dialogue and decision-making through the phases of implementation.

In order to ensure that the implementation of APM reflects the values, concerns and expectations of citizens at each step along the way, the NWMO plans to initiate a broad range of activities. For each of these activities, reports are prepared by those who designed and conducted the work. This document is one such report. The nature and conduct of our activities is expected to change over time, as best practices evolve and the needs and preferences of citizens with respect to dialogue on nuclear waste management questions is better understood. The NWMO expects to engage citizens in a variety of ways, including:

- Workshops, roundtables and multi-party dialogues
- Public attitude research
- E-Dialogues
- Public information and discussion sessions.

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### Disclaimer:

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Facilitator's Report

## **ABORIGINAL ELDERS' FORUM 3**

August 20-22, 2007  
Garden River First Nation Community Centre  
Garden River First Nation, Ontario

Convened by

**The Nuclear Waste Management Organization**

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## INTRODUCTION

As stated by Mr. Ken Nash, President of the NWMO in his letter to participants of 20 August, 2007, the third Elders' Forum was meant to continue the work accomplished to date by forum participants and the NWMO, and to further develop the long-term collaborative relationship between the NWMO and Aboriginal peoples that will be vital to the successful implementation of Adaptive Phased Management.

Building on the themes and recommendations that emerged from the previous two Elders' Forums, the 2007 forum was intended to focus on the development of next steps as the NWMO moves towards the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management. The sharing of traditional teachings and of traditional ceremony, as planned through Niigani (the Aboriginal Working Group established as a result of recommendations from the 2006 Elders' Forum) were a highlight of this year's forum, and continued to enhance the sensitivity of the NWMO towards Aboriginal peoples' cultures and traditional practices, as well as to deepen NWMO's understanding of First Peoples' perspectives, knowledge and wisdom.

## **DAY ONE – 20 August, 2007**

Prior to the start of the agenda, participants were informed that various elders and youth from the host Garden River First Nation, as well as from other First Nations attending the Three Fires Confederacy meeting that was simultaneously being held nearby, would be attending from time to time as observers to the NWMO Elders' Forum.

The agenda for the forum was then briefly reviewed [*ref*: Appendix 1 – Agenda, NWMO Elders' Forum 3], with attention being drawn to the following items of discussion:

- The sharing of a traditional teaching, particularly appropriate to the discussions at hand, by elder Tom Mattinas. (Agenda item # 7);
- The presentation of the first draft of the Mission Statement, Principles and Objectives of the Niigani Working Group by Niigani's Chairman, Gordon Williams (Agenda item # 20);
- The discussion and input to the NWMO's Implementation Plan for Adaptive Phased Management, and Aboriginal Engagement in 2008, by the NWMO's President, Ken Nash, (Agenda item # 23);
- The presentation of the report on the Aboriginal Youth Summer Project by the summer project staff, Gitpu Nevin and Jennifer Piccin. (Agenda item # 22).
- Discussion concerning development of an effective communication plan between Niigani and the NWMO's Elders' Forum participants, facilitated by Chris Lafontaine, (Agenda item # 29).

Participants were updated on the expected arrivals of the Chairman of the Niigani Aboriginal Working Group, Gordon Williams, and Ken Nash, President of the NWMO, both of whom had been unable to travel to Garden River in time to attend the first day of the forum. Participants reviewed the Principles of Participation distributed for the meeting.



As an “ice-breaking” exercise, the forum facilitator then asked for a quick round-table introduction, providing participants with the opportunity to briefly express their individual expectations of this assembly. Participants expressed a wide range of concerns but the general consensus, as observed by the facilitator, was that participants were ready to continue the work begun in previous forums - with caution but determined to collaborate in discussions with open minds and to the best of their ability.

The Forum was opened with a prayer led by elder Doreen Lesage from Garden River First Nation.

Chief Lyle Sayers, of Garden River First Nation, then made his welcoming statement to the NWMO Elders’ Forum. Chief Sayers stated that such a meeting of people from many First Nations, Inuit and Métis was appropriate in Garden River, as it has been a “meeting place” historically for millennia. He went on to share his community’s most recent experience with nuclear waste, describing how the entire community mobilized to block the transportation of this “ultimate toxin” across their territory when a shipment was being sent by road transport to Chalk River, Ontario, forcing authorities to use air transport to fly the nuclear waste to its destination. Chief Sayers made brief mention of how, in his own short lifetime, massive environmental damages have detrimentally affected the sources of sustenance of the families of his community, with previously abundant medicinal plants, game and berry harvests virtually disappearing. Stating further that, while he was attending this forum to express the welcome of his community and not to make a speech, he declared that Garden River First Nation would never permit nuclear waste on to their territory, even in transit elsewhere. Chief Sayers closed his welcoming remarks by inviting those present to drop in to the summit meeting of the Three Fires Confederacy, which was coincidentally being held at Garden River First Nation.

NWMO V-P Kathryn Shaver then thanked Chief Sayers for his welcome and presented him with a traditional gift of a blanket as gratitude for the community’s gracious permission to be on their land.

At this point in the proceedings NWMO staff took participants through a quick review of the documentation in the participant's binder and the Agenda for the Forum. This was followed by a brief summary of the history of the NWMO Elders' Forum formation and evolution since, mentioning that this topic would be addressed in more detail the next day.

NWMO stressed that participant elders and youth were there solely as individuals who had responded to NWMO's request for Aboriginal peoples' knowledge and wisdom to help guide the NWMO in its work, and that no participant would be considered to be attending as a representative of any specific Aboriginal organization. The fact that these forums are not and never will be construed to be "consultation with Aboriginal people(s)" in the legal sense of the term was also stated on several occasions throughout this first morning of the forum.

NWMO staff closed their remarks by stating that everyone was there to learn together and from each other, and that this dialogue between NWMO and the participants in the Elders' Forums were not political in nature or intent.

Respected elder Tom Mattinas then presented his particularly well-chosen traditional ancestral teaching. [A copy of this valuable contribution to the deliberations of the forum, drawn entirely from the facilitator's notes, is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.]

Tom concluded his sharing of traditional wisdom with explanatory comments in relation to the teaching, to assist participants unfamiliar with this ancient and effective teaching method to better discern the valuable lessons it provides.

Following the regular health break the elders held an *in camera* session for the remainder of the afternoon.

In the evening a traditional shaking tent ceremony was attended by some of the participants.

## **DAY TWO – 20 August, 2007**

Elder Elmer Courchene opened the day's proceedings with a prayer, and set the collaborative tone of the day's session by saying, "Yesterday we shared conversation that sometimes heated a bit, and then we had time to sit together on our own as elders and it helped us to clear some of our concerns and worries about this from our minds. Today we will build on that, and we can start building a trusting relationship between everyone here."

NWMO staff then provided an overview of the evolution of the NWMO Elders' Forum. The presentation reviewed the legislative basis that created the NWMO, its mandate, and how NWMO's engagement and dialogue with Aboriginal peoples has been and will remain a core principle of operations for the organization. It was noted that NWMO has established and benefitted from dialogue with Aboriginal peoples, their governments and their organizations since the Study Period 2002-2005, when the NWMO worked in collaboration with and provided support to 15 Aboriginal national, provincial, territorial and local organizations to conduct dialogues with their members in a manner consistent with the unique value systems and/or decision-making process of the organization and the people represented.

