

# Council of Elders and Youth Record of Discussion #15

**APM-REP-00676-0207**

**August 2016**

**Bob Watts**  
**Jessica Perritt**

**nwmo**

NUCLEAR WASTE  
MANAGEMENT  
ORGANIZATION

SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION  
DES DÉCHETS  
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## **Record of Discussion**

### **NWMO Council of Elders and Youth**

#### **Rama Hotel**

**August 22 – 24, 2016**

#### **Attendees**

##### **NWMO Council of Elders and Youth**

**Chair:** Donna Augustine and Norman Stagg

**Members:** Augus Gardiner, Diane Longboat, Grace Manitowabi, George Morin, Dorothy Parenteau, Leslie Perley, Joseph Poitras, Billie Schibler, Roland St. Germain, Gordon Williams, Shavonne Custer, Brandon Petahtegoose, Rebekah Wilson, Jeff Knew, Madison Levi,

**Advisors:** Joanne Barnaby, Fred Kelly, Melanie Hadley

##### **NWMO:**

Staff: Ken Nash, Kathryn, Bob Watts, Jessica Perritt, Joe Gaboury, Jamie Matear, Ray Hatfield, Goyce Kakegamic, Arthur Moore, Greg Plain, Ross Holden, Bradley Hammond

##### **Guests:**

Ron Jamieson, David Charles, Chief Pitchenese, Danine Chief and Kathy McIvor

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### **Monday, August 22, 2016**

#### **Opening Ceremony and Welcome Remarks**

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Elder Fred Kelly provided a ceremony to begin the Council of Elder's meeting which included a Pipe ceremony, Healing story, Wellness prayer and memorial, and Eagle Whistle presentation.

Following a round of introductions, a Farewell Ceremony was conducted for Elder Joseph Poitras and Elder Leslie Perley who were provided with presentations and who responded with comment and appreciation for their term spent as members on the Council of Elders and Youth.

Chair Donna Augustine provided Opening Remarks.

Welcome remarks were then provided by Ken Nash, Kathryn Shaver and Bob Watts.

President Nash spoke about his resignation after 42 years in the nuclear field and that he would moving onto other things. He thanked the Council of Elders and Youth which involved his own personal journey. The NWMO progressed with the Council of Elders and recognized that there was a lot to learn during the journey. Despite the impact of colonialization and residential schools, through the Council's advice

and guidance, advancements have been made with agreements with Aboriginal Organizations, doors were opened with communities and Resource Programs and partnerships were developed with Indigenous communities.

Ken appreciated the friendships, recalled the difficult meetings in the early days, and paid homage to members who passed on such Mary Richard and Jim Sinclair. He referred to the important Winnipeg meeting between the Elders of Treaty 3 and Council of Elders which highlighted the respect for and responsibility for the Environment and the importance of ceremony. He closed with his feelings that the NWMO is in good shape and in a good place with the ability to adapt to support the APM process and with many thanks to everyone for their contributions and friendship.

Kathryn Shaver expressed appreciation to Elder Kelly for the opening ceremonies, acknowledged that the meeting is taking place within the traditional territory of Rama First Nation and recognized and welcomed Chief Pitchenese, Elder Kathy McIvor and Danine Chief from Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation and Ron Jamieson from the Board of Directors. Kathryn indicated how wonderful it is to be working with different parts of the Province with close collaboration with Aboriginal communities and provided comment on several activities and highlights such as: Walking the Land, Environmental Mapping, continuous learning events such as tours, and direct dialogues. She referred to the international recognition such as the USA looking favourably upon Canada's approach to used fuel management and the invitation to the International Conference on DGR's in December. Kathryn closed by thanking Leslie Perley and Joseph Poitras for their contributions over the years.

Bob Watts expressed recognition of the traditional territory of Rama First Nation, thanked Elder Kelly for the opening ceremonies; indicated welcome to Chief Pitchenese of Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation (WLON) for her participation at the meeting; and expressed appreciation for the messages of support for his family.

He recognized the importance of the work by the Council of Elders and Youth such as providing leadership with development the Declaration of the Keepers of Land. He looks forward to NWMO's participation at the Canadian Nuclear Society Conference in Ottawa and acknowledged Jessica's work on an Indigenous Traditional Knowledge policy (ITK). He commented that there is no organization that he knows of that has adopted and accepted an ITK Policy which is a recognition of Indigenous knowledge and its contribution to the project.

Bob provided a description of the selection process for membership on the Council of Elders and Youth and vacancies to be filled in the fall. Bob expressed appreciation to the Chair Donna Augustine, Elder Kelly for the invocation and thanks to Elder Joseph Poitras and Elder Leslie Perley.

### **Youth Overview of the NWMO and the APM**

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The Youth provided a description on the development of presentation the prepared as a draft orientation that they could potentially deliver to new members. They described their personal learning experiences and appreciated the level of security at the dry storage facilities.

The Youth then facilitated a group activity they called “speed teachings”. The Elders were divided into 3 groups, they youth were teamed up in pairs of two each with a question to ask each of the 3 groups of Elders. The questions were:

- What is your advice on how NWMO can demonstrate a commitment to reconciliation in terms of the TRC recommendation # 92?
- What is your advice on creating meaningful relationships between neighboring Aboriginal communities and non-aboriginal communities and neighboring Aboriginal communities?
- What is your advice on how the Council of Elders and Youth meetings can incorporate the teachings of stories and prophecies into the practice of the meetings

The Youth will be complaining the advice received from the Elders and reporting back at the next meeting.

