

**Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nation Chiefs Nuclear Waste
Management Dialogue**

Final Report

**Submitted on March 4, 2005
Submitted to NWMO**

INTRODUCTION

The Steering Committee had decided to conduct two day long workshops within the region where key people representing different organizations and age groups would be invited to give their input and ideas into this process. It was hoped that these meetings would begin the discussion on Nuclear Waste and spark interest to learn more about the issue.

FREDERICTON WORKSHOP

The first day-long Nuclear Waste Management workshop organized by the Atlantic Policy Congress was held in Fredericton New Brunswick, at the Lord Beaverbrook hotel on January 20th, 2005. We had 7 participants show up all together we had 11 people including speakers. The weather prevented other participants from showing up, as it was storming that day. The meeting started at 10 a.m. with an opening prayer made by a much respected elder from Tobique First Nation. Opening comments were made by Cheryl Knockwood and myself. The main observation at this workshop was that many people are unaware of nuclear energy and nuclear waste. For that reason it was great that Mike Krizanc from NWMO was there to give an overview of this subject matter. Nancy Bobbish from the Assembly of First Nations was also present to share the national First Nation perspective. There was a lively discussion and many questions were asked.

QUESTIONS

The following are some of the questions asked in this session:

- Is NWMO an agency of the government?
- Was NWMO established by the government?
- Is the NWMO in a conflict of interest because they represent the nuclear companies and is in a position of advising the government?
- Where would money for an independent advisory board come from?
- What happens to the water that is used in the cool bundles?
- How do the ports get emptied, from dry storage?
- Do they monitor the water, after it is done with the bundles, enclosed system, so the filters are contaminated?
- What happened with vent ports?
- What does AECL mean and what is this agencies responsibility?
- Do you have an Ethics panel? When do they meet? I hear they didn't have the meeting?

- Are there First Nations on the ethical technical expertise committee?
- Do you have anyone in the various committees/ groups in NWMO have first nation's background?
- Are there opportunities for Traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) to be given input in the Science Committee?
- What is the number of trucks transporting, off road option, from all the plants?
- If can't monitor in the Back filling option, cause the cameras will not be able, is it really an option?
- How would natural disasters impact the storage in the three options?
- Would NWMO entertain extending its deadlines to ensure proper in depth first nations input into this national dialogue?
- How is nuclear energy viable?
- What are the States doing that we can learn from their experiences?
- Has there been any talk about getting the government to pick out first nations people for the advisory committee?
- Can it be proven scientifically that for the deep geological options that earthquakes will not bother it?
- What happens if there is an accident? And who will be responsible-NWMO?
- How many of these containers did it take for these to grow, and how many more of these will be produced?
- Are there other methods Canada can utilize to produce power?
- How much land would be needed to store the containers, what will happen to the land after that?
- We need to find other means because we will have to refurbish again and again.

The following were the recommendations:

- NWMO needs to bring in first nations values, understandings, learning's and knowing on what's important within this process.
- First nations must be involved throughout this process.
- NWMO's definition of community must include First Nations whose traditional territory the nuclear generating stations are located within.
- TEK should be part of this assessment framework; we need a First Nations people involve in the process, scientifically or ethically. Recommendation that TEK knowledge position paper be brought.
- Elders all across Canada, have ecological knowledge that could make help with the decisions.
- Aboriginal eye view, because we never see that recommendations.

- Stop digging it up, plan and simple and it don't cost money.
- That the decision making process should also include the principle of sustainable development, be environmentally sound and should respect Aboriginal and treaty rights guaranteed under s.35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.
- To provide a greater accountability and transparency, it was recommended that a public agency, as an agent of the crown, be created to study the management options and make recommendations to the Governor in council.
- Recommended that the Advisory Council's membership reflect aboriginal traditional knowledge.
- Recommend a subsection stating the federal government will provide resources to Aboriginal governments and organizations to facilitate their informed participation on the Advisory Council, including support for research and discussion.
- Recommended that traditional territories be included, to recognize that economic regions may or may not coincide with the traditional territories of First Nations.
- Due to concern over a narrow interpretation of "significant socio-economic effects" it was recommended that there should be a definition of "significant socio-economic effects" in section 2 of the Bill.

TRURO WORKSHOP

The second day-long Nuclear Waste Management workshop organized by the Atlantic Policy Congress was held in Truro Nova Scotia, at the Super 8 Motel on January 31st, 2005. We had 19 participants present. The meeting started at 10 a.m. with an opening prayer made by a much respected elder from Indian Brook First Nation. Opening comments were made by Cheryl Knockwood and myself. Nancy Bobbish from the Assembly of First Nations was also present to share the national First Nation perspective. Eric Tusz-King from the EOS.ECO-Energy presented on other energy resources. Mike Krizanc from NWMO was there to show a video, "Understanding the Choices: The Future Management of Canada's Used Nuclear Fuel."

QUESTIONS

The following are some of the questions asked in this session:

- Did NWMO look at how the USA is managing their nuclear waste?
- Why don't we shoot the nuclear waste into space?

- We are consumers we credit it, where does it go? We create the demand and now we are stuck with the product, what should we do to reduce the amount of nuclear waste?
- What International studies have been examined?
- When you talking about storing it into the earth, than that worries me, where and how is it going to be stored?
- Who's going to make sure the nuclear waste storage sites get monitored?
- What other storage areas are being contemplated other than the Canadian Shield?
- How did Donald Obansawin get appointed on advisory council and by whom? How is he accountable to other aboriginal people?
- Does the Nuclear Fuel waste act stipulate how Canadians are to be engaged in consultation?
- If continue to use nuclear energy and decide to store it into Canadian Shield in 200 years how much land would be required to store waste?
- First Nations not given enough time to deliberate on this issue and make a choice.

