Council of Elders

Record of Discussion #1

APM-REP-00676-0001 **June 2012**

NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION
SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION DES DÉCHETS NUCLÉAIRES

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Meeting convened at the Kingbridge Conference Centre & Institute

King City, Ontario

June 27-29, 2012

Introduction

This first meeting of the newly formed Council of Elders followed advice given by the former members of the Elders Forum and much consideration with respect to its' Terms of Reference. The purpose of this Council of Elders meeting was to thank all of the previous Elders Forum members for their work and dedication since its' inception in 2005 and to usher in the newly formed Council of Elders, which includes seven former members of the Elders Forum and three new members. The new Council of Elders met for the first two days, the former members of the Elders Forum joined them for the third day. Much of the time was dedicated to traditional ceremonies led by Elder Fred Kelly.

Opening Session

President Ken Nash thanked Elder Fred Kelly for his opening ceremony and welcomed the new Council of Elders. Ken talked about the importance of the Council of Elders to the NWMO and emphasized the opportunity to explore new ways of Aboriginal communities and Corporations to work together.

Vice President Kathryn Shaver also welcomed the Council of Elders and expressed her hope that the Council will help provide advice to the NWMO on how to engage Aboriginal peoples from both a social and technical perspective. She spoke of the important work that the Elders Forum had done and the foundation they built for the Council of Elders.

Council of Elders Members

The NWMO was pleased to receive expressions of interest from many Elders, many of who served on the Elders Forum, as well as nominations from Aboriginal organizations. The NWMO welcomes the new members of the Council of Elders:

Former Elders Forum Members:

1. Donna Augustine (First Nation, New Brunswick)
2. Angus Gardiner (Métis, Saskatchewan)

3. Roland St. Germain (Métis, Ontario)
4. Josephine Mandamin (First Nation, Ontario)
5. Joseph Poitras (Métis, Ontario)
6. Billy Two Rivers (First Nation, Quebec)
7. Gordon Williams (First Nation, Ontario and Manitoba)

New members:

8. Lawrence Joseph (First Nation, Saskatchewan)
9. Leslie Perley (First Nation, New Brunswick)
10. Billie Schibler (Métis, Manitoba)

Council of Elders Terms of Reference

The Council reviewed the Terms of Reference and commented:

One member suggested that a pre-determined date be set to review the Terms of Reference annually and hoped that the Terms of Reference would not take up time at every meeting.

There was some discussion whether the members sat on the council as individuals or speaking on behalf of an organizations, regional areas and even future generations. It was clarified that the Terms of Reference identify that members sit as individuals and that agreements with Aboriginal organizations and communities are separate from the Council of Elders.

There was some discussion on the terms used in the Terms of Reference, specifically the term "good relations" in the purpose statement. In one language, "good" doesn't accurately reflect the meaning intended in English but in another language it does. Some suggested "respectful" or "harmonious" might replace this phrase. It was also suggested that the Terms of Reference improve language on Elders bringing individual perspective i.e. not representatives.

Site Selection

Aboriginal Engagement

Pat Patton, Director of Aboriginal Relations, provided a brief overview of NWMO's Aboriginal engagement approach since 2005 including principles, history, engagement Initiatives, Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge, and engagement going forward.

Technical Studies

Ben Belfadhel, Director, Used Fuel Geoscience provided an overview of the technical site evaluation process with a focus on safety, initial screening criteria, the comprehensive site evaluation criteria and technical site investigation studies to be undertaken.

Members asked Ben about studies into neutralizing nuclear waste and one felt that Aboriginal people might even help in this process.

Ben explained two processes:

1. Reprocessing is done to extract residual energy; some countries do this; but this doesn't get rid of radioactivity and an approach for the long-term containment and isolation of the remaining radioactive material would still be needed;
2. Partitioning and transmutation – there is some study being done on this; it is very long term; the NWMO keeps an ongoing watch on research in this area.

Community Involvement in Feasibility Studies

Jo-Ann Facella, Director of Social Research and Dialogue discussed the NWMO's approach to community involvement, activities undertaken, its approach to community well-being and how it will support communities.

Questions/Concerns

- There was concern for the uncertainty of the future and nuclear waste storage. Members pointed out that all those potentially affected must understand both the positive and negative aspects of nuclear waste. The more information, the better informed.
- How many fuel bundles will be in the repository by the time it goes into operation? Will this number continue to grow over time?
- Is there a projected growth for new nuclear reactors in Canada?
- One member expressed his uncertainty of his role. He observed that the NWMO says that communities make their own decision and is unsure what that looks like. Another member offered an explanation; that she is a carrier of teachings, brings knowledge and she speaks for her people without "representing" them.

Application of Traditional Knowledge to NWMO's Work

Joanne Barnaby provided an overview of the similarities and differences between Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge and Western Science using examples from her previous work with Aboriginal groups. She shared her experience with NWMO since 2003 and the application of traditional knowledge in its work. She pointed out that the NWMO has a growing commitment to traditional values, principles and ethics and a commitment to Aboriginal languages. She

went on to say that the NWMO is incorporating decision making processes that reflect traditional consensus building and inclusion of differences and that Adaptive Phased Management in itself is a fundamental aspect of traditional management practices. She finished by outlining ways the NWMO could move forward with respect to the application of traditional knowledge.

Traditional Ceremonies

Ceremonies were led by Elder Fred Kelly to open and close the meeting, and to welcome the new Council of Elders members and to give thanks and appreciation to the former Elders Forum members.

As an honoring gift for all of the dedication and advice the Elders Forum members gave of themselves since 2005, the Elders were presented with a Pendleton blanket symbolizing "the Elders Circle" while the youths were presented with a pair of moccasins to symbolize their journeys as young people who will lead future generations. Each member was also gifted with a thank-you plaque which commemorated their time with the NWMO.