### **Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation (WLON)**

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Chief Pitchenese expressed appreciation to the NWMO for the invitation to participate at the Council of Elders and Youth meeting. WLON has held ceremonies which reminded them to be respectful of grandfather rocks and that “the Rocks will decide” on whether the project can proceed in their area. Although, it is difficult to be open to learn about nuclear waste, the NWNNO staff have been helpful. WLON will continue on its learning journey and there are some nearby First Nations who would also like to learn more about the project. WLON hosted a Treaty #3 Learning and Sharing Gathering to encourage other communities to learn about NWMO and WLON involvement with NWMO. The Chief felt the need for this gathering after attending a Treaty #3 meeting and saw how misinformed people are on the topic of APM. The June meeting also had the attendance of the newly elected Treaty 3 Grand Chief. WLON worked with NWMO through the geoscience field activities, “Walking of the Land”, in which WLON provided local guides and developed traditional protocols. It was also very important for WLON to provide the geologist with cultural awareness training. The Chief said that learning needs to happen for everyone involved in the project. As WLON learns about nuclear waste and the project, NWMO staff and contractors are learning about WLON, how they use the land, teachings, ceremonies and so on. NWMO studied 4 areas in which WLON held ceremony on each parcel before anyone went out in the field. As part of these activities pictographs were found which required additional ceremony and this was then incorporated into WLON TK report.

Other activities include monthly meetings, open-houses, bring a friend night, youth engagement as well as different groups. It is important for WLON to be open and inclusive with its community members on their involvement in the project as well as create open and inclusive opportunities for community members to learn on their own. Through traditional knowledge and ceremony WLON will continue to move forward in the learning process and WLON will continue to use ceremony to help guide them.

**Tuesday August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016**

### **Nuclear Waste Management: International Experience**

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Tom Isaac, Lead Advisor, US Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future made a presentation on a summary of the work done by the Blue Ribbon Commission. The Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future (BRC) was formed by the Secretary of Energy to conduct a comprehensive review of policies for managing the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle and recommend a new strategy. The outcome of the study was a report that highlights the Commission's findings and conclusions and presents recommendations for consideration by the Administration and Congress, as well as interested state, tribal and local governments, other stakeholders, and the public. Tom made a presentation summarizing the report.

In closing Tom Isaacs shared that he felt privileged to share with the Council of Elders and Youth and he has learned a lot from them.

### **Questions and Comments:**

- Is licensing required in all Countries and in Canada and are these licenses legislative?
- In reference to the location of Sweden and Finland, Is there a radius of not allowing off shore drilling?
- Reminded that as countries work though this touch issue they need to remember and acknowledge the 7 grandfather teachings
- Earning public trust is essential and confidence is important
- Canada is not the only country in the world to use an adaptive approach – other countries are involved – We have to listen to the people that are willing to adapt and go through a number of different parts managing with trust and confidence with important concepts such as “the rock will decide”
- The rock and water will decide and we put waste in isolated area away from the society and combine the scientific point of view to understand the rock.
- When will Finland open there repository?
- Social license is important, for example Nevada, USA – rock was suitable and there was social and political opposition and the program was stopped by the Obama administration
- Ceremony helped to stop that and the Navaho prayed to stop it. Consultation is not simply sitting here to believe various points of views.
- Environmental monitoring is essential especially where Indigenous people are concerned.
- Why is the Sweden SF Repository so close to water? Is it beneath the bed rock? Not comfortable about it being so close to water although confident in scientific process and have a sense of humility to learn.
- Indigenous knowledge is more than just traditions, it is spiritual connection to the land. It is spirit base connection.
- Should we be talking about engagement or should we be talking about dialogue?

### **Wednesday August 24, 2016**

The meeting began with an opening prayer from Donna Augustine and smudge from Billie Schibler. An additional prayer and ceremony was conducted by Diane Longboat, sharing thoughts of the spirit of love and respect and with greetings to the Grandmother Spirit of water.

#### **Aboriginal Relations Update**

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Aboriginal relations team provided individual updates on their respective files.

#### **Next Meeting**

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Next meeting: November 21, 2016 was offered as a possible date for the next meeting. Jessica Perritt will confirm the date in the coming weeks/month.

#### **Closing Ceremony**

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Bob introduced the ceremony, asking Jessica Perritt and Joanne Barnaby to share their observations about the work in the development of the Indigenous Knowledge Policy. Bob gave examples of the implementation of the policy and that other departments within NWMO are embracing the policy. He looks forward to sharing the document with other corporations and institutions.

Fred Kelly – smudged the policy document. He explained the process as consecrating the document but not sanctifying the document. It allows for the document to be modified as necessary. He asked that during his song, that Elders, Youth and staff touch the document as acknowledgement of their participation in the creation of the document, as well as the acceptance of the document.

Not advocating for or against, but protecting the earth.

*Date notes taken: August 22-24, 2016*

*This note was prepared by staff and has not been approved and/or reviewed for accuracy by other meeting participants.*