

nwmo

NUCLEAR WASTE
MANAGEMENT
ORGANIZATION

SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION
DES DÉCHETS
NUCLÉAIRES

Implementing Adaptive Phased Management 2014 to 2018

DRAFT FOR PUBLIC REVIEW
SEPTEMBER 2013





The NWMO is guided by five fundamental values:

Table of Contents

Preface	1
Executive Summary	2
Progress Since Last Implementation Plan	4
NWMO Organization	5
Canada's Plan for Used Nuclear Fuel	7
Planning Priorities for 2014 to 2018	12
» Build Sustainable Relationships	14
» Collaboratively Implement the Site Selection Process	17
» Optimize Repository Designs and Further Increase Confidence in Safety	25
» Provide Financial Surety	28
» Adapt Plans	30
» Ensure Governance and Accountability	32
» Build and Sustain a High-Performing Organization	35
The Road Ahead	37
Glossary	38

» Integrity

We will conduct ourselves with openness, honesty and respect for all persons and organizations with whom we deal.

» Excellence

We will pursue the best knowledge, understanding and innovative thinking in our analysis, engagement processes and decision-making.

» Engagement

We will seek the participation of all communities of interest and be responsive to a diversity of views and perspectives. We will communicate and consult actively, promoting thoughtful reflection and facilitating a constructive dialogue.

» Accountability

We will be fully responsible for the wise, prudent and efficient management of resources, and be accountable for all our actions.

» Transparency

We will be open and transparent in our process, communications and decision-making, so that the approach is clear to all Canadians.



Preface

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) is responsible for the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management, Canada’s plan for the safe, long-term care of used nuclear fuel. Adaptive Phased Management involves the development of a large infrastructure project that will include a deep geological repository and a centre of expertise for technical, environmental and community studies.

The NWMO invites all Canadians and Aboriginal peoples of Canada to learn more and become involved in the management of Canada’s used nuclear fuel. To support this involvement and demonstrate our commitment to transparency and accountability, the NWMO publishes an annual update to its five-year strategic plan, titled *Implementing Adaptive Phased Management*. The plan is regularly assessed, strengthened and redirected as appropriate in the face of new information and comments we receive through our engagement initiatives.

Implementing Adaptive Phased Management 2014 to 2018 is released in draft for public review until November 29, 2013. Following the review period, the Plan will be revised to reflect comments received. An overview of comments received about the Draft Plan and how they helped to refine the plan will be published along with the revised 2014–2018 Plan at www.nwmo.ca.

The NWMO welcomes all suggestions and ideas about our work and how we can help you learn more about Adaptive Phased Management.

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Executive Summary

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) is responsible for the long-term care of Canada's used nuclear fuel. *Implementing Adaptive Phased Management 2014 to 2018* describes our five-year work program.

Adaptive Phased Management, Canada's long-term plan for used nuclear fuel, is a management system and a technical method. The management system is based on phased and adaptive decision-making supported by public engagement and continuous learning. The end point of the technical method is a repository deep underground in a suitable rock formation. The NWMO's primary motivation is safety – to protect people and the environment from highly radioactive used nuclear fuel. This objective and common vision underpins all the work of the NWMO. All aspects of the NWMO's work will meet or exceed all applicable federal, provincial and international regulatory standards and requirements for protecting the health, safety and security of humans and the environment.

The focus of the 2014 to 2018 period will be on siting and working with potentially interested communities as they move through the many steps of the siting process. When communities ask to advance in the process, the NWMO will be ready to implement activities such as learning more, site evaluation and engagement. We expect that the site selection process will advance over the five-year period such that the NWMO must be ready to undertake detailed site investigations in the latter half of the period. The NWMO will continue to refine postclosure safety assessments for a repository in both crystalline and sedimentary rock formations, and submit these to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission for a pre-project review. Throughout the planning period, engagement and social research will continue. Attention to sound governance and assurances around program funding will be maintained. Investing in people and the skills key to program success and continuity will remain a priority.