Participants were told that the NWMO learned in those initial meetings that it was critical, if NWMO is to have any chance of succeeding in its mandate, that Aboriginal traditional knowledge be interwoven with the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management.

In order to ensure this recommendation was effectively implemented, NWMO asked the 15 Aboriginal organizations involved during the Study Period for their recommendation of appropriate resource people who could share such traditional knowledge with the NWMO.

The participants in the NWMO Aboriginal Elders' Forums were the resource people recommended by those Aboriginal organizations, but it is clearly understood by all concerned that the elders participate only as individuals, not as representatives of any organization.

The standard need for a helper to assist a traveling elder was enhanced by adding the youth component to the NWMO's Elders' Forum, which was first convened in the City of Ottawa in 2005.

The deliberations of the Elders' Forum do not replace the dialogue between NWMO and the Aboriginal national, provincial and territorial organizations, or NWMO dialogue with individual Aboriginal communities. Further, NWMO staff underlined, that the deliberations of the NWMO's Aboriginal Elders' Forums have never been and never will be used in any way that would even suggest that such deliberations would constitute "consultation with Aboriginal people" in the legally valid sense.

The Chairman of the Niigani Working Group, Gordon Williams, recapped the process that resulted in the formation of the Niigani Working Group by the Elders' Forum subsequent to the forum of 2006. He then reviewed the 2007 Workplan devised by and for the Niigani Working Group.

The Chairman concluded this brief review by presenting the draft of the Mission Statement of the Niigani Aboriginal Working Group prepared for review and ratification by the entire Elders' Forum. With the consent of the forum participants, discussion and ratification of this draft Mission Statement was put off until after Ken Nash, President of the NWMO, had made his presentation regarding the implementation planning for Adaptive Phased Management, and the organization's Aboriginal Engagement in 2008.

Ken Nash, President of the NWMO, then addressed the forum, first by expressing his pleasure at being able to participate and thanking the participants for welcoming his attendance. Ken stressed that the NWMO takes the advice and guidance provided to the

organization by the participants in the Aboriginal Elders' Forum very seriously. He emphasized that the goals of NWMO are very long term, and that it would be years if not decades before any plans would be completed, let alone implemented regarding the disposition and long-term storage of Canada's nuclear waste. He reviewed the legislated origin of NWMO, telling forum participants that regardless of the fact that NWMO is funded by the nuclear waste producers, the organization is independent in its deliberations, planning, decision-making and eventual action. Ken informed the Elders' Forum that Mr. Ron Jamieson, a Mohawk Six Nations member and high-profile Aboriginal business leader, has agreed to serve on the NWMO's Board of Directors. Ron is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Ontario Power Authority. The NWMO also has added more Aboriginal input to its deliberative process, by drawing on the expertise of Aboriginal members on the NWMO Advisory Council.

Ken stressed that the NWMO does not consider Aboriginal peoples to be "merely another special interest group", citing the unique and special status of Aboriginal peoples in Canada as defined by constitutional, legal and moral imperatives. He stated that the dialogue between the NWMO and the Elders' Forum was not "consultation with Aboriginal people" in the legally binding sense at all, but rather a dialogue between the NWMO and Aboriginal expert advisors that helps the NWMO learn how it is to reach its objectives and fulfill its mandate more effectively.

Ken reiterated that, at this point in the process, the NWMO is learning how to effectively engage in consultations with Aboriginal peoples, and not engaging in any consultations specific to the disposal of the nuclear waste. The advice of the Niigani Working Group will be carefully considered by the Board of Directors of the NWMO when they will meet in November.

Ken recognized the frustrations inherent to meeting only once a year, and stated that only logistics prevented more frequent meetings of the forum. Regardless of the lack of opportunities to convene, Ken concluded by assuring all participants that their

contribution of time and effort was greatly appreciated by, and of much value to, the NWMO.

The floor was then opened for discussion of the presentations by Gordon Williams and that of Ken Nash.

An elder initiated discussion by stating that he was uncomfortable with the draft of the Mission Statement of the Niigani Working Group as proposed. He suggested that the working group affirm that it should undertake to, "...preserve and protect the land, the water, the air, animals, fish, birds and people." He felt that such wording would better define the sense of "relationship" that Aboriginal peoples recognize with all of their environment, rather than dealing with issues of such potentially devastating impacts on the environment as if the environment and people were somehow separate entities.

Another elder, stated that the Principles as well as the proposed Mission Statement drafted for the Niigani Working Group required review and correction. He suggested that the elders meet *in camera* to discuss those framework documents.

The suggestion to meet *in camera* was supported throughout the morning by other members of the Forum. One stated that in addition to the opportunity to meet *in camera* to re-work the proposed Niigani Mission Statement to better reflect the underlying values and culture, they could also discuss options for improving communications in order to have more effective discussion when the topic was to be fully addressed the following day. The elder noted support for independence of the Elders' Forum and Niigani Working Group in addressing the complex issue as well as to fulfill their advisory function not just to the NWMO but even more to their people and communities. "It's also our job to inform communities so that they are well prepared to work with the initiatives undertaken when the NWMO and the national, regional provincial/territorial organizations begin to develop those implementation strategies," the elder concluded.

Ken Nash then responded, stating that the Adaptive Phased Management process had been proposed in 2005 and approved by the federal government in 2007, demonstrating the long-term timelines inherent to the work of the NWMO and the Aboriginal Elders' Forum. He repeated that these discussions were taking place so that NWMO could learn how to eventually engage in formal consultations with Aboriginal peoples at the regional and community levels. He reassured all present that it will be at least two or more years before the process of site evaluation even begins. "Sharing and forming constructive partnerships at the local level is a great idea," Ken declared, "and we count on Niigani and the Elders' Forum to help us learn how to make that happen effectively. We are *not* trying to persuade anyone here that they should promote the objectives of the NWMO to anyone. What we are asking of you is guidance and advice on *how* to talk with Aboriginal peoples, *how* to learn from them, *how* to inform them, and *how* to work with them."

Another elder then spoke, referring to the 15 national Aboriginal organizations that the NWMO had worked with in the past. He asked if a second round of such talks was being planned, and if so, requested that the Elders' Forum participants be kept informed of such plans. He asked that the elders be kept informed of any process that the NWMO might consider in developing formal protocols with national Aboriginal organizations, and pointed out that care must be taken to avoid any conflict that may develop between the mandates of these organizations and that of the Niigani Working Group. He also asked if the NWMO was going to allocate funds for baseline studies soon.

Ken Nash responded to these questions by stating that a second round of meetings with the national Aboriginal organizations as well as with "communities of interest", that is, various groups, organizations and others interested in the work of the NWMO, would be undertaken soon, and that in the matter of planning further meetings with any Aboriginal groups the advice of Niigani would be critical to the NWMO. As to the question regarding the availability of funds as will be required for baseline studies, Ken pointed out that it would be, "at least 20 years" before such studies are required or even possible."

The Chairman of the Niigani Working Group added that there is no doubt that Niigani's role will expand as the NWMO's operations evolve, and that Niigani's recommendations will go beyond sharing 'traditional knowledge' insofar as it will also advise the NWMO on the means and mechanisms it will require to continue its advisory role as the scope of the NWMO's operations is realized.

