

**ADVISORY COUNCIL TO THE NWMO**  
c/o NWMO, 22 St. Clair Avenue East, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, ON M4T 2S3

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Energy and Natural Resources  
580 Booth Street, 21st Floor, Room: C7-1  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0E4

December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Re: NWMO's Selection of a Site for the Disposition of Canada's Used Nuclear Fuel**

Dear Minister,

A critically important milestone on the pathway towards implementing Canada's plan for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel has been achieved. With the final identification by the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) of the preferred site for a deep geologic repository (DGR), hosted by the Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation and the Township of Ignace, a major goal has been accomplished.

Following passage of the Nuclear Fuel Waste Act in 2002 (NFWA, Bill C-27), this historic achievement represents the culmination of many years of extensive collaborative work between the NWMO and the 22 communities that initially volunteered to be considered as potential hosts.

Throughout this period, the Advisory Council has reported regularly to the Government of Canada and has provided independent comments, observations and advice to the NWMO, helping to ensure that their processes were open, transparent, thorough and sound. We are pleased to confirm that throughout their work the NWMO has held fast to their six core values: Safety; Integrity; Excellence; Collaboration; Accountability, and Transparency.

With the help and guidance of its Council of Elders and Youth, the NWMO has been consistently committed to the building of respectful relationships with First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples, and to the development of its Reconciliation Policy, which is central to all the organization's activities and a key to deepening its understanding of Indigenous

perspectives. The NWMO has worked with equal dedication on establishing and sustaining mutually respectful relationships with the participating municipalities

It has been a long journey for Canada to reach this historic decision. Since the earliest days of nuclear power generation in Canada some 50 years ago, deep underground storage within a stable geologic setting was consistently identified as the preferred technical approach for the long-term management of our spent fuel. Following many years of engineering studies and related safety analyses, Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd (AECL) put forward a detailed conceptual design of a DGR, not connected to any specific site, for review by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency. After 10 years of hearings, in 1998 the Seaborn Panel concluded that, while the conceptual design appeared adequate from a technical perspective, from a social perspective it did not have the broad public support necessary to be adopted.

Following the recommendations of the Seaborn Panel, the Parliament of Canada, through the 2002 NFWA, mandated a different approach, first requiring the newly formed NWMO to hold extensive discussions with Canadians to identify and incorporate their views as to a preferred approach for management of Canada's nuclear wastes, and then to present the resulting options to the government. Deep geologic storage was once again identified by Canadians as the preferred option. In 2007 the federal government selected an approach called Adaptive Phased Management (APM) which incorporated both a technical method and a flexible management system for the identification and development of a centralized DGR, one that would only proceed if accepted by informed and willing host communities. This major milestone has now been reached with the signing of hosting agreements between the NWMO and the communities of Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation and the Township of Ignace.

This milestone also represents a major hinge point in the operations of the NWMO. From this point forward, the focus of the organization will turn towards the host communities, working collaboratively with them to fulfill all the requirements of the federal and Indigenous assessment and approval processes and of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission's (CNSC) regulatory process. The NWMO's centre of operations will move from Toronto to the selected area as further site characterization is undertaken, detailed design and safety analyses are completed, and the planned Centre of Expertise is designed and constructed within the host communities.

That we as a country have arrived at this point is testimony to the steady leadership of the Government of Canada and the work of the NWMO, and to the active, responsible engagement of all the communities that have participated in the process. More broadly, this achievement speaks to the conscientious consideration of Canadians themselves who, during their extensive discussions with the NWMO, made it clear that the

unresolved issue of the country's used nuclear fuel should not be handed down to future generations of Canadians to address.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Cameron". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style. The first name "David" is written with a large, looped 'D', and the last name "Cameron" is written in a similar cursive style.

David R. Cameron

Chair, Advisory Council to the NWMO

cc: Mr. Donald Obonsawin, Vice-Chair  
Mr. Joseph Cavalancia Dr. Monica Gattinger  
Dr. Dean Jacobs Ms. Diane M. Kelly  
Dr. Dougal McCreath Dr. Stella Swanson  
Ms. Linda Thompson