

The Honourable James Gordon Carr
Minister, Natural Resources Canada
580 Booth Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0E4

April, 2016

Dear Minister Carr:

Congratulations on your appointment as Minister of Natural Resources Canada. On behalf of the Advisory Council to the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO), I am pleased to provide you with an update on some of our activities in 2015.

Throughout the year, members kept abreast of the NWMO's progress in implementing the process to identify an informed and willing host for the deep geological repository that will safely contain and isolate Canada's used nuclear fuel over the long term. The NWMO began the year studying 13 siting areas. We discussed findings from technical and social preliminary assessments throughout the year. The first phase of Preliminary Assessments was completed in 2015 for all the communities that initially expressed interest in learning. The NWMO is now continuing a second, more intensive phase of study focusing in the vicinities of nine potential areas.

We reviewed reports on fieldwork, as well as on engagement activities, as the organization worked in partnership with municipal, First Nation and Métis communities in each siting study area. The Council was pleased to see that fieldwork in 2015 included the interweaving of science with Indigenous Knowledge, as community members worked closely with the NWMO in geoscience mapping and surveys. Maintaining the emphasis on safety for people and the environment, and the well-being of communities, will be important for sustained progress in siting.

The Advisory Council encouraged the NWMO to continue fostering relationships among municipal, First Nation and Métis communities in each siting area. We advised the organization that the site ultimately selected for the project should be one in which communities share the NWMO's core corporate values. Management provided updates on the nature of its agreements with First Nation and Métis communities and organizations, and how these agreements are supporting engagement, dialogue and learning about Canada's plan for long-term used nuclear fuel management. We are regularly updated on how the NWMO continues to seek guidance from the Council of Elders on meaningful engagement with First Nation and Métis people. The Advisory Council would like to acknowledge the valuable contributions of the Council of Elders.

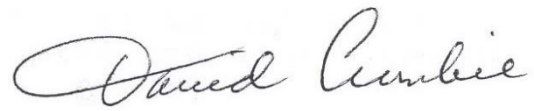
Transportation continued to be a significant subject of discussion. The Council reviewed activities and progress in both technical work and engagement plans to support the objective of establishing safe, secure and socially acceptable plans for transporting nuclear fuel waste to the preferred location for the deep geological repository.

We note that the NWMO's groundbreaking work on a voluntary site selection process and on the NWMO's engineered-barrier system is the subject of growing international attention.

The Council believes that a strong ethical and social framework will continue to be important in paving the way for sustained progress with site selection and implementation of this important national initiative.

A more detailed account of our activities is published in the NWMO's 2015 Annual Report submitted to you earlier and made public at the same time. I trust you will find it helpful and informative.

Sincerely, on behalf of the members of the Advisory Council,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Crombie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Honourable David Crombie, PC, OC
Chair, Advisory Council

cc: Dr. David R. Cameron, Vice-Chair
 Dr. Dougal McCreath Eva Ligeti Dr. Derek Lister Donald Obonsawin
 Linda Thompson Diane M. Kelly Dean Jacobs Joseph Cavalancia