

Nuclear Waste Agency Heading for Northern Ontario

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization is gearing up for its third and final year before submitting recommendations to the federal government on the long term management of nuclear fuel waste.

A flurry of reports have been released since late August, including a report from “citizens dialogues” organized by the Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) on behalf of NWMO, a second “discussion document” issued by the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO), and a report by a “multi-disciplinary Assessment Team of 9 individuals” selected by the NWMO to do a preliminary review of nuclear waste management options, and provide advice on how a more rigorous review could be conducted. The NWMO has also announced a 35 community tour for this autumn, including sessions in Sudbury, Timmins, Rouyn and Thunder Bay.

The NWMO was mandated by legislation passed by the federal government in 2002 to spend three years looking at three “options” for the long term management of nuclear fuel waste: continued storage of present and future stock piles of nuclear fuel waste at the nuclear reactor sites where the waste is generated and is currently stored; movement to a centralized storage site, either above or below ground; or movement to an underground “geological repository” in the Canadian Shield, a long time favourite of both the nuclear industry and the nuclear boosters in the federal government.

Citizens' Dialogue Rejects Nuclear Waste Burial

The Canadian Policy Research Network's report on their National Citizens Dialogue, released in late August, contains some timely messages: the Dialogue participants don't trust government, they don't want to see the nuclear waste buried and forgotten, and they want to see an independent monitoring body consisting of experts and citizens overseeing government and industry decision-making and actions around nuclear waste.

Arsenic Exposure Measured in Falconbridge Residents

According to recent coverage in the Sudbury Star, a team conducting the arsenic exposure study in the Town of Falconbridge has gotten to work distributing notices and setting up appointments to test arsenic levels in residents' urine.

The report says that the decision to launch the study was made last year after residents grew concerned when they were notified that higher than normal levels of arsenic were found in soils in the town. The elevated levels were discovered in the course of sampling being done for the Sudbury Soils Study, a four-year, \$5-million study to examine the level of harmful chemicals in Sudbury soils and the risk of adverse human health effects.

That conclusion is an echo of recommendations made in the late 1990's by an environmental assessment review panel which had spent ten years reviewing a proposal by Atomic Energy of Canada Limited to bury nuclear waste in the Canadian Shield of northern Ontario. That EA panel's recommendation that an independent agency be created to oversee research and further evaluation of long term management options was rejected by the federal government, who opted instead to create the Nuclear Waste Management Organization, which is wholly funded and operated by the utilities who operate nuclear reactors in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick.

News coverage following the Citizens' Dialogue report's release characterized the “overwhelming public rejection of geological disposal deep in the Canadian Shield” as “a striking rebuff for the federal government which has been pushing that approach for more than 30 years and financed costly studies at an underground lab in Manitoba”. This is the same federal government that created a Nuclear Waste Management Organization that is run by the nuclear industry to do the job the public clearly sees as needing to be handled beyond the clutches of the nuclear industry.

The report was greeted with some satisfaction among nuclear waste watchers in environmental and public interest groups, who have been concerned by the selective approach being taken by the Nuclear Waste Management Organization to public consultation, and the carry-over of that approach into the Citizens' Dialogues managed by the Canadian Policy Research Networks. To participate in a session, members of the public had to be unaffiliated with any group who has an interest in nuclear waste and its management, which could potentially exclude any affiliated with women's organizations, environmental groups, First Nations, trade unions, or churches, all of whom have expressed strong concerns about nuclear waste in the past.

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Falconbridge soil was found to contain five times the level of arsenic set out in Ministry of the Environment guidelines. The levels were enough to prompt the Sudbury and District Health Unit to go door to door telling people to use caution by doing things such as washing vegetables, covering exposed soil and keeping dust levels down to lessen their exposure.

The Falconbridge Citizen's Group is overseeing the arsenic exposure study, which is being funded by Falconbridge Ltd.

