

Minister's Statement on the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's 2014 Annual Report

As Canada's Minister of Natural Resources and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, I am pleased to receive the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's (NWMO) 2014 Annual Report, *Progress Through Collaboration*.

The NWMO is responsible for implementing Canada's plan for the long-term management of nuclear fuel waste in a way that is safe for Canadians and the environment. The annual report outlines NWMO's ongoing engagement with communities in its efforts to find a community willing and suited to be a secure host site for a deep underground facility where nuclear fuel waste would be isolated and safely contained.

I am pleased with the progress the NWMO has achieved toward the site selection process launched in 2010. By the end of 2014, it had actively engaged with 21 communities in Ontario and Saskatchewan, including First Nations and Métis communities that had expressed an interest in hosting the waste management facility. The ultimate success of the project depends upon community engagement and lasting partnerships.

As of June 2015, nine candidate communities remain in the NWMO process. Detailed field work to address the scientific and technical aspects, as well as the social dimensions of site selection, will proceed. Field studies, borehole drilling, airborne surveys, environmental mapping, socio-economic studies and other assessments will be carried out to determine the suitability of sites and the willingness of communities. The NWMO will continue to build and strengthen its working relationships with participating communities as this process advances.

The nuclear industry is a major contributor to our economy and Canada's status as a world leader in clean electricity. Nuclear power production generates close to \$5 billion in revenues per year and employs 30,000 people. Uranium exports are valued at \$1 billion per year. Today, nuclear generates close to 15% of Canada's electricity, including more than half the electricity in Ontario. Ensuring that safe and secure strategies are in place for the long-term management of Canada's nuclear waste is one of the ways our Government is acting to support a strong nuclear industry.

The Government of Canada remains committed to monitoring the activities of the NWMO to ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities under the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act* to implement Canada's plan for the long-term management of nuclear fuel waste.

Greg Rickford
Canada's Minister of Natural Resources and
Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario

June 24, 2015