As the NWMO conducts this work, it carries with it the lessons and good practices of the past. The

NWMO-led three-year study (2002 to 2005) created the foundation for the safe, long-term care of used nuclear fuel. Since the Government's selection of Adaptive Phased Management for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel in 2007, the NWMO has transitioned from a small study group to a sustainable implementing organization. From 2007 through 2009, the NWMO built the organization, putting in place a comprehensive governance structure and expanding staff resources with technical research and social research expertise and skills key to implementing Adaptive Phased Management. Much activity has been directed to engaging interested Canadians and Aboriginal peoples in the development and implementation of our plans, including the principles and process to guide selection of a site for the underground repository for used nuclear fuel and its associated facilities. In 2008 and 2009, the NWMO conducted a two-year dialogue with Canadians about the design of a process to select an informed, willing host community that is fair and transparent, and meets the expectations of citizens. The site selection process has been designed to ensure, above all, that the site which is selected is safe and secure, and meets the highest scientific, professional and ethical standards. In May 2010, the NWMO initiated the process to select an informed, willing community to host this national infrastructure initiative. Through 2011, 2012 and 2013, the NWMO has worked with communities wishing to learn more about the Adaptive Phased Management project and increasingly with those in the surrounding area and Aboriginal peoples to explore potential suitability through initial screening and assessments. This project will only proceed with the involvement of the interested community, surrounding communities and affected Aboriginal peoples.

Key milestones for the next five-year planning period include:

- » Completing desktop preliminary assessments for communities that have passed an initial screening and elect to proceed in the site selection process;
- » Engaging the surrounding communities and Aboriginal peoples in learning and consideration of the project;
- » Based on the results of this work, identifying the communities with the strongest potential to be suitable for the project to progress with the next phase of work involving preliminary field studies and engagement of surrounding communities and Aboriginal peoples in order to establish a foundation to proceed to implement the project together;
- » Conducting this work collaboratively with the communities involved; and
- » Based on the findings from preliminary field studies and assessments, identifying one or two communities to progress to the detailed site characterization phase of work.

The plan for the next five years is organized along seven strategic objectives outlined in the following pages. This 2014 to 2018 strategic plan is a 'living' document that is regularly assessed, strengthened and redirected in the face of new information, advances in science and technology, changes in societal values and evolving public policy. Adaptive Phased Management will only proceed as quickly as Canadians, successful technology development and demonstration, and the regulatory authorities allow.

The NWMO approaches its work with the following vision: the long-term management of Canada's nuclear waste in a manner that safeguards people and respects the environment, now and in the future.

Strategic Objectives

The NWMO will:

- » **Build sustainable, long-term relationships with interested Canadians and Aboriginal peoples of Canada, and involve them in setting future directions for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel.**
- » **Implement collaboratively with Canadians the process for siting a deep geological repository for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel in an informed, willing host community.**
- » **Refine and further develop the generic designs and safety cases for a repository for used nuclear fuel in both crystalline and sedimentary rock formations, and conduct technical research and development to ensure continuous improvement, consistent with best practices.**
- » **Ensure funds are available to pay for the safe, long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel.**
- » **Adapt plans for the management of used nuclear fuel in response to new knowledge, international best practices, advances in technical learning, evolving societal expectations and values, and changes in public policies.**
- » **Maintain an accountable governance structure that provides confidence to the Canadian public in the conduct of the NWMO's work.**
- » **Build and sustain an effective organization with the social, environmental, technical and financial capabilities for the safe, long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel.**

Progress Since Last Implementation Plan

The NWMO reports in detail on its progress in achieving the activities outlined in the Implementation Plan each year in its Annual Report and every three years in its Triennial Report. Selected highlights are outlined below.

Building Sustainable Relationships	The NWMO continued to engage with the many groups involved in the long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel, including Aboriginal organizations, municipal associations, federal and provincial governments, and young Canadians.
Collaboratively Implementing the Site Selection Process	Twenty communities involved in learning more as part of the site selection process successfully passed an initial screening and elected to advance to Step 3 – Phase 1 of the site selection process.
Optimizing Repository Designs and Further Increasing Confidence in Safety	The NWMO's technical program continued research and development in the key areas of repository engineering, geoscience and repository safety. Research and development work is ongoing regarding the transportation of used nuclear fuel; a mobile exhibit was launched to help share information with communities and interested public.
Providing Financial Surety	The NWMO, in compliance with the <i>Nuclear Fuel Waste Act</i> , continues to monitor the segregated funds whose sole purpose is to fund the implementation of the Deep Geological Repository and Centre of Expertise once a construction licence has been granted by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, many years in the future.
Adapting Plans	The NWMO engaged in continuous learning so as to be able to adapt its plans should new technologies emerge or societal expectations change. The NWMO continues to work with specialists across Canada, as well as internationally.
Ensuring Governance and Accountability	Multiple layers of oversight and peer review, complemented by externally audited international certifications, helped ensure that the NWMO's work was both transparent and guided by the highest scientific and professional standards.
Building and Sustaining a High-Performing Organization	The NWMO continued to enhance its staffing and contractor capability through a variety of initiatives, including research partnerships with universities, staff training and development, and investment in business systems and processes.

