



NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION DES DÉCHETS NUCLÉAIRES



MANITOUWADGE
ONTARIO • CANADA

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Guiding principles for exploring partnership – Community conversations update

In 2018, engagement was conducted in Manitouwadge with a focus on development of a set of values and principles that will guide the way we talk together and further explore the Adaptive Phased Management project. This is important as we begin a new phase of more detailed exploration of the project.

The principles will help guide community and NWMO discussions to explore what it would mean if the Adaptive Phased Management project were implemented in Manitouwadge, including how we might come together in a partnership to implement the project. Over time, these discussions will also need to involve First Nation and Métis communities, as well as others in the area.

Values and principles to guide discussions

- **Community well-being** – The changes associated with hosting the project, and how to optimize benefits and mitigate challenges, must be understood.
- **Effective communication** – Maximize the effectiveness of mutual open communication and learning with a range of audiences in a variety of settings.
- **Environment** – Protect or enhance the environment that is so important to our quality of life.
- **Involving neighbours** – Regional communities must learn about the project and be involved.
- **Respect and transparency** – In order to succeed, there must be mutual respect and transparency.
- **Safety** – Confidence in safety is essential.
- **Strong relationships** – Strong relationships are necessary to effectively engage in productive future discussions.

Summary of activities and community discussions about principles

Purpose of these community discussions

Manitouwadge is one of several communities in Ontario learning about Canada's plan for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel (Adaptive Phased Management), and exploring the possibility of hosting the associated deep geological repository, Centre of Expertise, and other project components.

Since 2012, Manitouwadge has been involved in a process of learning about the project and assessing whether it could be a good fit for the community, as part of the site selection process led by the NWMO. Preliminary studies conducted to date suggest the project has the potential to be implemented safely in Manitouwadge, and align with Manitouwadge's long-term objectives. Manitouwadge and the NWMO are working together to begin more detailed discussions to explore, over the next several years, what it would mean if the project were implemented in the community.

The purpose of the recently completed community engagement was to develop guiding values and principles to set the groundwork for these more detailed conversations. These principles will set the foundation for the way in which Manitouwadge and the NWMO will talk and work with each other during more detailed conversations about the project.

Exploring the potential for partnership

The project will only be implemented at a site that meets robust safety criteria. Once safety criteria have been met, the ability to develop a supportive partnership is an important consideration in selecting a preferred location for the project. This partnership would need to begin with Manitouwadge, and also seek involvement of First Nation and Métis communities and others in the area.

In order to explore the potential for partnership, this next phase of more detailed discussions will consider how the project might be configured in order to align with Manitouwadge's priorities and objectives. It will also explore the investments associated with the project which would be made in the near term and the longer term, and how the broader area would be involved.

Ultimately, the project will only be implemented in the area if a safe site for the repository can be identified, if Manitouwadge is willing, and if a supportive partnership can be developed.

Engaging the community

Over the past several months, the NWMO and Township of Manitouwadge engaged in conversations to gather community member input and feedback on the values and principles that should guide future discussions. Community liaison committee meetings and a drop-in session were advertised in the monthly Forecaster publication, through the Manitouwadge Nuclear Waste Community Liaison Committee's (NWCLC) website, and via posters in the community.

Activities included the following:

- The NWMO presented the "Partnership – Roadmap for Discussions" at the Manitouwadge NWCLC's February 2018 meeting. The first step in the road map involves identification of common values and principles to guide more detailed conversations about the project.
- A working session to explore possible values and principles was conducted with the NWCLC at their March meeting. A workbook seeking input on values and principles was used to guide the discussion; CLC members could provide their immediate feedback verbally and/or written feedback through the workbook.

- Preliminary conversations with a cross-section of residents occurred in summer 2018 through one-on-one discussions. The workbook seeking input on values and principles was used to guide the conversations; participants could provide their immediate feedback verbally, and/or had the options of providing written feedback and leaving it at the Learn More Centre, or emailing it to the NWMO by September 4. Staff were also available at the Learn More Centre to engage people who dropped by in discussion.
- Initial draft values and principles began to emerge through these conversations. The emerging values and principles were summarized and shared at the October NWCLC meeting, and the NWMO and Township of Manitowadge continued to seek input from community members. The initial draft values and principles, and the workbook, were available in the community office for people to add their perspectives, and there was continued outreach to community members to discuss values and principles in late October. Feedback was taken throughout the discussions, including comments and priorities that emerged during the review of the values and principles. In addition to the meetings with community members, some residents shared their comments and questions via email.
- Based on the engagement up until early November, the initial draft values and principles were revised. On November 15, 2018, a community drop-in session was held in advance of the NWCLC meeting. The drop-in session at the Council Chambers was publicly advertised in the November Forecaster publication, on the NWCLC website, and through posters distributed in the community. Residents were invited to review and comment on the revised draft values and principles. A workbook was used to support this discussion. The workbook was also distributed to NWCLC members in advance of their meeting.
- At the November NWCLC meeting, the NWMO and Township of Manitowadge provided an update presentation on the community conversations on values and principles, including the community drop-in session. The NWCLC passed a resolution stating their support for the joint values and principles, recommending that Council adopt them going forward in discussions with the NWMO.