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INSIDE: Nuclear restart at Bruce, Calendar of Events, Bennett Sues N.B. Opposition, Ontario EA Process under Review, Old Trees Wanted



Nuclear Waste Agency / cont.

Second Discussion Document Released

The NWMO's second discussion document "Understanding the Choices", proposes a way of assessing the options for the long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel. Described by the NWMO as being "rooted in values and ethical considerations identified by Canadians, and the advice of technical experts", the 112 page document includes a summary of what the NWMO has heard from the focus groups and "experts" they have assembled, describes what the various management options being studied might look like, ie on-site storage, centralized storage or burial in the Canadian Shield, outlines how the framework to assess them has evolved and, and presents a preliminary assessment of the approaches for public discussion. This second discussion document will be the focus of the NWMO's consultations and activities over the next several months, including the 35 city tour.

Assessment Team Opts for Burial

Also released in late summer was the June 2004 report of an "Assessment Team" assembled by the NWMO to develop a methodology for the assessment of the various management approaches being considered by the NWMO and to perform a preliminary assessment on a number of specific options for managing nuclear fuel waste.

The 9 person assessment team's report includes a preliminary description of the strengths and limitations of three management options for used nuclear fuel – extended storage at nuclear reactor sites, centralized storage, and deep geological disposal. Reportedly, the multi-disciplinary group of individuals, who comprised the Assessment Team, did not assess each of the management options on the objectives in precisely the same way, which resulted in a wide range in scores for each of the three options. The assessment found that each of the management options has specific, and quite different, strengths and weaknesses, and no method perfectly addresses all of the values and objectives important to Canadians. However, overall, the assessment found that the deep geological repository option (burial in the Canadian Shield) is "expected to perform significantly better than the other two

options, especially in the light of the long term during which any management option must perform well". The centralized storage option was said to be expected to perform significantly better than the third option of extended storage in the wastes' present location at the nuclear reactor site.

Nuke Waste Agency Coming to Town

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization is planning to visit 35 communities across Canada this fall, including two in northeastern Ontario - Sudbury and Timmins - and neighboring communities in northwestern Quebec and northwestern Ontario - Rouyn and Thunder Bay. Sessions will be open to the public, with two visits per community. The first will be an "information session", with the NWMO returning two or three weeks later "for a full day of discussion and dialogue". Information sessions will be in Sudbury November 15th and 16th and in Timmins on November 17th and 18th. The "dialogue and discussion" sessions will in Timmins on December 13th and in Sudbury on December 14th.

To request a copy of any of the NWMO reports or for more information about the upcoming tour, call the Nuclear Waste Management Organization at 1 800 349-4859 or email info@nwmco.ca.

Join Northwatch Today!

Telephone 705 497 0373

Visit www.northwatch.org

Box 282, North Bay, P1B 8H2

\$10 regular, \$25 supporting or group membership



Arsenic in Falconbridge /cont.

It was the citizen group's concerns with high arsenic levels, expressed at several public meetings, that prompted the study. Fifteen members of the study team were in the community in early September, inviting families to participate in the study, which will begin in September and last until early October.

Hanmer has been selected as a comparison community for the study. About 200 families have been randomly invited to participate by completing interviews and providing urine samples for arsenic analysis. The levels of urinary arsenic in the Hanmer residents will be compared to those from Falconbridge.

Saturday, November 27

**Northwatch Fall Meeting
Workshop and Strategy Session**

Nuclear Waste and Northern Ontario



Caldwell Ellen Community Centre
398 Carruthers Street, North Bay

\$20 includes registration, workshop kit & lunch
Pre-registration requested; Childcare and
billets must be requested by November 27th.

Visit www.northwatch.org for more information.

McGuinty Goes Nuclear

Announces Negotiations for Bruce Restart
The Provincial announced September 8th that it was beginning discussions with Bruce Power to restart Reactors #1 and #2 at the Bruce Nuclear Generating Station in Kincardine.