NWMO Organization

NWMO Vision: The long-term management of Canada’s nuclear waste in a manner that safeguards people and respects the environment, now and in the future.

The Government of Canada, through the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act* (2002), assigned responsibility for the long-term management of Canada’s used nuclear fuel to the NWMO. The NWMO was established to operate on a not-for-profit basis by Canada’s major nuclear fuel waste owners, Ontario Power Generation, Hydro-Québec and NB Power¹. The NWMO’s mission is to develop and implement, collaboratively with Canadians, a management approach for the long-term care of Canada’s used nuclear fuel that is socially acceptable, technically sound, environmentally responsible and economically feasible².

Over the period 2002 to 2005, the NWMO engaged a broad cross-section of citizens in a study to examine options for the long-term care of Canada’s used nuclear fuel. The study and the NWMO’s recommendation to the Government of Canada are available on the NWMO website at www.nwmo.ca.

In 2007, the Government of Canada, based on the NWMO’s recommendations, selected Adaptive Phased Management as the best plan for Canada for safeguarding both the public and the environment over the very long time in which used nuclear fuel must be

managed. Implementation of a deep geological repository under Adaptive Phased Management will be regulated by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) under the *Nuclear Safety and Control Act* and its associated regulations.

In 2010, the NWMO initiated the site selection process, following a two-year dialogue with Canadians to design a community-driven process for identifying the location for the deep geological repository. In 2011, 2012 and 2013, many of the NWMO’s activities focused on working with communities that chose to become involved in the site selection process through the early steps of learning more about Adaptive Phased Management, the site selection process and the project.

The NWMO continues to build a multidisciplinary team with a range of experience in the fields of social research, technical research and development, public engagement, communications, finance and governance. We continue to collaborate with an extensive network of consultants, practitioners and academics from across Canada and around the world to ensure that our work benefits from the best available knowledge.

¹ In 2004, through a transfer order, the Government of New Brunswick assigned responsibility for all aspects of the provincially owned nuclear generating assets to a new subsidiary corporation, NB Power Nuclear.

² In addition to used nuclear fuel, the operation of nuclear reactors produces low and intermediate level waste that is managed at the reactor sites and Ontario Power Generation’s Western Waste Management Facility. See glossary for more information about low and intermediate level waste.

Regulatory Oversight of Adaptive Phased Management

All aspects of the NWMO's work will meet or exceed all applicable regulatory standards and requirements for protecting the health, safety and security of humans and the environment.

Implementation of a repository under Adaptive Phased Management falls within federal jurisdiction and will be regulated under the *Nuclear Safety and Control Act (NSCA)* and its associated regulations. The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) is Canada's regulatory authority, and regulates the use of nuclear energy and materials to protect the health and safety of people and the environment and to respect Canada's international commitments on the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Under section 26 of the *NSCA*, activities associated with a nuclear facility, such as preparing a site, construction, operation or decommissioning, can occur only in accordance with a licence issued by the CNSC. The Adaptive Phased Management repository will be subject to the CNSC's comprehensive licensing process, which covers the entire life cycle of the repository. This stepwise approach will require a licence for each phase of the repository life cycle. A licensing decision by the CNSC on a repository can be taken only after the successful completion of the environmental assessment process.

The transportation of used nuclear fuel is jointly regulated by the CNSC and Transport Canada.