Focus of discussion

The principles emerged from community discussions on three key questions:

1. Values and principles are important because they will guide the way Manitowadge and the NWMO talk and work with each other during more detailed conversations about the project. What values or principles – i.e., rules or requirements – should guide discussions and future decision-making between Manitowadge and the NWMO? Why are these values and principles important?
2. What should we avoid doing while having partnership discussions?
3. Other suggestions or rules that should be considered?

These principles were the focus of further discussion at a community drop-in session in November:

1. Have we covered what is most important? Are there important values and principles that should be added?
2. Each value and principle has a short description. Can you suggest refinements to these descriptions that would make them clearer or the principles stronger?
3. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Values and principles identified by the community

Seven principles emerged from these community discussions and are listed below alphabetically.

→ **Community well-being – The changes associated with hosting the project, and how to optimize benefits and mitigate challenges, must be understood.**

Comprehensive discussion of the long-term changes that would come to the community and surrounding area with the project is needed – both benefits and challenges. There are many dimensions to explore, including economics, community character, the shift from mining/forestry/tourism and potential competition for workers, housing, education and training, services and infrastructure, and more. Planning is needed to successfully capture opportunities, reach our potential, and prevent or mitigate potential impacts. Creativity and innovation will be essential to balance community well-being with safety and environmental considerations.

→ **Effective communication – Maximize the effectiveness of mutual open communication and learning with a range of audiences in a variety of settings.**

Proactively engage with individuals and organizations, and encourage ongoing learning with clear and accessible information that maintains momentum in the discussions, increases understanding, and keeps it “fresh.” Maximize regular, timely and effective communication using both “tried and true” and innovative approaches to reach a range of community members with different perspectives. Those involved in discussions need to ensure effective two-way communication with community members and interested parties. Continue to expand the audience by reaching out to people, in addition to inviting them to meetings or open houses. Enhance understanding of the interests of Indigenous neighbours, traditional knowledge and land uses to inform the future discussions about the project.

→ **Environment – Protect or enhance the environment that is so important to our quality of life.**

Important values that are central to the community’s quality of life, including outdoor activities in the natural environment, must be protected or enhanced. Project planning should seek to complement or reflect the surrounding environment.

→ **Involving neighbours – Regional communities must learn about the project and be involved.**

Surrounding communities, including First Nation and Métis communities, need to be involved in discussions related to planning and implementation of a project that has the potential to transform the area. Service providers at the regional level also need to be engaged.

→ **Respect and transparency – In order to succeed, there must be mutual respect and transparency.**

To achieve pride of ownership in the process and project, there must be a clear process and decision-making structure that will demonstrate progress. Respect, transparency and accountability are essential. Periodically reflect together on the process – evaluate the plan/next steps, and what worked well or did not. Constructive criticism and respectful disagreement should be welcomed. Where the responses to questions are not fully known or understood, acknowledge uncertainty, follow up and seek the answers. All parties must keep the commitments that they make.

→ **Safety – Confidence in safety is essential.**

It is important for people to continue to learn about nuclear waste, safety, and the approaches to the management of used nuclear fuel in Canada and other countries.

→ **Strong relationships – Strong relationships are necessary to effectively engage in productive future discussions.**

The key players – those responsible for planning and decision-making – must be at the table in positions of equality, working together to achieve common goals and focus on solutions. Relationships will need to be built and maintained over the longer term. Strong professional relationships are guided by important values such as effective communication, respect and transparency. An inclusive process must welcome different sectors of the community to be engaged – e.g., the Nuclear Waste Community Liaison Committee, agencies, services, students/youth, community organizations, seniors, and others. Relationships must be built with Indigenous neighbours.

Next steps

With these guiding principles as a foundation, next steps involve getting into the details of the individual facilities and components associated with the project. This will help build community understanding of the project and its various components, and pave the way for reflecting on where facilities might be located in the area, investments that would be required in the near and longer term to support implementation of the project, and how others in the area might be involved if the project were implemented in the area.

Ongoing engagement, discussions and learning may suggest refinements to these principles over time. These principles will be reviewed and refined as needed through these detailed discussions.

Other comments

During engagement, people also shared suggestions on next steps, and how to get more people involved in learning and discussions.

- Continue to explore how to effectively engage the different audiences in Manitouwadge, and with municipal and Indigenous communities in the area, including proactive outreach, presentations by technical experts on a range of topics, and ready access to information.
- Use various engagement techniques and approaches (e.g., “hands-on” or interactive displays/activities, community events) that will support learning by a range of audiences (e.g., youth, newcomers) that have different ways of learning and levels of interest in the project.
- Keep the community up-to-date with respect to the timelines and status of the siting process, in order to ensure that people are well-informed with factual information and avoid misperceptions.
- Collaboratively build understanding of the potential partnership with the NWMO, future decision-making processes, as well as project components (including the Centre of Expertise) and timelines. There is a need to understand the changes that the project would bring, understand how to maximize opportunities, and avoid potential issues that have been experienced with large infrastructure or development projects elsewhere in Canada.
- Start exploring the Centre of Expertise and what it may look like in Manitouwadge, including how to reflect both western science and traditional knowledge.

Learn more

Review the history of Manitouwadge's involvement in the site selection process:
www.nwmo.ca/manitouwadge

Review the activities of the Manitouwadge NWCLC: <http://clinfo.ca/manitouwadge>

Read about the NWMO, Canada's plan and the site selection process: www.nwmo.ca