

Council of Elders and Youth Record of Discussion #19

APM-REP-00676-0211

November 2017

Jessica Perritt

nwmo

NUCLEAR WASTE
MANAGEMENT
ORGANIZATION

SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION
DES DÉCHETS
NUCLÉAIRES



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Record of Discussion
NWMO Council of Elders and Youth
Kingbridge Conference Centre, King City, ON
November 14-15, 2017

Attendees:

NWMO Council of Elders and Youth

Chair: Donna Augustine and Rayanna Seymour

Members: Angus Gardiner, Diane Longboat, Grace Manitowabi, Dorothy Parenteau, Billie Schibler, Gordon Williams, Roland St. Germain, Debbie Plain, Theresa Hall, Verna Porter-Brunelle, Shavonne Custer, Brandon Petahtegoose, Norman Stagg, Madison Levi, Jeff Kinew, Rebekah Wilson

Advisors: Joanne Barnaby, Fred Kelly, Melanie Hadley

NWMO:

Staff: Laurie Swami, Bob Watts, Ben Belfadhel, Jessica Perritt, Joe Gaboury, Raymond Hatfield, Arthur Moore, Greg Plain, Donna Chief, Kevin Muloin, Monique Hobbs, Joe Heil

Guests:

Ron Jamieson, Dean Jacobs, Willie Pine, Nekan Williams, Danine Chief

Tuesday, November 14, 2017

Opening Ceremony and Welcoming Remarks

Elder Fred Kelly conducted a ceremony to begin the meeting, which included a pipe ceremony and a female Elder to speak to the water. The ceremony also included a Thunderbird song done by one of the female Elders.

President and CEO Laurie Swami recognized the traditional territory in which the meeting was held and expressed her gratitude for being able to meet with the Council of Elders and Youth again. She gifted a shell she collected from New Zealand to Elder Fred Kelly in gratitude for the opening ceremony and his continued guidance. She shared that the NWMO celebrated its 15-year anniversary, and a celebration was held on October 19 at the NWMO Oakville research facility. The celebration was opened with a ceremony conducted by Bob Watts and Jessica Perritt. She also announced that the NWMO started drilling its first borehole in the Ignace/Wabigoon area, which was a major milestone for the NWMO. She also shared with the Council that the NWMO has been working through a stock-taking exercise, which may result in the narrowing down of communities in the site selection process which would occur in December 2017. She closed her remarks by saying she looks forward to the next two days with the Elders and Youth.

Bob Watts acknowledged the traditional territory in which the meeting was being held. He welcomed two new members to the Aboriginal Relations team – Donna Chief and Kevin Muloin. He also recognized Ron Jamieson from the Board of Directors and Monique Hobbs from the NWMO. He closed his comments by expressing his gratitude for the continued advice from the Council of Elders and Youth.

Draft Reconciliation Statement

Bob Watts introduced a draft Reconciliation Statement to the Council for feedback. Bob highlighted that the statement was a very early draft and work in progress. The idea is that following the release of a Reconciliation Statement, the NWMO would release an implementation strategy. An internal committee has been put together to work on this initiative, and Elder Diane Longboat sits on this committee on behalf of the Council of Elders and Youth. Bob commits that all the Council's comments will be brought to the working group, and a revised statement will be brought to the next Council meeting.

Questions/Comments:

- 2nd paragraph suggestions “the NWMO understands and respects.”
- If the NWMO is going to go down the road of reconciliation, it needs to expect that healing will be part of the process amongst Indigenous communities.
- A reconciliation statement needs to address the dark history of the residential school and that this history will not be repeated.
- Residential school survivors need to see themselves in this statement.
- Stories that are heard on the news, e.g., murdered and missing Indigenous women, bring out the hurt that our people have endured throughout history.
- This will set the tone for the NWMO, and maybe other organizations will follow suit.
- What is the NWMO's plan to be an ally for Indigenous communities?
- Request to get copies of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #92.

Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation

Danine Chief from Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation made a presentation to the Council regarding the work Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation has done in conjunction with the borehole drilling activities. This work included:

- Conducting ceremony prior to drilling to seek guidance on how to proceed with the drilling activities and implementing the advice received through ceremony.
- The community conducting cultural verification in the land parcel being studied.
- The community initiating a baseline water monitoring study.
- The community developing a consultation protocol.
- Working with the NWMO on local procurement with regards to the borehole drilling activities.
- Having a cultural monitor at the drill site.
- Hosting a Treaty #3 Learning and Sharing Gathering focused on the protection of water.