Although Canada's constitutional division of powers confers the authority to regulate nuclear energy to the federal government, it does not exclude provincial and territorial authority to regulate related matters within their domain. All aspects of the NWMO's work will comply with all applicable provincial regulatory requirements. For example, some aspects of siting or construction of the project and the transportation of used nuclear fuel may be governed by provincial legislation:

- » Most provinces and territories include nuclear substances in legislation and regulations addressing the transportation of dangerous goods within that province or territory.
- » Provincial governments are responsible for protecting public health and safety, property and the environment within their borders, which often includes provincial emergency preparedness legislation.
- » Provincial governments are responsible for the regulation of resource exploration and/or extraction (e.g., drilling and underground mining) and Crown land management (e.g., disposition of provincial lands).
- » Provincial legislation requiring the assessment of potential environmental effects of an activity, plan or program may apply to some aspects of this work. Legislation governing endangered species, environmental protection, heritage protection or preservation, water resources protection, occupational health and safety, employment standards or labour relations may be relevant.
- » Various permits, licences and approvals will be required, and provincial policies and guidelines may be applicable at the site selection stage.
- » Municipalities, which derive their authority from provincial legislation, may have requirements such as permits, codes, standards and/or bylaws that also need to be addressed.

Canada's Plan for Used Nuclear Fuel

Canada's plan for the long-term care of used nuclear fuel is known as Adaptive Phased Management. Used fuel will be safely and securely contained and isolated from people and the environment in a deep geological repository in a suitable rock formation using a multiple-barrier system. A fundamental tenet of Canada's plan is the incorporation of learning and knowledge at each step to guide a process of phased decision-making. Adaptive Phased Management is designed to be flexible and respond to new learning, social priorities and evolving public policy.

The development of the long-term management facility for Canada's used nuclear fuel is a national infrastructure project (see *The Project*). The facility is to be sited in an informed, willing host community. The process for identifying the site reflects the ideas, experience and best advice of a broad cross-section of Canadians who participated in dialogues conducted over a two-year period to design the process to select a site.

Adaptive Phased Management moves towards a goal that Canadians themselves identified: safe, secure, long-term containment and isolation of used nuclear fuel produced in Canada with flexibility for future generations to make their own decisions and adapt to experience and societal changes.

Adaptive Phased Management

- » Centralized containment and isolation of used nuclear fuel in a repository deep underground in a suitable rock formation
- » A series of steps and clear decision points that can be adapted over time
- » An open, inclusive and fair siting process to identify an informed and willing host community
- » Opportunities for people and communities to be involved throughout the implementation process
- » Optional temporary shallow storage at the central site, if needed
- » Long-term stewardship through the continuous monitoring of used fuel
- » Ability to retrieve the used fuel over an extended period should there be a need to access the waste or take advantage of new technologies
- » Financial surety and long-term program funding to ensure the necessary money will be available for the long-term care of used nuclear fuel

Canadians' objectives for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel, as identified during the study phase:

- » **Fairness:** To ensure fairness (in substance and process) in the distribution of costs, benefits, risks and responsibilities, within this generation and across generations.
- » **Public Health and Safety:** To protect public health from the risk of exposure to radioactive or other hazardous materials and from the threat of injuries or deaths due to accidents.
- » **Worker Health and Safety:** To protect workers from and minimize hazards associated with managing used nuclear fuel.
- » **Community Well-Being:** To ensure the well-being of all communities with a shared interest.
- » **Security:** To ensure the security of facilities, materials and infrastructure.
- » **Environmental Integrity:** To ensure that environmental integrity is maintained over the long term.
- » **Economic Viability:** To ensure the economic viability of the used nuclear fuel management system, while simultaneously contributing positively to the local economy.
- » **Adaptability:** To ensure a capacity to adapt to changing knowledge and conditions over time.

Used Nuclear Fuel

Used nuclear fuel is a by-product of the generation of electricity by nuclear power plants. It remains radioactive for a long period of time, and the material must be contained and isolated from people and the environment essentially indefinitely. Canada's used nuclear fuel is currently safely managed in facilities licensed for interim storage at nuclear reactor sites in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick, and at Atomic Energy of Canada Limited's nuclear research sites in Manitoba and Chalk River Laboratories in Ontario.

Canadian nuclear power plants are fuelled by natural uranium, formed into ceramic pellets which are encased in Zircaloy tubes welded together in the shape of a fireplace log weighing approximately 24 kilograms. Once the fuel bundle has been used to generate electricity, it is removed from the reactor. Physically, the bundle looks the same as when it was placed in the reactor. When used nuclear fuel is removed from a reactor, it is considered a waste product, is radioactive and requires careful management. It is first placed in a water-filled pool where its heat and radioactivity decrease. After seven to 10 years, the used bundles are placed in dry storage containers, silos or vaults. The containers have a minimum design life of 50 years. Although its radioactivity decreases with time, chemical toxicity persists and the used fuel will remain a potential health risk for many hundreds of thousands of years. For this reason, used fuel requires careful management.