An elder then suggested that the 'traditional knowledge' that the NWMO requested be shared has never been clearly defined, and asked if it was possible for the NWMO to define, "western knowledge" as a basis of reference to do so. And as comment regarding the information shared about the NWMO's Board of Directors by Ken Nash, this elder expressed the opinion that Niigani would be much more effective if a member of Niigani was appointed to the Board of Directors of the NWMO.

Ken Nash replied to these comments by stating that, in his personal opinion, "western knowledge", as differentiated from "traditional knowledge", addressed primarily technical issues within the context of the NWMO's work and mandate. He said that he did not know precisely how "traditional knowledge" could add to their technical knowledge, but it would be up to Aboriginal people to impart such specific applications of traditional knowledge. Ken went on to address the concern expressed about the lack of Niigani representation on the Board of Directors of the NWMO, stating that he shared that concern to a certain extent. He noted that Niigani's deliberations with the NWMO are regularly reported to the Board as he is a member of the Board.

He also noted that a topic of discussion and great concern of the NWMO is the history of corporations, including those in power development such as the member companies of the NWMO, which in the past failed to adequately take into account Aboriginal concerns either prior to implementation of projects or during their operations. He specifically noted his experience with the Bruce Peninsula-Saugeen First Nation.

In terms of the issue of profit motivated decision-making regarding waste disposal, and potential conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest insofar as the people



who are producing nuclear waste may want to create more of it, he concluded by stating that NWMO was very aware of the potential for corporate self-interest or profit-motivated decision-making to dominate discussions, and that NWMO staff was making considerable effort to make it clear that it was not the NWMO's mandate to promote the nuclear industry, or to base the eventual disposition of the nuclear waste on a "strictly business, bottom line" basis. Further in this respect, Ken pointed out that the NWMO Advisory Council meets regularly with the Board of Directors of the NWMO to advise them and that Niigani will be meeting with both the Advisory Council and the Board of Directors in November.

An elder responded to Ken's remarks by stating, "plain and simple", that until Niigani was represented on the NWMO's Board of Directors, it would be difficult to establish a truly trusting relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the NWMO.

Another elder stated that he was pleased to hear that the NWMO had recently hired some Aboriginal staff, and suggested that the NWMO examine the possibility of establishing scholarships for Aboriginal youth and improving communication between the Elders' Forum members and the NWMO Board, finding ways to make it more frequent and effective. He also suggested that Niigani explore the possibility of learning from other Aboriginal peoples who may have been party to actually dealing with nuclear waste in other countries.

Another elder suggested that there might be more to the NWMO agenda than has been divulged to participants at these Elders' Forums to date, and asked why so much money and effort was being spent, because as far as his community and Nation is concerned when asked about transporting nuclear waste through or depositing it on their lands, "...the answer is and always will be 'No'". The elder asked why, therefore, were these discussions even taking place? He invited the NWMO to come and meet with his community "...to get their 'No' firsthand".

Ken Nash replied that the NWMO would gladly accept that invitation, and NWMO staff added that the NWMO has already met with elders from that particular First Nation.

Another elder then asked who the producers of nuclear waste are in Canada and where the production of nuclear waste is located.

Ken Nash replied that there are currently 22 nuclear reactors in operation in Canada. Twenty are in Ontario, and Quebec and New Brunswick each have one. The Ontario nuclear reactors produce 50% of Ontario's current power generating capacity.

Donald Obonsawin, member of the NWMO's Advisory Council, stated that there is currently, in his opinion, adequate Aboriginal input to and vigilance of the NWMO's Board of Directors, citing the Aboriginal representation on the Board of Directors as well as on the Advisory Council, complemented by the NWMO-supported Elders' Forum and its Niigani Working Group. Donald reiterated the critical point that participants in the Elders' Forums do not represent their communities, their Nations or any Aboriginal government, organization, or entity. Donald stated that, "The questions you are asking the NWMO are the very questions that the NWMO is asking itself." He concluded by sharing his opinion that, "progress is being made" and asked "What is your advice so we can do it better?"

An elder then asked if the NWMO is going to consider some sort of cross-cultural training, in the context of sharing western scientific knowledge with Aboriginal people in culturally adapted terms so that the people understand what they will be asked to evaluate in the future. He stated that he had been told that as many as eight more nuclear power plants were being planned for Ontario, raising the probability that more nuclear waste will be produced before solutions to the problem of dealing with the long-term management of the current nuclear waste has even begun.

He stated that Ontario Hydro has never shown any real interest in the well-being of Aboriginal peoples or their lands, so expansion of Ontario's nuclear power generation

capacity is of great concern to him. He also expressed his confidence that ‘creation’ will somehow neutralize the waste eventually, referring to the Aboriginal teaching shared with participants by Tom Mattinas the previous day describing how the life-killing monster from the east will eventually be destroyed by Aboriginal youth, with the guidance of their elders.

Two other elders then expressed their opinion in agreement with those remarks regarding the willful ignorance of the Ontario power generation industry towards Aboriginal peoples and the environment. They asked that the NWMO provide more information about the pros and cons of on nuclear power generation in order that they be better equipped to effectively assist their people in discussions in the communities.

Another elder then expressed her agreement that more Aboriginal people should be appointed the NWMO Board of Directors, and added that Aboriginal people should be given the power to nominate suitable candidates for such appointments. She also suggested that Aboriginal people should have more say in the organizing of the NWMO agendas as well as in the NWMO’s hiring practices. She stated that care should be taken to ensure that participants in this forum, and other work with the NWMO, were not treated as “token Indians”. She suggested that recently-appointed NWMO Board member Ron Jamieson should attend the next Elders’ Forum. The elder closed her remarks by reminding participants that as Aboriginal people they each had traditional knowledge and spiritual connections with each other and with their lands and all life abiding there. The group and Aboriginal people in general must be proactive rather than reactive.

Another elder who is a member of Niigani explained that the Niigani Working Group gets its direction from the Elders’ Forum, and that one of the primary objectives of this third forum was to review and refine the Niigani Mission Statement, Principles and Objectives. She stated that while it was all very well for forum participants to express their fears and mistrust, they should also be able to tell the NWMO what the Elders’ Forum participants need in order to diminish those fears and the lack of trust. Niigani drafted the Mission Statement, Principles and Objectives and was active with the NWMO

in hiring the summer project staff and creating the Elders' Forum Agenda, however, she also stated that Niigani and the Elders' Forum are willing and anxious to do more and that the Mission Statement, Principles and Objectives were just the suggested ideas and could be changed through the Elders' Forums' feedback. "The whole idea is to establish the proper communication tools to allow the NWMO to go to communities and work with Aboriginal people." The elder concluded with the reminder that Niigani will need resources to do its work. "We need money as a group if we are going to be able to do the work that we as elders think is important to improving the relationship with the NWMO and to interact effectively with them, with each other and with the people in our communities. We need more independence, our own agenda, and capacity building in order to have the ability to do research we believe is necessary in order to work with the NWMO as equal partners." Aboriginal peoples' existing trust in the NWMO was virtually non-existent because of Aboriginal peoples past experiences, and that the message of the shaking tent ceremony performed by Tom Mattinas the previous day had been clear in that without a solid trusting relationship between those concerned there would be no progress and probably escalating levels of conflict instead. The elder stressed that the more independence the elders have in working with NWMO the quicker a trusting relationship can be established.