The new Council of Elders were invited as a group to uphold the Council of Elder's mission statement: *Through its advice to the NWMO, the Council of Elders will protect and preserve all creation: air, land, fire, water, plants, medicines, animals and human kind - guided by the Seven Universal Teachings of Love, Trust, Sharing, Honesty, Humility, Respect and Wisdom.* Based, on this mission statement, each member was invited through Ceremony to join the Council of Elders.

Closing Session

As this was the last meeting of the larger group of Elders Forum members, many expressed their appreciation for one another and to the NWMO for bringing them together to work on such a tough issue as nuclear waste. One person felt that there was an evolution over the last seven years of going from "naysayers" to true understanding of the issue of long-term storage of nuclear waste. There were requests to keep the youth involved in the process in terms of membership to the new council, the establishment of scholarships and bursaries for students and for the intergenerational knowledge shared between Elders and youth. Many requested that they be kept informed of the NWMO's work in the future.

A few people had specific messages to leave the group with:

One member noted that people from his territory do not want nuclear waste as they feel they have not benefitted from nuclear power and therefore have no responsibility for the waste. His concern was for the care and preservation for Mother Earth and to make decisions in a good way with a kind heart.

One member stressed the importance of protecting treaty and Aboriginal rights, the importance of building an economy and planning for the future with training opportunities for young people. He felt that Aboriginal people must have a share/ownership of this project.

One member referenced the final report done by the Community Involvement committee. In it, there are suggestions and a rating system to be reviewed.

One member noted that traditional ceremonies of communities will be different and that when he is given a gift, they are giving him a prayer and respect. He applauded the outspoken efforts of Elders Jim Sinclair and Billy Two Rivers to the Elders Forum.

Action items to be followed up:

1. At the next Council of Elders meeting:
    a. they requested a technical orientation including a presentation on transportation
    b. they requested information on the international experience (how much waste do they have, etc.?)
    c. discussion around youth
    d. review of administrative items for coverage of expenses and honorarium amounts
    e. selection of joint chairs

2. Members would like to hold the technical orientation and transportation briefing for all members of the Council of Elders

3. Former Elders Forum members would like to be kept informed of NWMO's activities (via mailing lists)

Appendix I – Participant List

NWMO COUNCIL OF ELDERS MEETING, JUNE 27-29, 2012

*Elders names are in bold

PARTICIPANTS			
FIRST NAME	**LAST NAME**	**COMMUNITY**	**PROVINCE**
Eli	**Angiyou**	**Akulivik**	**QC**
Donna	**Augustine**	**Rexton**	**NB**
Tanisha	Augustine	Rexton	NB
Roy	Bois	Eabametoong F.N.	ON
Elmer	**Courchene**	**Pine Falls**	**MB**
Francis	**Dumais**	**Bonnyville**	**AB**
Bill	**Flett**	**Selkirk**	**MB**
Angus	**Gardiner**	**Ile-a-la-Crosse**	**SK**
Lance	Gardiner	Ile-a-la-Crosse	SK
Derrick	Gould	Fairford	ON
Sheri	Gould	Fairford	ON
Helen	Jacob	Eabametoong F.N.	ON
Lawrence	**Joseph**	**Prince Albert**	**SK**
Tasha	Kaye	Winnipeg	MB
Chris	Lafontaine	Regina	SK
Vianney	**Laliberte**	**Ile-a-la-Crosse**	**SK**
Amber	Laliberte	Ile-a-la-Crosse	SK
Mary	Magiskan	Thunder Bay	ON
Josephine	**Mandamin**	**Thunder Bay**	**ON**
Micheal	**McGuire**	**Thunder Bay**	**ON**
Veronica	McGuire	Thunder Bay	ON
Madeline	**Meeseetawageesic**	**Eabametoong F.N.**	**ON**
Melanie	Nepinak	Winnipeg	MB
Anna	Novalinga	Puvirnituq	QC
Leslie	**Perley**	**Grand Falls**	**NB**
Joseph	**Poitras**	**Scarborough**	**ON**
Jennifer	Prisciak	Barrie	ON
Billie	**Schibler**	**Winnipeg**	**MB**
Jim	**Sinclair**	**Regina Beach**	**SK**
Roland	**St. Germain**	**Owen Sound**	**ON**
Billy	**Two Rivers**	**Kahnawake**	**QC**
Gordon	**Williams**	**Orleans**	**ON**
Rebekah	Wilson	Ottawa	ON
NWMO			
Ben	Belfadhel	Director, APM Geoscience	
Cassandra	Bowers	Engagement Officer, Aboriginal Relations	
Wesley	Cragg	NWMO Advisory Council	
Jo-Ann	Facella	Director, Social Research & Dialogue	
Raymond	Hatfield	Senior Advisor, Aboriginal Relations	
Ron	Jamieson	NWMO Board of Directors	
Cynthia	Jourdain	Engagement Officer, Aboriginal Relations	
Fred	Kelly	Traditional Consultant	
Eva	Ligeti	NWMO Advisory Council	

Jamie	Matear	Senior Advisor, Aboriginal Relations	
Ken	Nash	President & CEO	
Donald	Obonsawin	NWMO Advisory Council	
Pat	Patton	Director, Aboriginal Relations	
Dawn	Pratt	Senior Advisor, Aboriginal Relations	
Micheal	Rheaume	NWMO Advisory Council	
Kathryn	Shaver	Vice President, APM Engagement & Site Selection	
Albert	Sweetnam	NWMO Board of Directors	
Bob	Watts	Director, Aboriginal Community Relations	
Guests			
Joanne	Barnaby	Joanne Barnaby Consulting	