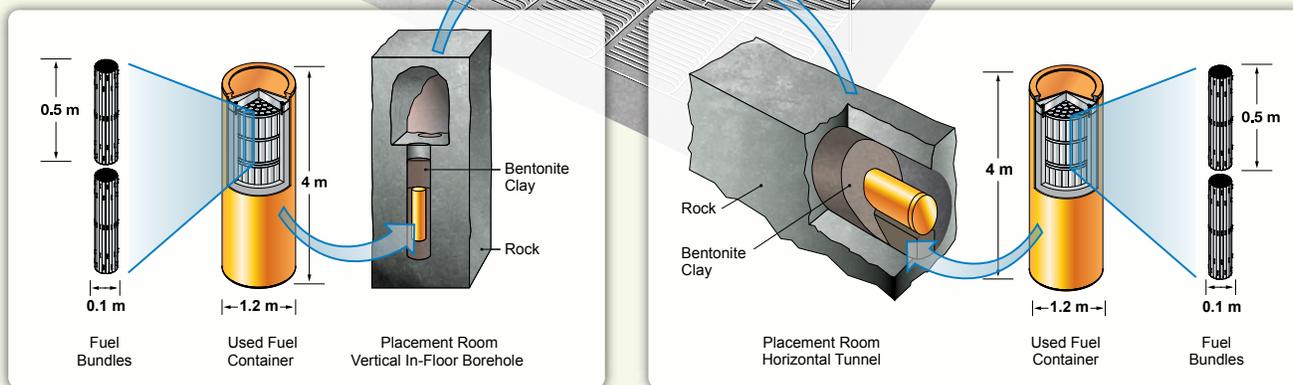
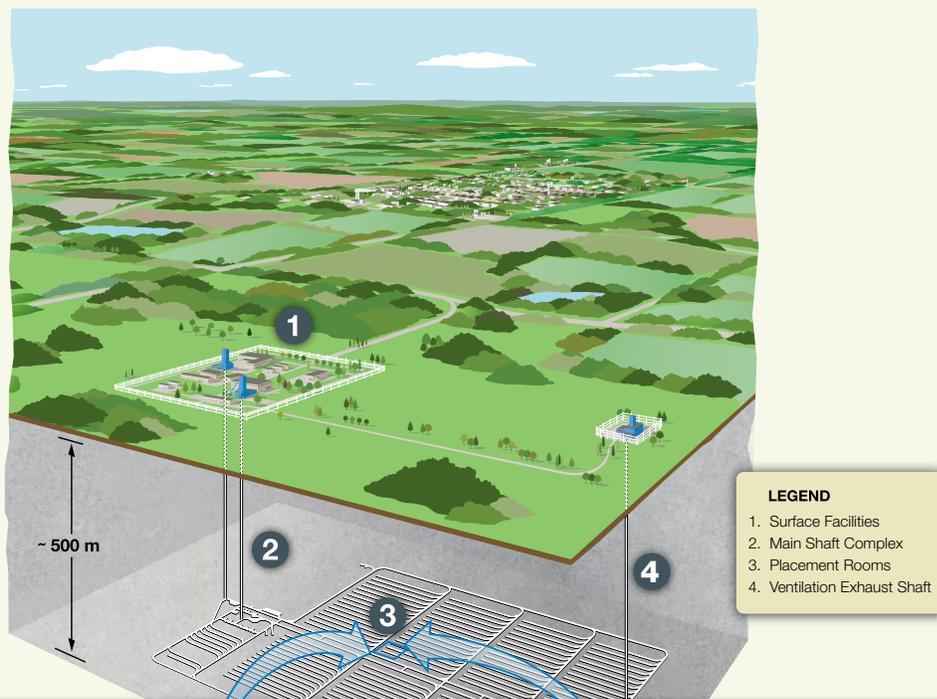
About 85,000 used nuclear fuel bundles are generated in Canada each year. Over 40 years, Canada's nuclear power program has produced just over two million used nuclear fuel bundles. A small amount of used nuclear fuel, and components, is also created at research and development facilities operated by Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, and Canadian university facilities. If the entire inventory of used nuclear fuel bundles could be stacked end-to-end like cordwood, it would fit into a space the size of six hockey rinks, from the ice surface to the top of the boards. The NWMO publishes an annual update on the number of fuel bundles currently in storage along with a range of projections for future quantities. This report is available on the NWMO website.