Another elder then took the floor and began by thanking Ken Nash for his openness, referring to Ken's statement that the executives of the NWMO were making every effort to integrate full and transparent collaboration with Aboriginal people as a factor in the deliberations of their Board of Directors. The elder pointed out that what the gathered elders and youth are dealing with, insofar as Aboriginal dialogue with the NWMO is concerned, is essentially 'big business' supported by government. He also pointed out that the forum participants are being asked to dialogue, "after the fact".

"There is no question in the minds of anyone at NWMO," the elder stated, "of the underlying premise that nuclear waste will be stored in Canada. That decision has already been made, and of course the people who produce that toxic waste don't want to pay the price of having that waste sit in their own homeland, so they are looking at whose home

they will use as their dump. Toronto needs the energy but Toronto wants someone else to hold their toxic waste. People with that ‘Toronto mentality’ are always trying to dump their toxic wastes on those they consider to be worth less than they are worth.” Other provinces remain neutral on this issue because they don’t have the demand for nuclear power generation.”

He went on to say that it is obvious to him that Toronto’s insatiable greed for energy is the core of this problem. He stated that he has a personal interest in the issue of Toronto’s “off-loading of waste” because his community is downstream and constantly vigilant in this regard. He offered the example of a leader from one of the First Nations who once made the mistake of simply accepting to consider a proposal put forth by the City of Toronto to permit the dumping of Toronto’s garbage on their land. The community rose up and immediately removed the leader. The elder then recommended that the NWMO also make efforts to diminish the production of nuclear waste by promoting alternatives, not simply dealing with its eventual storage. He also stated that the NWMO’s Board of Directors should meet with the participants in the Elders’ Forum. In conclusion to his comments, the elder asked who wrote the draft of the Niigani Mission Statement.

The Chairman of the Niganii Working Group, two other elders and Chris Lafontaine declared that they had all contributed in the formulation of the Mission Statement as presented.

At this point the Agenda called for Ken Nash to present the NWMO’s current work and discussion on implementation of Adaptive Phased Management as well as Aboriginal Engagement in 2008. Earlier in the discussion an elder had talked about the need for information to be available in a simple and straightforward manner and suggested that the presentations be given verbally. In the spirit of these comments Ken proposed that he would read from his informal notes on these two topics rather than present the full-blown presentation to the forum. Ken noted that the NWMO was building its capacity to implement Adaptive Phased Management, including expanding engagement through having more discussions such as this Elders’ Forum, and with more people and

organizations, groups and people interested in the NWMO's work. The NWMO will also be expanding its technical staff, and will possibly add more people with the expertise to work on Aboriginal issues. The NWMO Board of Directors approves the budget, and it is important for the Niigani Working Group to put forward their recommendations as clearly and as completely as possible. "The better we can understand the needs, the better we can make the case for the funding that your ideas will need in order to be realized."

An elder requested a flow chart to better understand the implementation plan for the launch of Adaptive Phased Management, preferably with cost factors/budgetary allocations. "You had mentioned that this process to dispose of and store Canada's nuclear waste will cost more than \$15billion over the coming 20 to 30 years. On what?" he asked.

Ken Nash replied that, "... the final study report shows the cost estimates, but they are rough estimates as are the timelines shown in the new brochure. These are very general figures. We need collaboration with the people concerned, such as yourselves, in order to refine those numbers into more specific and precise form."

Chris Lafontaine then addressed the issue of communications, stating that there had to be a better way to get information out to the participants in these forums. He pointed out that the NWMO will be making strategic decisions in the coming months, and it is crucial that participants in these Elders' Forums have the information they need in order to provide valuable advice to the NWMO before they make these decisions. Chris asked that, prior to the discussion on communication scheduled for the following day, participants think about what information they wanted, as well as how they want to receive that data.

Ken Nash noted that the only strategic decisions that would be made in the immediate future would be to refine the information in the brochure and proceed to distribute it.

An elder suggested that the NWMO consider providing an orientation or basic ‘training’ session to forum participants, to help them understand what nuclear waste is, how the NWMO was formed, etc.

Another elder suggested that the NWMO consider asking the producers of nuclear waste to at least slow down their production of this toxic waste until the eventual disposition of that waste is decided and asked for an update on nuclear energy production and its current status in Canada.

Ken Nash replied that there are current plans to build more nuclear reactors and that such decisions are taken by provincial governments.

Donald Obonsawin followed up on this point by stating that the NWMO’s current mandate is to deal with current nuclear waste from current technology. New reactors may use different, emerging technologies that may create a new type of nuclear waste, possibly of a type that might be recycled. He concluded his remark by stating that the use of technology that would permit at least some nuclear waste to be recycled is being evaluated by power generating companies as to its feasibility and to see if in using it can be implemented profitably.

An elder pointed out that if the Niigani Mission Statement was accepted by all of the people dealing with nuclear waste; they would be more cautious to the safety of all people, all nations and the environment. Another elder cautioned to put the well being of people ahead of the well being of profits.

A youth participant stated that Aboriginal peoples have considered themselves and all humanity to be part of nature since time immemorial. In the Aboriginal perspective people were put on this earth as protectors of the earth, the land, waters, air, plants and animals, and are no more or less important than any other being, people, trees or even mosquitoes. Then came the foreign concepts of business and politics which have been trying to destroy that Aboriginal perspective ever since those concepts were brought to

these shores. “The burying of this toxic nuclear waste in the earth is just as harmful as burying it in our bodies,” she said, and concluded her remarks by stating that she does not agree with the notion of burying this nuclear waste.

Speaking through a translator, another elder stated that everything about the Aboriginal way of life for tens of thousands of years reflects the harmonious relationship with the land and all that forms it and is part of it. Now a new struggle to maintain that harmonious relationship has arisen, in the form of this deadly nuclear waste. It is obvious to him, he said, that greedy men will continue to develop new ways to harm and destroy the land in their pursuit of power, forgetting that they also need to live on this land. He felt that Aboriginal peoples will never have any desire to develop anything that will kill children in the future, as he believes this nuclear waste does. The people of [his community] do not use nuclear material, and will never accept nuclear waste anywhere near them. He concluded his remarks by asking that the NWMO remind the producers of nuclear waste that what they decide today will affect the well being of many, many children in the future.

Another elder asked to receive more information regarding the possibility of recycling nuclear waste. He suggested that scientists on both sides of the issue (pro and con) consider working together. He also suggested that the NWMO explore the possibility of producing a documentary on the issue of nuclear waste for public broadcast. “Because at present,” he said, “the average Canadian hears more and more about the benefits of nuclear power generation, but next to nothing about the critical issue of the nuclear waste.”

Ken Nash replied that the idea of having ‘pro and con’ scientists work together was a good one. As for recycling of nuclear waste, Ken stated that it was a newly emerging technology that was allowing some of the nuclear waste to go back into reactors for further use, but it still left waste with very high levels of radioactivity to deal with. He said that during his work on this issue in Europe, France had spent hundreds of millions of dollars attempting to neutralize the radioactivity of nuclear waste, or even to just



diminish its half-life to the point where it remains dangerously radioactive for only a few million years, without success. He also added that some nuclear waste is used to produce beneficial medical treatments, especially in the production of isotopes and equipment used in the fight against cancers.