There are eight nuclear reactors at Bruce Power's facility. Reactor #2 was shut down in October 1995 and reactors 1, 3 and 4 were shut down in March 1998 because of poor performance and technical and management deficiencies. Bruce A #3 was returned to service after refurbishment in 2003, followed by #4 in 2004. Restart costs for Units #3 and 4 were approximately \$500 million. All four Bruce B units are in operation.

In May 2001, Ontario Power Generation closed a deal with Bruce Power to operate the Bruce nuclear complex. As part of the deal, Bruce Power has no long-term responsibility for radioactive waste management or decommissioning. On December 24, 2002, a new Canadian consortium announced the purchase of Bruce Power from British Energy. The group consists of Cameco Corporation, TransCanada Pipelines Ltd., and BPC Generation Income Trust, part of the OMERS pension fund.

The Ontario government has engaged David Santangeli, a managing director of Energy Fundamentals Group Inc. (EFG), to develop a team to advise them through negotiations with Bruce Power.

Coming Right Up Calendar of Events

October 21-23 - "Building the Eco-City: Today's Cities for Tomorrow's Generations", Canadian Environmental Network Annual Conference & General Assembly, **Montreal**, www.cen-rce.org,

November 3 - "True North, Wild and Free", with special guest Cathy Jones. A **celebration of Canada's Boreal Forest** at True North, Wild and Free. **Toronto**. www.cpaws.org/boreal.

November 5 - 7 - Building the Other Superpower: **Pan-Canadian Peace Conference**, Ryerson University, **Toronto**. Canadian Peace Alliance, Toronto Coalition to Stop the War, Canadian Voice of Women for Peace and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Call 416-588-5555 <http://ca.geocities.com/peaceconference2004/>

November 15 - Nuclear Waste Management Organization "information session" on option for the longer management of nuclear waste, including the "option" of burying the waste in northern Ontario, 6-9 p.m, Holiday Inn, 50 Brady Street, **Sudbury**, visit www.nwmo.ca

November 16 - Nuclear Waste Management Organization "information session" on long term management of nuclear waste, including the "option" of burying the waste in northern Ontario, 2-5 and 6-9 p.m, Holiday Inn, , 50 Brady Street, **Sudbury** visit www.nwmo.ca

November 17 - Nuclear Waste Management Organization "information session" on long term management of nuclear waste, including the "option" of burying the waste in northern Ontario, 6-9 p.m, Days Inn, 14 Mount Joy Street South, **Timmins**, visit www.nwmo.ca

November 18 - Nuclear Waste Management Organization "information session" on long term management of nuclear waste, including the "option" of burying the waste in northern Ontario, 2-5 and 6-9 p.m, Days Inn, 14 Mount Joy Street South, **Timmins**, visit www.nwmo.ca

November 19-21 - Annual Meeting and Conference of the **Ontario Environment Network**, at the offices of Conservation Halton, near **Milton**. For info visit www.oen.ca

November 22 - Nuclear Waste Management Organization "information session" on options for the longer management of nuclear waste, 6-9 p.m, **Rouyn-Noranda**, Quebec, visit www.nwmo.ca

November 23 - Nuclear Waste Management Organization "information session" on long management of nuclear waste, 2-5 and 6-9 p.m, **Rouyn-Noranda**, Quebec, visit www.nwmo.ca

November 24 - Nuclear Waste Management Organization "information session" on long term management of nuclear waste, including the "option" of burying the waste in northern Ontario, 6-9 p.m, Ogden Community Centre, 600 McKenzie Street, **Thunder Bay**, visit www.nwmo.ca

November 24-27 - Eco-North 2004 Conference and Trade Show. Learn how to tap into Northern Ontario's nature-based tourism market, Valhalla Inn, **Thunder Bay**, visit www.eco-north2004.ca for info

November 25 - Nuclear Waste Management Organization "information session" on long term management of nuclear waste, including the "option" of burying the waste in northern Ontario, 2-5 and 6-9 p.m, Ogden Community Centre, 600 McKenzie Street, **Thunder Bay**, visit www.nwmo.ca

November 26 - Buy Nothing Day 2004. On the busiest shopping day of the year, refuse to participate in the consumer frenzy for 24 hours! www.adbusters.org/metas/eco/bnd/

November 26 - Regional Workshop on **Forest Management Planning** and the use of computer models, Caldwell Ellen Centre, 398 Carruthers Street **North Bay**, visit www.northeastforest.net for details.