The NWMO has a legal obligation to provide long-term management of all Canada's used nuclear fuel, that which exists now and that which will be produced in the future.



The Project

This national infrastructure project will include the development of a deep geological repository and used fuel transportation system, and a national centre of expertise.



The containers will be placed in vertical boreholes drilled in the floor along the axis of a placement room, or placed horizontally within the confines of a placement room, depending on the nature of the rock and characteristics of the site.

Deep Geological Repository

The deep geological repository is a multiple-barrier system designed to safely contain and isolate used nuclear fuel over the long term. It will be constructed at a depth of approximately 500 metres, depending upon the geology of the site, and consist of a network of placement rooms for the used fuel (see diagram). The surface facilities require a dedicated surface area of about 600 metres by 550 metres for the main buildings and about 100 metres by 100 metres for the ventilation exhaust shaft. Land above the underground footprint that is not required for the surface facilities could be available for public or private uses.

In addition to the surface area described above, the excavated rock from the underground repository will need to be managed for use in backfilling and sealing the repository. Any remaining excavated rock may have a public or commercial use by the community and surrounding region as aggregate for construction. Storage of this rock during operation of the facility is expected to require an area of about 700 metres by 700 metres, with a height between 3 metres and 6 metres. The area will include a storm water runoff pond, to collect and manage waste water. The excavated rock management facility is assumed to be located off-site. The location of the excavated rock would be selected in consultation with the community and surrounding region.

Used nuclear fuel will be loaded into specially designed and certified containers at the reactor sites and transported to the repository site where it will be repackaged in corrosion-resistant containers for placement in the repository. The containers will be transported underground to one of many placement rooms. The containers will be placed in vertical or horizontal boreholes drilled into the rock and sealed with an effective sealing material such as bentonite clay.

The used fuel will be monitored and retrievable throughout all phases of implementation consistent with the direction from Canadians. Once the host community and the NWMO decide to close the site, the access tunnels will be backfilled and sealed and the NWMO will seek the appropriate regulatory approvals prior to decommissioning. Following successful decommissioning, the NWMO will seek appropriate regulatory approvals for postclosure monitoring.

A robust safety case must be developed to demonstrate that the project can be safely implemented at the site, including transportation, and that it can meet or exceed the requirements of regulatory authorities and the host community.

No foreign waste (used fuel from outside Canada) will be placed in this facility.

Transportation of Used Nuclear Fuel

Used nuclear fuel is currently safely stored in facilities licensed by the CNSC at sites where it is produced. Placing all Canada's used nuclear fuel in a single central location will require transportation from these interim storage facilities to the deep geological repository. Depending on the location of the site, this may involve road, rail or water transport, or a combination of the three. The NWMO will need to demonstrate to regulatory authorities and citizens the safety and security of any transportation system before transport of used nuclear fuel to the repository can begin. Transportation of the used nuclear fuel will have to meet the stringent packaging and transport requirements of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) and Transport Canada regulations prior to obtaining the certificate for the design of the package and a licence to transport being issued.

Centre of Expertise

A centre of expertise will be established for the one or more communities in which a site has been selected for detailed evaluation (Step 4 of the site selection process as described on page 18). The centre will be located in or near the community, as determined with the community. Its purpose will be to support the multi-year testing and assessment of the site on technical safety and community well-being related dimensions, which are key components of the site selection process. It will be the home for an active technical and social research and technology demonstration program during this period, involving scientists and other experts in a wide variety of disciplines, including geoscience, engineering, and environmental, socioeconomic and cultural impact assessment.

The design details of the centre of expertise would be developed with the community, surrounding communities and affected Aboriginal peoples, with their preferences in mind. The centre of expertise could be designed as a focus for engaging members of the community to learn more about the project, and to view the scientific and engineering work-in-progress involved in site assessment, through public viewing galleries and interactive displays. The centre could be created as a small science centre, highlighting and demonstrating the science and technology being used to determine whether the site is suitable. It may be developed as a meeting place and learning centre for the community, and as a destination that welcomes interested visitors from the region and beyond.