Following the lunch break, the summer project staff presented their report on the NWMO's Aboriginal Summer Project to "*Explore Two-Way Communication with Aboriginal Peoples.*" The presentation was co-presented by Gitpu Nevin and Jennifer Piccin and was very well received by all present. [This report in its entirety is available on the NWMO website at [www.nwmo.ca](http://www.nwmo.ca).]

Following the presentation, many participants expressed their sincere thanks to the summer project youth for their work and complimented both the presentation as well as the work that they had accomplished. Most of those expressing such sentiments also suggested that the NWMO's Aboriginal summer youth program be enlarged and continued.

One of the summer staff presenting this report addressed the assembly to recount his experience as an employee of the NWMO, as well as his perspective on these Elders' Forums and their integrated youth component. He spoke passionately and at some length about his perception and experience as a youth within the Elders' Forum, his recent employment by the NWMO, and other matters related to the perspectives of Aboriginal peoples in conflict with the perspectives of non-Aboriginal peoples. He expressed his wish that youth at the forum play an active role. He also expressed his opinion that the NWMO cannot be neutral on the subject of nuclear energy because they are owned by the producers of nuclear power as well as his feelings that Aboriginal communities must be approached with respect in any negotiation with the NWMO and they must ensure that they are fully knowledgeable and not be taken advantage of. He concluded his remarks by declaring his intention to continue safeguarding the well being of his people with regards to this issue of nuclear waste.

An elder then asked if the recommendations regarding communication, including the possibility of an Aboriginal Youth Conference, as made by the youth in their report will be incorporated into the communication strategy of the Elders' Forum.

NWMO staff responsible for the Summer Project replied that the two separate communication strategies will be considered in the NWMO's planning for Aboriginal engagement. A two-fold approach will be used, one being the communication with Aboriginal communities and people and the material needed to support this purpose and the other being the opportunity for the youth members of the Elders' Forum to get together on their own to discuss matters which are of importance to youth.

The meeting adjourned for the Aboriginal elders and youth to meet *in camera*. Following the *in camera* session the forum resumed.

Ken Nash expressed his sincere thanks to all participants, as well as to those who had worked hard to create the opportunity for this Elders' Forum. He reflected that he had once read, "People should seek to understand before attempting to be understood," and opined that it certainly applied to the spirit and substance of these dialogues with the Aboriginal Elders' Forum. These meetings, he went on to say, had given him and many others a better appreciation of the history that impedes trust, and the fact that despite that history Aboriginal people are still willing to dialogue encourages him to pledge that he and everyone who works for or with the NWMO will work hard to earn that trust. Ken acknowledged the presence of the members of the NWMO Board of Directors and from the Advisory Council at this forum, not just to listen but to participate. "The Board of Directors has heard you, and the Advisory Council has heard you. This is a good start," he said. He concluded by saying that he hoped that the NWMO, "... did not come across as 'sugar-coating' any issues or facts we have shared with anyone. One of the biggest reasons we are having so much dialogue with so many, many people right across the country, Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals alike, is because we want to do everything possible to ensure that everyone understands exactly how serious is the issue of the safe

and secure management of nuclear waste.” Ken then thanked the young man for being honest and courageous, saying he admired and encouraged such qualities.

The proposed revision of the draft of the Niigani Mission Statement was then addressed by the forum. The Niigani Mission Statement, as revised by the Elders’ Forum *in camera*, reads:

***“.. To 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.”***

Following over an hour of discussion by all participants as to the precise meaning that may be implied or drawn from the wording, one of the more senior of the elders brought the discussion to a close by reminding participants that the issue could be revisited in the future, should the need arise. The elder concluded that the wording was something all participants could live with and which reflected their own beliefs as a group.

Another elder took the floor, and while expressing agreement with the wording of the Niigani Mission Statement, in consensus with the other participants, he warned that participants should beware that they as a forum of traditional Aboriginal elders do not become an organization, with a more and more rigid – and non-traditional - way of deliberating as a council of elders. He concluded his remarks by saying that the traditional teaching of the previous day, as well as the message from the shaking tent ceremony performed, held a lesson that should be carefully considered.

NWMO staff then thanked the participants for reaching consensus on the Mission Statement, and said that this Mission Statement was something that Niigani would now take and, within its spirit and context, review and adjust the accompanying Principles and Objectives to ensure that they completely support the intent of the Mission Statement. The final draft would be submitted to the next Elders’ Forum for approval.

Throughout the day there were various topics raised that were not directly related to the discussion of the Mission Statement, Principles and Objectives but which provided

additional suggestions and ideas from Forum participants. One Elder asked President Ken Nash, “What about economic development and resource sharing with Aboriginal peoples?” He stated that it would be helpful if a timetable was available, indicating the point in the process when “dialogue becomes consultation”. He suggested that the Elders’ Forum gain more independence by way of a formal agreement with NWMO, with an appropriate operational budget allocation. He pointed out that it will require a “capacity building” program for communities to be able to effectively understand the subject matter and subsequently work with their national, provincial and local Aboriginal organizations and governments.

Another elder, suggested that forum participants would benefit from reception of regular, simple updates from NWMO on the specific issues and topics at hand.

A youth participant suggested that, since young people will be the generation most affected by the disposition of nuclear waste, the NWMO should enlarge the scope of public dialogue among Aboriginal peoples’ youth in particular.

Finally, there was general support for the proposition that Niigani get more funding for its work as well as more independence in developing its own agenda and work plan so as to better advise the NWMO.

### **DAY THREE – 21 August, 2007**

The final day of the Elders’ Forum began with Chris Lafontaine taking the floor to address the development of a more effective communication plan.

Chris told the forum that he needed answers to two questions in order to be able to formulate a communication strategy that would meet the needs of all forum participants. He then asked for a ‘round-table’ response to the following two questions:

*“What information do you need?”* and, *“How do you want to receive this information?”* Twenty-six (26) participants replied in turn.

In terms of content, participants said that they want to receive a regular update providing detailed information on all the activities undertaken by the NWMO in the context of public consultation, as well as in regard to all internal deliberation between the NWMO Board of Directors, the Niigani Working Group and/or the Advisory Council to the NWMO Board of Directors.

The preferred medium of communication should be in the form of a regular newsletter. While distribution of the information newsletter via e-mail was said to be an acceptable medium, a printed copy must also be distributed to all participants as some have limited access to the internet and others do not use computers at all.

Some participants also suggested establishing a ‘blog’ or ‘bulletin board/chat room’ for the NWMO and participants in the Elders’ Forum.

In relation to the issue of access to information concerning nuclear material, the uses of nuclear material and the issues surrounding disposal of nuclear waste, all participants at the forum requested that the NWMO make more effort to provide them with such data so that they could discuss these issues with the people and families that constitute their respective home communities. Documentary information on the NWMO, its formation, mandate and intentions was also requested for the same reason.

Youth participants in the forum also recommended that the NWMO consider sponsoring a national conference for Aboriginal Youth, and this recommendation received strong support from the Elders’ Forum as a whole.

