

The Land Access Process: Next steps in Huron-Kinloss and South Bruce

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) is responsible for designing and implementing Canada's plan for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel, in a manner that protects people and the environment.

Canada's plan calls for used nuclear fuel to be contained and isolated in a deep geological repository located in an area with informed and willing hosts, including local municipalities and Indigenous communities. We expect to select a site by 2023.

A key part of that selection process is studying and identifying a site that can safely house the underground repository and its surface-level facilities. Part of that work requires us to assemble and access sufficient land to complete our studies, which could include borehole drilling, environmental monitoring and other site investigation work such as Indigenous cultural verification.

In two of the five areas remaining in the process – Huron-Kinloss and South Bruce – the NWMO seeks to sign agreements to access sufficient land in order to complete those studies. Similar land is already available to us in the other three siting areas. As the NWMO continues to work with communities towards site selection in 2023, the Land Access Process will also help us understand if we can assemble sufficient land in these areas as well.

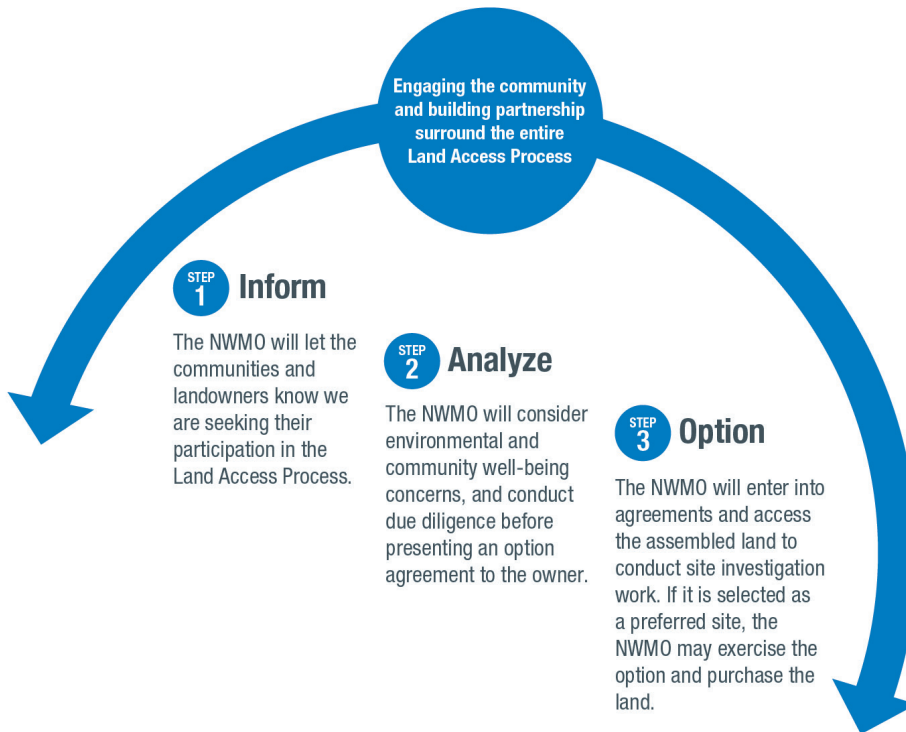
That is why the NWMO is asking landowners to join us in this Land Access Process and consider signing an agreement with us. This agreement would provide us the right to conduct studies on the land, and if the community later proves to be willing and the site is selected, it would provide us the ability to purchase the land in the future. Landowners who sign agreements will be compensated, and they could be eligible for additional compensation if the NWMO's site investigation work significantly disrupts existing operations on their land.

We also remain committed to protecting the environment and farmland, and minimizing disruption to local businesses. The NWMO will only need to access small areas of the optioned land to conduct our studies. If the NWMO purchases the land, landowners may be able to leaseback much of the land and continue current land use for decades to come.

While the NWMO continues to work with the Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON), other Indigenous communities and local municipalities, the rollout of land access does not suggest they have provided their support for the Land Access Process or the siting of the repository in this area. Canada's plan will only be implemented with the involvement of municipalities, First Nation and Métis communities, and others in the area. For example, the NWMO has committed to the SON that we will not select a site for the deep geological repository in the SON's traditional territory without the consent of the SON communities.

Anyone interested in the initiative can learn more from this brochure, email landaccess@nwmo.ca or visit us online at www.nwmo.ca.





QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

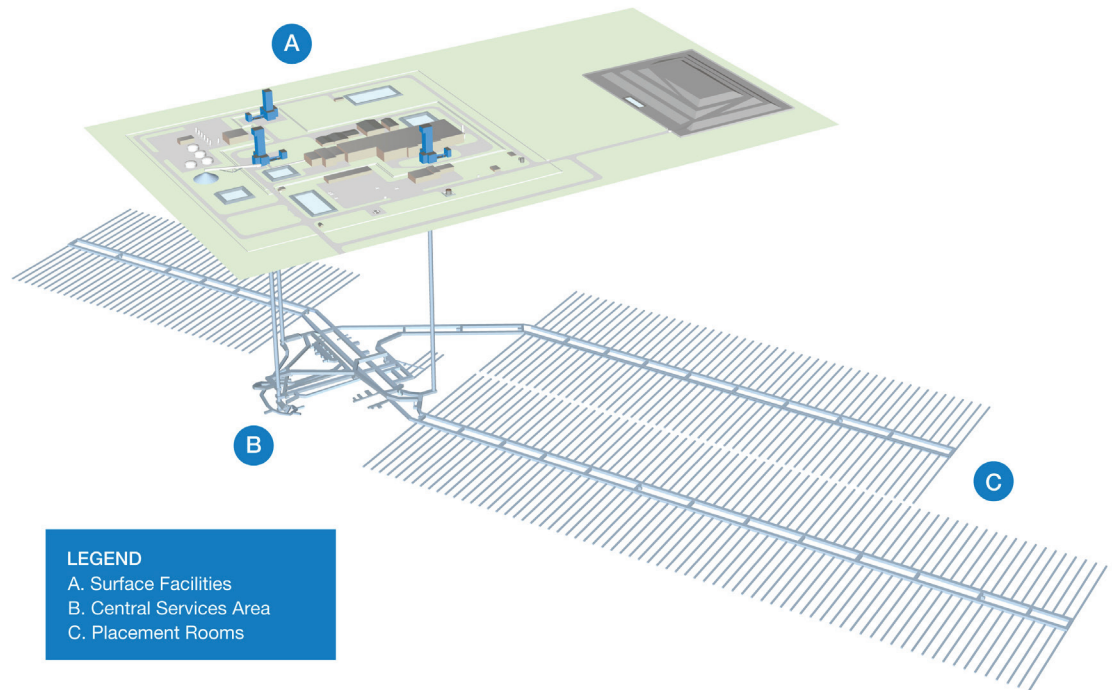
Does the Land Access Process mean that the NWMO is going to build the deep geological repository in Huron-Kinloss or South Bruce?

No. This is just part of the site investigation process that is part of the larger site selection process. The NWMO is also conducting or planning site investigations in other communities. In addition to the communities of Huron-Kinloss and South Bruce, we are also working with municipalities and Indigenous communities in the areas of Ignace, Hornepayne and Manitouwadge in northern Ontario. The NWMO has an active engagement program and plans to identify a single, preferred location with informed and willing hosts by 2023.

How much land does the NWMO need?

The NWMO is looking to access approximately 1,500 acres (600 hectares). These can belong to one or several landowner(s). This area would allow for the size of the underground repository, which is estimated to be about two kilometres by three kilometres, or about 1,500 acres.

The surface facilities of the repository is expected to be about one square kilometre, or about 250 acres (100 hectares).



This diagram reflects the latest conceptual layout for the surface facilities, and the underground services area and placement rooms. This design will continue to become more detailed as the project progresses.

How will a landowner be compensated for participating in an option agreement?

Landowners will be compensated upon signing an option agreement. Each landowner who goes through the Land Access Process will receive \$10,000 to cover the costs of professional fees (such as an appraisal, legal advice or an accountant), plus 10 per cent of the fair market value of the property as an option payment. This option payment can be received as a lump sum upon signing the agreement or spread out evenly over the term of the option agreement.

If the option is exercised in the future, the NWMO will purchase the land for fair market value, plus a 25 per cent premium. That means a landowner with a property valued at \$1,000,000 would receive \$10,000 to cover professional fees, then an additional \$100,000 as an option payment. In addition, if the option is exercised, the landowner would receive \$1,250,000 for the purchase of the land.

Reasonable compensation will be provided in the event the NWMO's site investigation activities cause significant disruptions to ongoing activities on the land.

Is the NWMO interested in buying land at this time?

The NWMO's preference at this time is to sign option agreements with landowners to allow us to assemble sufficient lands and to complete our studies.

However, if requested by a landowner, the NWMO will consider immediate purchase on a case-by-case basis. In this situation, the landowner would receive the \$10,000 to cover any professional advice they have received, and a 5 per cent premium on the market value of their land. Landowners who request immediate purchase would not be eligible for an option payment.