November 27 - Northwatch Fall Meeting **Workshop and Strategy Session on Nuclear Waste** and Northern Ontario, Caldwell Ellen Centre, 398 Carruthers Street, **North Bay**, www.northwatch.org

December 13 - Nuclear Waste Management Organization "discussion session" on long term management of nuclear waste, including the "option" of burying the waste in northern Ontario, 6-9:30 p.m, Days Inn, 14 Mount Joy Street South, **Timmins**, visit www.nwmo.ca 6-9:30 p.m.

December 13 - Nuclear Waste Management Organization "discussion session" on long term management of nuclear waste, 6-9:30 p.m, **Rouyn-Noranda**, Quebec, visit www.nwmo.ca

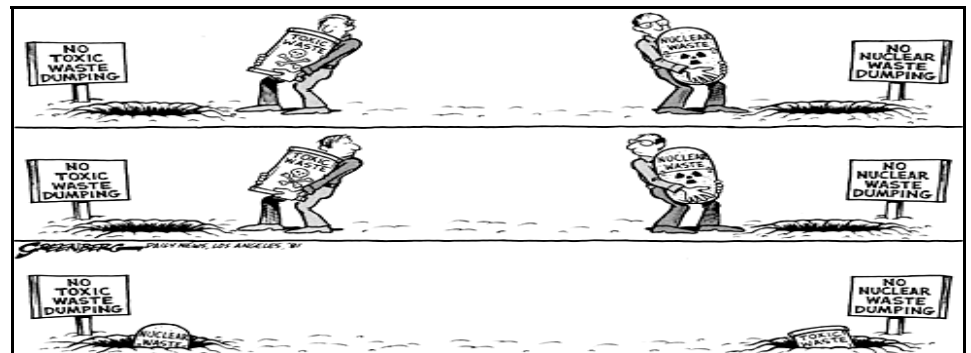
December 14 - Nuclear Waste Management Organization "discussion session" on long term management of nuclear waste, including the "option" of burying the waste in northern Ontario, 6-9:30 p.m, Holiday Inn, 50 Brady Street, **Sudbury**, visit www.nwmo.ca 6-9:30 p.m.

December 14 - Nuclear Waste Management Organization "discussion session" on long term management of nuclear waste, including the "option" of burying the waste in northern Ontario, 6-9:30 p.m, Ogden Community Centre, 600 McKenzie Street, **Thunder Bay**, visit www.nwmo.ca

January 20-23 - Guelph Organic Conference, **Guelph** University Centre. Visit www.guelphorganicconf.ca

March 25-26 - Northwatch Winter/Spring Meeting, **Sudbury**, details t.b.a.

May 2005 - Community Economic Development Network Conference in Sault Ste. Marie



Bennett Sues New Brunswick Conservation Council Over Incinerator Comments

The Conservation Council of New Brunswick and its senior staff members David Coon and Inka Milewski are being sued by Bennett Environmental for comments made in the media and a letter to the editor concerning a hazardous waste incinerator the company is building in Belledune, New Brunswick. Bennett Environmental also has a proposal to develop a hazardous waste incinerator in Kirkland Lake, which has been the subject of intense local and regional opposition in northeastern Ontario.

What the Conservation Council saw as its duty to provide fair comment on a matter of significant public interest has resulted in this lawsuit which alleges the comments were defamatory and brought Bennett Environmental into hatred, ridicule and contempt resulting in injury to its character and professional reputation. The company is seeking general damages, special damages, punitive damages and its costs.