These replies were summarized by Chris Lafontaine. He concluded that the NWMO communication strategy will need to provide a platform for discussion between participants in the NWMO’s Elders’ Forum, Niigani and NWMO resource staff. The

communication platform of choice should also provide easy access to background material such as a description of the ‘nuclear cycle’, the formation and mandate of the NWMO, etc. As for the suggested Elders’ Forum newsletter, Chris stated that it was his opinion that it could be produced and distributed at least on a quarterly basis, or even monthly if the volume of information and news merits more frequent publication.

He noted that in addition to this discussion on communication between Forum members and Niigani and the NWMO that there were a number of related communication media suggestions for information in general. Several participants recommended that the NWMO make use of the Aboriginal Peoples’ Television Network (APTN), given the strong following this network has among all Aboriginal communities across the country. Further to that suggestion, it was added that the NWMO should consider producing an in-depth documentary describing the entire nuclear cycle, from mining of fissionable ore to nuclear waste.

Chris ended his summary by thanking everyone for their input, and stating that he would continue to work on the development of a more effective communication strategy and ensure that participants are kept up to date on the work in progress.

NWMO staff then took the floor to reflect on, and summarize, the proceedings of the NWMO’s third Elders’ Forum. Participants were informed that the NWMO was hoping to convene the Elders’ Forum at least twice in 2008, once in each half of the year. The proposed 2008 Elders’ Forums would be convened in a First Nation community if at all possible, or in a centralized location that can accommodate the large number of participants. Participants were also told that, while the idea of holding a separate youth conference on the issue of nuclear waste disposal was a good idea, the public engagement efforts of the NWMO at this time are still in evolution, and that in the meantime youth and elders continue to work together.

The NWMO’s sincere thanks was extended to everyone for their important participation and valuable advice, along with best wishes for a safe journey home.

# **APPENDIX 1**

## **Agenda**

### **ABORIGINAL ELDERS' FORUM 3**

August 20-22, 2007  
Garden River First Nation Community Centre  
Garden River First Nation, Ontario

Convened by  
**The Nuclear Waste Management Organization**

**ELDERS' FORUM 3  
AUGUST 20-22, 2007  
Garden River First Nation Community Centre  
Garden River, Ontario  
AGENDA**

Monday, August 20, 2007			
		<b>Speaker/Lead</b>	<b>Notes/Comments</b>
7:30 – 9:00 a.m.	1. Breakfast in hotel		Breakfast Buffet served between 7:30 & 9:00 a.m. in “Simpson Suite”
10:00	2. Bus Departs Hotel for Garden River		
11:00	3. Youth get-together	Brennan Merasty Tasha Kaye Mary Magiskan	Youth request to have an opportunity to meet briefly to get reacquainted; Elders will also have time to socialize prior to the start of the meeting
12:00 p.m.	4. Lunch		
1:00	5. Opening Prayer	Garden River Elder	
	6. Welcome from Garden River First Nation	Chief Lyle Sayers	
2:00-5:00	7. Workshop on Traditional Teachings	Thomas Mattinas, Sr.	
3:30	8. Refreshment Break		
5:00	9. Photographs of group	Cynthia Jourdain	Group photograph of Elders and Youth and of Niigani; Candid photos will also be taken during dinner
6:00	10. Dinner & Social with Question Period	Chris Nicolas, Facilitator	At Garden River First Nation Garden River Elders and Council members may attend
7:00	11. Bus Departs Garden River for hotel for those not attending Traditional Ceremony		
7:00	12. Traditional Ceremony	Thomas Mattinas, Sr.	Optional participation Warm jackets needed
10:00	13. Bus Departs Garden River for hotel		



**ELDERS' FORUM 3  
AGENDA**

Tuesday August 21, 2007			
7:00 a.m.	14. Breakfast in hotel		Breakfast Buffet served between 7:00 & 8:30 a.m. in "Simpson Suite"
8:30	15. Bus Departs hotel for Garden River		
9:30	16. Overview of Elders' Forum formation	Pat Patton	
10:00	17. Update on Working Group (Niigani) and Questions & Answers	Gordon Williams	
	18. Update on NWMO and Questions & Answers	Ken Nash	
10:45	19. Mid-morning refreshment break		
11:00	20. Discussion of Niigani Mission Statement, Principles, Objectives, Name and Workplan	Gordon Williams	
12:00 p.m.	21. Lunch		
1:00	22. Aboriginal Youth Summer Project – <i>Project to Explore Effective Two-Way Communication with Aboriginal People</i>	Gitpu Nevin & Jennifer Piccin	Presentation by summer project staff
2:00 – 4:30	23. Presentation, discussion and input to NWMO Implementation Plan for Adaptive Phased Management and 2008 Aboriginal Engagement Plan	Ken Nash & Kathryn Shaver	
3:00	24. Mid-afternoon refreshment break		
5:30	25. Dinner		At Garden River First Nation
7:30	26. Bus Departs Garden River for hotel		

**ELDERS' FORUM 3  
AGENDA**

Wednesday, August 22, 2007			
7:00 a.m.	27. Breakfast in hotel		Breakfast Buffet served between 7:00 & 8:00 a.m. in "Simpson Suite"
8:00	28. Bus Departs hotel for Garden River		
9:00	29. Develop Plan for Communication between Niigani and Elders' and Youth between meetings of Elders' Forum	Chris Lafontaine	
	30. Mid-morning refreshment break		
10:30	31. Closing Prayer	Garden River Elder	
11:00	32. Bus Departure for Airport		

# **APPENDIX 2**

## **Traditional teaching as shared by Tom Mattinas**

August 20-22, 2007  
Garden River First Nation Community Centre  
Garden River First Nation, Ontario

Convened by

**The Nuclear Waste Management Organization**

### **Traditional teaching as shared with the NWMO's Elders' Forum 3 by elder Tom Mattinas**

Tom began by stating that he wished he could say that 'everything will be okay', but that the future did not hold any promise of improvement, only a worsening of the coming global destruction and suffering. He said that the ancestors of his people had predicted the current changes that the earth and mankind were beginning to go through.

"Today the air is good, the land and waters are clean and food is abundant,' the ancestors said, 'but someday our seed will not have this clean air to breath, this clean water to drink, or this abundance of food,'" Tom told the forum.

"It will come to pass," the old and wise ones predicted, "that the people will not be able to find a place to stand. At that time the trees will shrink and the animals and fish will disappear. The people will forget how to live and will hurt each other in their fear and confusion because they will have forgotten the teachings of generations before them."

Tom then shared the following teaching with the assembled group, declaring that the legend applied to the growing environmental and social crises of today.