How can landowners use the land during the term of the agreement?

The NWMO will only need to access small areas to conduct our studies, which will allow people to continue to live and work there. That said, landowners may also be provided reasonable compensation for significant disruptions to ongoing operations caused by the NWMO's site investigation activities. Also, if the NWMO purchases the land, landowners may be able to leaseback much of the land for decades to come.

That means from now until 2023, most of the land may be used just as it is right now. If the land is purchased in 2023 or before, landowners may be able to leaseback some or all the land during the design and construction of the repository through to the 2040s. Once operations begin as expected in 2043, regulatory and safety criteria will dictate how the land can be used.

How will the NWMO decide who gets to participate?

The NWMO does not decide who gets to participate – the landowners decide if they want to participate. The NWMO will only move forward with the Land Access Process if enough landowners express interest in working with us.

Once we have sufficient expressions of interest, the NWMO will conduct due diligence on the properties. The NWMO may decide to not pursue an option agreement or purchase land for a number of reasons, including if there are legal or title issues with the land being offered.

What will the NWMO do when it studies the land?

Canada's plan is about protecting people and the environment for generations to come, and to do so, we have to study any possible site to determine whether it meets the project's safety requirements. That work includes borehole drilling, geophysical studies, environmental monitoring, and other site investigation work such as Indigenous cultural verification. NWMO specialists may also conduct field surveys to identify any species at risk or environmentally sensitive habitats in the area.

How will the NWMO protect people, the environment, farmland, and local watersheds?

Canada's plan is anchored in a commitment to protect people and the environment for generations to come.

We are committed to protecting sensitive environmental areas, and that includes watersheds and other sensitive ecological environments. We remain committed to respecting Indigenous rights and treaty rights.

Our commitment to minimizing disruption also extends to local residents, businesses and farms. We expect landowners would be able to inhabit and continue their operations on the majority of, if not all, their land for the duration of an option agreement. Should the NWMO eventually purchase the land, we may leaseback land to allow agricultural or other work to continue on some of the land before, during and possibly even after the repository is constructed.

Will the Land Access Process increase the cost of Canada's plan?

No. The total cost of Canada's plan, from the NWMO's founding in 2002 through eventual decommissioning of the repository generations from now, is estimated to be just over \$23 billion (in 2015 dollars).

Canada's plan is funded by waste owners through annual payments to trust funds that cover the costs of building, maintaining and decommissioning the project, as well as separate payments to cover our annual operations. This land access initiative fits into our long-term fiscal plan and does not change the overall cost of the project.

Does the Land Access Process mean that local municipalities have agreed to host the repository?

Importantly, at this stage of the process, neither of the communities have decided whether or not they wish to host the project. The NWMO continues to work with communities in all its potential host areas. The Land Access Process is another step in Canada's plan. The NWMO has developed a fair process to explore our ability to identify a potential site.

Ultimately, the project will only proceed with the involvement of the potential host municipality, First Nation and Métis communities, and others in the area, working in partnership to implement it.

Have local Indigenous communities agreed to the Land Access Process?

The NWMO continues to work with the SON. The Land Access Process is another step in Canada's plan, but it does not mean the SON has agreed to this process or to host the repository.

Ultimately, the project will only proceed with the involvement of local and surrounding communities, the municipality, First Nation and Métis communities, and others in the area, working in partnership to implement it. For example, the NWMO has committed to the SON that we will not select a site for the deep geological repository in the SON's traditional territory without the consent of the SON communities.

The NWMO also has a commitment to work with Indigenous communities to include traditional knowledge sharing on the land, and if appropriate and requested, to support ceremony.

Where will the Centre of Expertise go?

The NWMO is committed to breaking ground on a Centre of Expertise at or near a repository site shortly after a preferred site is identified. The centre and its location will be based on community input and engagement. The Land Access Process does not alter or affect plans for the Centre of Expertise.

Why use option agreements instead of just asking to study the land like the NWMO did in northern Ontario?

The process for accessing land in northern Ontario is different because potential repository sites in those regions are located on Crown land. Optioning private land is a variation on the general approach we have taken in northern Ontario, as it allows us to work with people in the area to identify a potential repository site and conduct the necessary studies to determine if it is a suitable location to build the repository.

How can I participate?

To inquire about participating in an option agreement with the NWMO, please email landaccess@nwmo.ca or visit one of our Learn More Centres.

**For more information,
please contact:**

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