The following were the recommendations:

- Need elders to be represented on advisory council; ethics committee and other boards/agencies or committees under NWMO.
- Need further research done and shared on the long term impacts on the earth and people in relation to the three storage options.
- Need more time and resources to develop our position in relation to NWMO and present it concurrently with NWMO and Natural Resource Minister.
- Need to report to Minister we need more time to make this choice because issue is much too important to decide in two months.
- It's not First nation way to make these decisions without having consensus and dialogue occurring in all communities. Government has responsibility to ensure this dialogue is carried out.
- The time frame being asked to make choice is too tight. Need more time and information to make choice.
- Capacity issue we need to have our own scientists, etc; to look at it critical eye. More of whatever more information people need to know more, relying on there experts. Maybe a 3 year study, if this is going to be talked about we need to look at it more closely.
- We want first nation's voices in there.

- Elders in the advisory, we need to listen to them.
- Need more time and resources to continue with this Dialogue.

Elders Comments:

- You where talking about storing it into Canadian Shield, that's not an option, are there any other options. What goes down must come up. What concerns me 12 years ago major forest fire in Quebec, so bad the smoke, the sky was yellow, forest fire what concerns me at that time, if Point Lepreau should they have a melt down.
- We are concerned if have a nuclear waste disaster how it will impact us.
- Nuclear waste is poisoning our planet it's so unfortunate we are continuing to produce it. And we are not being asked if this is OK.
- When pulp and paper plants were built near waterways we were told that this water will still be good and that we would be able to drink it, but they lied. I am worried about the validity of the current information shared with us on nuclear waste.
- Elders brought up our concerns to NWMO at a meeting in Saskatchewan and I still don't see how they addressed them. I am worried our concerns we bring up today will not be addressed.
- How will they interpret the recommendation and concerns? We need to push for someone to be on the panel, and ensure our voice is present in the decision making process in November. We are not there to be consulted but to police this process.
- If at some point we get money to sit down and talk about this, we must ensure we have an inclusive process.
- There's a great saying, "only after the last tree has been cut down, only after the last river has been poisoned, only after the last fish has been caught, only then you will find that money cannot be eaten." Cree Indian Prophecy.
- Mother earth, 90% water, and 10% land, human being is like that. We are part of mother earth. Natural chemicals in me, same as earth. Earth is the same way. We have to take care of the earth like we would our bodies. We wouldn't intentionally put poisons in to our bloodstream would we?
- We need to focus on the solution not the problem. Good to inform people. We got to deal with it.

NOTE

The sharing of the feedback from this session is not to be construed as consultation under s 35(1).

APC: Nuclear Waste Management Dialogue Appendix 1 to 2

Appendix One: This is the memo I sent out to people on Nuclear Waste for Fredericton New Brunswick and Truro Nova Scotia Dialogue's.

APC: “Nuclear Waste Management Dialogue”

To: Whom it my Concern

From: Oasoeg Milliea

Date: January 20th, 2005

Re: Nuclear Waste Management Dialogue Meeting

APC wants to develop a position paper to be presented to Minister of Natural Resources on what to do with the Nuclear Waste. Currently Nuclear Waste generated at Nuclear Power plants are being stored on site which is costly and could be unsafe. Canada is not alone in trying to figure out how to store the waste generated from nuclear power. The international community is also attempting to do so. The Federal agency responsible for addressing this issue is talking to all Canadians and getting their feedback. We want to collect the Atlantic First Nations perspective.

APC is organizing a Nuclear Waste Management Dialogue Workshop on January 20th, 2005 at the Lord Beaverbrook Hotel, Fredericton, N.B. It will be a day long workshop on Nuclear Waste Management issue and to give our voice to Government. We want to invite you to participate. If you are interested in learning more about Nuclear Waste Management and participating in a dialogue, please let us know. We will reimburse you your travel expenses.

A draft agenda will follow once prepared. If you should have any questions or items that you would like included on the agenda please contact Oasoeg Milliea, Policy Analyst Assistant at (902) 435-8021 or by cell at (506) 210-1471.

Meeting: **Nuclear Waste Management Dialogue**

Date: January 20th, 2005

Times: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Location: Lord Beaverbrook Hotel
 Fredericton, N.B.

Ph: (506) 451-8974 or Toll Free # 1-866-444-1946

Please confirm your attendance by contacting Head office at (902) 435-8021 or Cell Phone (506) 210-1471 and ask for Oasoeg Joy Milliea or send your confirmation by e-mail to oasoeg.milliea@apcfnc.ca

Thank you.

Appendix Two: Agenda for Fredericton New Brunswick, Lord Beaverbrook Hotel and Truro Nova Scotia, Super 8 Motel.

APC: Nuclear Waste Management Dialogue

Lord Beaverbrook Hotel, Fredericton, NB

January 20th, 2005

Agenda

January 20th, 2005

10:00 a.m. **Opening Prayer by Gwen Bear**

10:15 a.m. **Opening Comments**

Oasoeg Milliea and Cheryl Knockwood, Overview and Objective for Nuclear Waste Management Dialogue

10:30 a.m. **Introductions:**

Roundtable

11:00 a.m. **Nuclear Waste Management Organization:**

- Mike Krizance – perspective and overview on NWMO.

12:00 a.m. **Questions**

- About what was discussed.

12:30 a.m. **Lunch Break**

- Food served by hotel. (Provided.)

1:15 a.m. **Assembly of First Nations**

- Nancy Bobbish- perspective and overview on AFN.

2:15 a.m. **Questions**

- About what has been discussed.

2:30 a.m. **Break**

- coffee

2:45 a.m. **Talking Circle**

Adjourned.