*"In the old times, when the people knew how to live and the land and air and water was clean and healthy, the most respected warrior was a man called Mistasiyan who was very wise and had the great respect of his people. One day Mistasiyan called his people together and told them that he had been gifted with a vision. He told the people gathered that there was a monster, a snake-like monster that would eat all the trees, all the animals, all the medicine and food plants, and foul the water and the air. The people were very frightened when they heard this prophesy, and asked Mistasiyan what they should do to prevent this catastrophe from coming about. Mistasiyan told them that they could fight and kill the monster when it came to their lands. But the warriors were scared and no one volunteered to act until a boy about 5 years old stepped forward and declared that he would kill the monster to save his people. But it would take special weapons to destroy such a beast, and no one among the people knew how to make such weapons.*

*Mistasian told the young boy to ask his grandmothers and grandfathers and that they would provide him with instruction on how to make the weapons he would need for his mission. So the boy asked a grandmother for advice, and this grandmother was a relative of trees and suggested that the boy go and ask cedar, the oldest of the trees, for instructions. Cedar was very sympathetic, and told the boy to go speak with a certain kind of tree, and that tree was also sympathetic and gave the boy the perfect wood for a bow and for an arrow. The boy took the wood to his grandfather, who made the perfect bow and the perfect arrow for the boy to use to kill the monster from the east. But he needed the perfect arrowhead to pierce the scales of the monster. So the boy again asked his grandmothers and grandfathers for advice, and they told him to go speak with the oldest beings, the rocks. So the boy went and spoke with the rocks, explaining his need for an arrowhead that could pierce the scales of the monster that was coming from the east. None of the rocks could provide anything sharp enough for the task until flint spoke up and gave the young boy a piece of himself. The boy thanked flint and brought the piece back to his grandfather, who made the perfect arrowhead and attached it to the arrow. But the arrow needed feathers to make it fly straight and true, and ordinary feathers were not good enough for such an important arrow. So the boy was once again told to ask the grandmothers and grandfathers for advice, and a grandmother of the Whitefish clan suggested that he ask the thunderbirds for their advice, and to take a mouse to exchange for the feather he would need if he found it. The boy met thunderbird and explained his need. The thunderbird suggested that he speak with eagle, but eagle said that he could not provide the perfect feather for such an arrow. The boy asked many families of birds if they could supply him with that perfect feather, the heron and the owl and many others, and none could give him the perfect feather until he came to hawk. Hawk said that he would provide that perfect feather, and gave it to the boy in exchange for the mouse. The boy took the feather back to his grandfather, who placed the hawk feather on the powerful arrow. Now all they needed was the perfect bowstring. Again the boy consulted with his grandmothers and grandfathers, and the clan mothers talked it over and came to the conclusion that the perfect bowstring would be made of the hair of a virgin, a maiden girl of the people with the purest heart and spirit. The boy began his search for the perfect bowstring, but although there were unmarried girls around, each maiden he*

*spoke with had a flaw such as a bad temper or selfishness. The boy searched and searched for the girl that would provide the bowstring to help him kill the monster from the east and save his people, but after a long time searching he began to think that he would never get the bow ready in time, so he sat down and began to cry, because he loved his people and he feared that he would not be able to save them. Then all of a sudden a voice asked him why he was crying, and he looked up and saw a girl he had never seen before. So he told her of his mission. She replied that she would give him the hair from her head for his bowstring, and he saw at once that she was not only a virgin but also had a pure heart and spirit, so he gave her much thanks and took a single braid from the middle of her head, where it was long and strong. He took the hair back to his grandfather, and his grandfather made the perfect bowstring for the perfect bow. Now the boy was ready to battle the monster coming from the east. He did not have to wait long, because soon the sky in the east darkened, and the earth started to tremble with the approach of the monster. It came closer and closer, eating all the trees, all the animals, fouling the air and the waters with all that disease and destruction that it brought from its home in the east. The people were very frightened but the boy told the people to be quiet and stand fast. When the monster came in sight the people saw that it had taken the form of a giant snake. When it saw the boy and the weapons that the boy had, the bow and the single arrow that could kill it, it split into two snakes, thinking that this would defeat the boy's purpose. Then it continued its way towards the people, destroying everything it touched and leaving a foul poison slime in its wake. The boy waited patiently, ignoring his own fear. He waited and waited until the two snakes intertwined, and at the exact moment when the two snake hearts were lined up he shot the arrow from his powerful bow. The arrow flew perfectly between the hard scales of both snakes, piercing both evil hearts and finally killing the monster from the east. The people came out from hiding and began a huge celebration, dancing around the dead monster. But even in death it was evil and the people saw that they must dispose of this monster full of poison, so they called in the flesh-eaters. The flesh-eaters came and ate all of the flesh of the monster, until only the bones remained. And since even the bones of the monster from the east were toxic, the people saw that they must get all traces of the eastern monster off their land, so the clan mothers met and decided that the best way to do that was to ask*

*spider to weave a big strong web in which to wrap the bones, which is what they did. Then the people called on the thunderbirds to help, and the thunderbirds came and picked up the web-wrapped bones and took them far out over the ocean and dropped them into the deepest part, so that such a and destructive monster would never again threaten the people, the land, the waters, the trees or the animals.”*

Tom then pointed out the many lessons in this teaching that apply to the issue of nuclear waste. He pointed out how, in this teaching story, it was only by working together that the people had been able to destroy the monster from the east, how they had the wisdom and the resources they needed to this right in their own communities, how the young saved their people with the guidance and advice of their grandmothers and grandfathers. He urged Aboriginal youth present to work hand in hand with the elders, to watch and listen before they act, so that this “nuclear monster from the east” would also one day be destroyed. Tom cautioned that, while an academic education is worthwhile, only by accepting the guidance of their elders would young people know how to use that academic knowledge wisely and effectively to rid their people and their lands of the pestilence from the east. He urged all present to keep telling and re-telling the old stories so that the abilities of the people hidden in each story would be re-born and re-discovered, before it is too late.

Tom reminded those present that since the beginning of time the people of the land had always looked after the land they were living on, and all the living things sharing the land with them, that are part of the land along with the people. “Then,” said Tom, “the ‘business world’ arrived on these shores, and turned the world here upside down. And this ‘business world’ began to value different parts of creation, even different races of humans, as worth less than another, based on their greed and their worship of the almighty dollar. And recently even some Indian people have begun to believe that same twisted way of thinking, because they have forgotten the teachings of their elders.” In the old days not too long ago, Tom went on to say, all of the people were family. Aunts were part-time mothers, and uncles were part-time fathers. Everyone shared knowledge and experience, generation to generation, so that all may continue to live. It is

fear and lack of honesty that keeps the generations from reaching out to one another, Tom told the group. And if we were honest about what we don't know instead of pretending we do know, if we were not scared to admit that we do not know and need advice, we as families and a people could learn what is needed to kill this monster of nuclear waste, as well as learning how to solve other problems facing mankind. And this lack of honesty and fear of reaching out is causing more and more death and suffering among Aboriginal youth, Tom pointed out. And yet people do the same thing over and over again in response to this death and suffering, even though doing the same thing that failed again and again is insanity. Young people may learn about the tools and resources available to solve problems, Tom emphasized, but knowledge is not wisdom, does not teach how and when and why to use knowledge wisely and effectively. Only experience can turn knowledge into real wisdom, Tom declared. Right now all we can all agree on is that we have a problem, Tom said, but it is only by being honest with each other, by ignoring our fear of reaching out to each other for help, by sharing the common sense of generations can we begin to make progress to solve this problem.

“This is the last of the seven generations until the big changes to this earth and the life on it hits us hard,” Tom said, “and the time for different peoples and different generations to begin to work together to change the future for the better is right now.”

Tom closed his sharing of his teaching by urging the youth present to work more closely with the elders, saying that with the wisdom of the elders and the technical knowledge they were getting in academic education they had the opportunity to make the world change predicted for this seventh generation into a good change instead of one for the worse.