Greenland Analogue Project Presentation

Monique Hobbs from the NWMO presented the findings from the Greenland Analogue Project (GAP). The GAP was a collaborative research project that ran from 2008 to 2013 in which the NWMO partnered with organizations SKB (Sweden) and Posiva (Finland). This project brought together specialists, research scientists, and engineers from six countries, and focused on increasing scientific understanding of how an ice sheet interacts with areas both above and below ground. This understanding will be used in safety cases – the comprehensive, detailed studies used to evaluate the safety of deep geological repositories over time frames of up to one million years.

Over the five years of the study, researchers made direct and indirect observations about the movement of the ice sheet, meltwater runoff, water pressure due to the weight of the ice sheet, and water transfer from the ice sheet to areas below the ice surface, and they gained valuable insight into interactions between meltwater and the underlying groundwater systems. The new information and the increased scientific understanding from the GAP will inform and strengthen future safety cases for deep geological repositories.

Questions/Comments:

- Was Indigenous knowledge incorporated into this project?

Aboriginal Relations Team Update

The Aboriginal Relations team shared an overview of the work they have been doing in the field with First Nation and Métis communities involved in the site selection process.

Ceremony for Gordon Williams

To close the day, Elder Fred Kelly and Jessica Perritt lead a ceremony to honour Elder Gordon Williams and his contributions to the NWMO and Council of Elders and Youth over the past 12 years.

Wednesday, November 15, 2017

Elder Fred Kelly provided some opening remarks alongside Elder Roland St. Germain. In honour of Louis Riel Day, Elder St. Germain shared a story of Louis Riel's journey and fight for his people.

Council of Elders and Youth Terms of Reference

The Council reviewed the Terms of Reference to discuss the term of the Elder co-chair position.

The Council met in camera to nominate a new Elder Co-Chair for the Council. The meeting reconvened, and the Council announced that Elder Donna Augustine will remain as Elder Co-Chair by a unanimous vote.

Water Discussion

As a followup from the July meeting, Jessica Perritt provided an update of the feedback received from the water presentation that was presented to the Council at the last Council meeting in July. She reminded the Council that this was the presentation that went to the communities and was revised based on input from the Council at the July meeting. The presentation outlined different time scales associated with the movement of water above ground compared to the time scales associated with movement of water below ground. The presentation went to one community at the community's request and was presented internally at the NWMO. This presentation was well-received in the community, and Jessica asked the Council to provide advice on potential topics for the next water presentations.

Questions/Comments:

- Language translations could be incorporated into the presentation.
- Language or translation should come from the communities the NWMO is working with as dialects change.
- The Council of Elders and Youth needs to help the NWMO understand the concept that water has spirit.
- Suggested prequel with the topic "Where water comes from" from both the Indigenous Knowledge and western science perspectives.
- The NWMO may want to look into the Water Law, which Elders from Treaties 1, 2 and 3 have documented. There is a report and film online.
- Indigenous Knowledge is not an easy topic for non-Indigenous people to understand, and the NWMO needs to find a space to help bridge that understanding. Ceremony will need to be the starting point.
- It would be good if a presentation included the teachings like women are carriers of water, how water is used in ceremonies, how water is used for our medicines, e.g., tea making, sacred places, traditional stories and prophecies of water, highway system, food source, and our belief in "water if life."
- Another presentation could include how water is impacted within different phases of the NWMO's work and the lifetime of the project.

Next Meeting

- The Council suggested that the meeting dates be set for all 2018 with the months of April, July and October being a preference for the Council. Jessica will reach out to the Council for potential dates for 2018 meetings.
- A revised draft Reconciliation Statement will be brought for discussion to the next meeting.
- The Council would like a summary of the projects Indigenous Relations is working on for the next meeting.

- The Council would like a presentation on the NWMO's social media strategy at an upcoming meeting.

Closing Ceremony

Fred Kelly closed meeting with a closing invocation.

Date notes taken: November 14-15, 2017

This note was prepared by staff and has not been approved and/or reviewed for accuracy by other meeting participants.