The Province of New Brunswick exempted the hazardous waste

incinerator from a full public environmental impact assessment. The Federal Court of Appeal recently overturned the decision of the federal Minister of Environment to refer the project to a federal review panel following a judicial review brought by the company. Local property owners are currently appealing the company's building permit.

A complete copy of Bennett's Statement of Claim can be obtained by contacting the Conservation Council for full details on what the company alleges were defamatory statements. Following are paraphrases of two of the statements.

In response to a question from a New Brunswick Telegraph Journal reporter in August 2003, David Coon told him that toxic pollutants are released from incinerators which treat hazardous waste and that these end up as contaminants in the environment. In its Statement of Claim, Bennett alleges that the statement was false and defamatory of their company, and maliciously stated.

processes; public participation; transparency and accountability; monitoring; and prescriptive requirements and technical and policy guidance.

The Panel will provide the Minister with a report by December 31, 2004. An interim report is expected in early October, and the public has been invited to submit their comments and suggestions to the EA advisory panel. A second posting on the EBR electronic registry in mid-October.

For more information contact Blair Rohaly, Project Manager, Strategic Policy Branch, Ministry of the Environment, tel 416 212 4083 or email blair.rohaly@ene.gov.on.ca

In an October letter to the editor of the New Brunswick Telegraph Journal last year, Inka Milewski noted that months had passed since the Conservation Council had written to the Ministers of Environment and Health detailing what it believed were deficiencies in the company's air pollution and human health risk assessments. In its Statement of Claim, Bennett alleges the statement was false and malicious.

The Conservation Council has had a long-standing policy of opposing the importation of hazardous wastes for treatment in New Brunswick and the high temperature incineration of toxic chemicals on environmental grounds.

To make a donation to the Conservation Council Legal Defence Fund, be listed as a Friend of the CCNB Legal Defence Fund, order a copy of the Statement of Claim, or if you are willing to host a fundraising event, please contact the Conservation Council of New Brunswick, tel(506) 458-8747 fax (506) 458-1047 or email ccnb@nb.aibn.com. Further information about the issue can be found at www.conservationcouncil.ca

Ontario Environmental Assessment Under Review

The Ontario government has formed an advisory panel to recommend ways of improving the province's Environmental Assessment process. A review of the Province's environmental assessment process was part of an announcement last April that included an end to any use of the Adams Mine as an option for the disposal of Toronto's garbage.

The advisory panel has been asked to identify "key impediments to obtaining timely approvals for projects" in the waste, transportation and clean energy sectors and to examine the existing environmental assessment process and identify potential improvements to such areas as the government review process; decision-making and approval

WANTED: OLD TREES

Ancient Forest Exploration and Research is seeking examples of old trees of each species native to Ontario. They intend to publish the final list of Ontario's oldest trees on the website of Ancient Forest Exploration & Research, and it will likely form part of an upcoming book on old-growth forests in Ontario. AFER is interested in currently living trees in Ontario, recently dead trees, and historic records of trees, which have been accurately aged using ring counts.

All submissions are welcome. Visit www.ancientforest.org for more information or send an email inquiry to mhenry@ancientforest.org or write to 633 Aylmer St. N. Peterborough ON, K9H 3X2.

Forestry by the Numbers

A Workshop on the Use of Computer Models in Forest Management Planning

Friday, November 26, 2004 • 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. • North Bay, Ontario • Workshop Leader: Dr. David Euler

This goal of this one day workshop is to make computer models and their use in forest management planning make sense to forest management planning participants. We'll learn how they work, how they're used, and how to evaluate the computer predictions that are the basis for forest management planning. To register call 705 497 0373 or 1 877 553 0481 or email forests@onlink.net. Visit www.northeastforest.net for workshop details and agenda. No registration charge.