“This nuclear waste is the most dangerous of all environmental poisons,” Tom pointed out in conclusion, “but it is only one symptom of the real problem, which is minds closed to reality by greed and who love money more than they love life. The ceremonies and teaching accumulated through thousands of years and passed on through the elders today can give us all the answers we need to eliminate this danger from our world forever.”



# **APPENDIX 3**

## **Principles of Participation**

August 20-22, 2007  
Garden River First Nation Community Centre  
Garden River First Nation, Ontario

Convened by

**The Nuclear Waste Management Organization**

## NWMO Elders' Forum 3

# ***Principles of Participation***

*The following principles of participation are offered as a guide to deliberations. They will be reviewed at the beginning of the meeting and modified if the meeting directs.*

### **Intent of the Dialogue**

1. To share experience and learn from dialogue among participants;
2. To understand and respect the diversity of perspectives brought to the table;
3. To build working relationships; and
4. To identify areas of common ground, of differences and the various underlying reasons.

### **Participation**

Participants in the discussion have been selected to reflect a range of values, interests and experience and to share these with other participants and the NWMO. They are invited in their personal capacity and not as representative of any organization or interest. There is no expectation that participants will report back to or seek approval from any organization of interest. Further, participation is not to be seen as an endorsement by any participant of NWMO decision-making or any specific outcome.

### **Report**

A summary report of the meeting will be prepared and distributed to participants for review before being finalized. The report will include a list of participants as well as these Principles of Participation.

No specific attribution of any comment made by any participant will be referenced in the report of the meeting, unless specifically requested by a participant.

# **APPENDIX 4**

## **Participants List**

August 20-22, 2007  
Garden River First Nation Community Centre  
Garden River First Nation, Ontario

Convened by

**The Nuclear Waste Management Organization**

**NWMO Elders' Forum 3  
Participants**

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Community</b>
Simon	Aliqu	Akulivik, QC
Lindsay	Amahoose	Bonnyville, AB
<b>Eli</b>	<b>Angiyou</b>	<b>Akulivik, QC</b>
<b>Donna</b>	<b>Augustine</b>	<b>Rexton, NB</b>
Tinisha	Augustine	Rexton, NB
<b>Gwen</b>	<b>Bear</b>	<b>Fredericton, NB</b>
Roy	Bois	Eabametoong First Nation, ON
<b>John</b>	<b>Boyce</b>	<b>Eabametoong First Nation, ON</b>
<b>Elmer</b>	<b>Courchene</b>	<b>Pine Falls, MB</b>
<b>Francis</b>	<b>Dumais</b>	<b>Bonnyville, AB</b>
<b>Jim</b>	<b>Favel</b>	<b>Ile-a-la-Crosse, SK</b>
<b>Angus</b>	<b>Gardiner</b>	<b>Ile-a-la-Crosse, SK</b>
Tasha	Kaye	Winnipeg, MB
Chelsea	Kyplain	Ile-a-la-Crosse, SK
Holly	LaBillois	Eel River Bar, NB
<b>Margaret</b>	<b>LaBillois</b>	<b>Eel River Bar, NB</b>
Chris	Lafontaine	Regina, SK
<b>Vianney</b>	<b>Laliberte</b>	<b>Ile-a-la-Crosse, SK</b>
Mary	Magiskan	Thunder Bay, ON
<b>Tom</b>	<b>Mattinas Sr.</b>	<b>Calstock, ON</b>
<b>Micheal</b>	<b>McGuire</b>	<b>Thunder Bay, ON</b>
Veronica	McGuire	Thunder Bay, ON
<b>Madeline</b>	<b>Meeseetawageesic</b>	<b>Eabametoong First Nation, ON</b>
Brennan	Merasty	Ile-a-La-Crosse, SK
<b>Allan</b>	<b>Morin</b>	<b>Ile-a-la-Crosse, SK</b>
Rebecca	Nepinak	Winnipeg, MB
Krista	Peterson	Fredericton, NB
<b>Mary</b>	<b>Richard</b>	<b>Winnipeg, MB</b>
<b>Jim</b>	<b>Sinclair</b>	<b>Regina Beach, SK</b>
<b>Billy</b>	<b>Two Rivers</b>	<b>Kahnawake, QC</b>
Tinisha	Wesley	Calstock, ON
<b>Gordon</b>	<b>Williams</b>	<b>Ottawa, ON</b>
<b>NWMO</b>		
Ken	Nash	President, NWMO
Kathryn	Shaver	Vice President, Corporate Affairs & Corporate Secretary
Deborah	Poff	NWMO Board of Directors
Donald	Obonsawin	NWMO Advisory Council
Gillian	Adshead	Assistant Board Secretary
Mahrez	Benbelfadhel	Manager, Geoscience
Cynthia	Jourdain	Trainee, Engagement & Communications
Anda	Kalvins	Director Environment
Gitpu	Nevin	Summer Project staff
Pat	Patton	Manager, Engagement & Aboriginal Relations
Jennifer	Piccin	Summer Project staff
<b>Facilitator</b>		
Chris	Nicolas	Principal, Development Services International
<b>Guests</b>		
Jean	Courchene	
Bernice	Hlady	

**Elders' names are in Bold**

Facilitator/Rapporteur's note regarding the format and content of this report:

The format of the reports on the previous two NWMO Elders' Forum was based on the interpretation of participants' remarks in the form of somewhat generalized "themes". However, while that style of report is entirely acceptable to participants as well as to the NWMO, this rapporteur is unable to emulate that interpretative style of report. I believe that participants in this forum expressed themselves quite clearly.

I believe that, given the broad range of topics addressed by the several important presentations made at this forum, and the even broader range of questions, comments and concerns raised by participants in response, it is up to the participants to decide which participant's comment or question merits inclusion in this report.

I also believe that not citing these important remarks and comments – especially regarding the key items on the agenda - would also prove detrimental to the purpose for which the forum was established, insofar as the NWMO and all other participants put great emphasis on learning from each other as well as on sharing as much information as possible with one another. It was made very clear, throughout the forum, that forum participants want *every* participant's contribution to be treated with equal importance, deserving notation.

So other than any obvious repetitions or comments I may have missed noting due to occasional and normal distraction, I have tried to include the contributions of all participants in this report, paraphrased from my notes, with some reference to the notes of the NWMO's staff with regards to the 90-minute discussion that took place on Day 3 of the forum. That particular discussion is encapsulated as it was done when it took place.

Established policy regarding these reports also dictates that speakers not be identified save in cases where permission to do so has been previously obtained by the NWMO. So when the full range of comments following a particular presentation is cited in this report, speakers are identified only as being elders, youth or NWMO staff.

My written instructions were very clear: "To record and write the report of the NWMO Elders' Forum", and I respectfully submit that this report does so, completely, in good faith and to the best of my ability.

In closing I want to express my thanks to each and all of the participants, as well as to the NWMO, for the unique opportunity to provide some modest service to this distinguished group of Aboriginal people. Masi:cho. Although, due to other plans, I must decline to participate in future deliberations by the NWMO's Elders' Forum in the future, I wish you each and all success in your future deliberations on this matter so vitally important to the continued survival of life on this planet.

Chris Nicolas  
Principal, DSI

Ottawa  
04 October 2007