Should the site ultimately be selected to host the deep geological repository, the centre of expertise would be expanded to include and support the construction and operation of an underground facility designed to confirm the characteristics of the site. The centre of expertise would become a hub for knowledge sharing across Canada and internationally.

A Partnership Approach

The deep geological repository and centre of expertise will have a significant impact on any community and region in which they are located. It is a multi-generational project that will be developed in phases. The repository will be sited and constructed over two to three decades. The used nuclear fuel will be placed in the facility over a period of three decades or more, and then monitored for an extended period of time prior to decommissioning.

The project will provide significant economic benefits. It offers direct employment for hundreds of people at the facility for many decades and many more indirect jobs in the host region and host province, with the opportunity to develop transferable skills and capacities. Implementation of the project will involve scientists, engineers, tradespeople and many others. The project may contribute to social and economic pressures that will need to be carefully managed to ensure the long-term health and sustainability of the community. For example, the potential influx of temporary construction workers may increase demand for social and physical infrastructure. To minimize social costs and help communities adapt to the opportunities and challenges of the project, the need for assistance, such as job training, affordable housing and infrastructure, would be examined.

Project implementation will require a long-term partnership among the community, surrounding communities, affected Aboriginal peoples and the NWMO to ensure that the project fosters well-being and sustainability of the area, consistent with its vision for the future. The pace and manner of project development will be determined in partnership with the community, surrounding communities and affected Aboriginal peoples.

For more information about the project, see *Description of Canada's Repository for Used Nuclear Fuel and Centre of Expertise* on the NWMO website.

Planning Priorities for 2014 to 2018

To guide implementation of Adaptive Phased Management, the NWMO established seven strategic objectives. The objectives identify program areas in the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management and the planning priorities for 2014 to 2018.

First developed in 2007, the objectives were the subject of public review and discussion in 2007 and 2008. Subsequent evolution of the strategic objectives reflects advancement in the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management, as planning milestones are met and major areas of focus for the used nuclear fuel program evolve.

On an annual basis, the NWMO publishes for review and comment the rolling five-year implementation plan for Adaptive Phased Management, to confirm support for the strategic direction and to invite suggestions on the associated work programs. The strategic objectives also provide the framework for the annual planning and reporting on our activities. The seven strategic objectives are briefly outlined in the table that follows.

In May 2010, the NWMO initiated a multi-year process for selecting an informed, willing community to host a national facility for the long-term care of used nuclear fuel.

Over the period 2014 to 2018, the NWMO will continue to implement the process to decide where to contain and isolate Canada's used nuclear fuel for the long term.

The site selection process is described in *Moving Forward Together: Process for Selecting a Site for Canada's Deep Geological Repository for Used Nuclear Fuel*, May 2010, available on the NWMO website at www.nwmo.ca. The process is the product of a two-year dialogue with Canadians and is designed to guide the selection of an informed, willing host community.

The nine-step site selection process spans from communities learning about the project to construction and operation. The process is designed to be driven by the interest of communities, the progressively more detailed conduct of scientific and technical studies, and the involvement of surrounding communities and Aboriginal peoples. In the planning period, the NWMO will

Strategic Objectives 2014–2018

The NWMO will:

- » Build sustainable, long-term relationships with interested Canadians and Aboriginal peoples of Canada, and involve them in setting future directions for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel.
- » Implement collaboratively with Canadians the process for siting a deep geological repository for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel in an informed, willing host community.
- » Refine and further develop the generic designs and safety cases for a repository for used nuclear fuel in both crystalline and sedimentary rock formations, and conduct technical research and development to ensure continuous improvement, consistent with best practices.
- » Ensure funds are available to pay for the safe, long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel.
- » Adapt plans for the management of used nuclear fuel in response to new knowledge, international best practices, advances in technical learning, evolving societal expectations and values, and changes in public policies.
- » Maintain an accountable governance structure that provides confidence to the Canadian public in the conduct of the NWMO's work.
- » Build and sustain an effective organization with the social, environmental, technical and financial capabilities for the safe, long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel.

support communities and Aboriginal peoples in learning about the project and how long-term well-being or quality of life of the area might be fostered through participation in the project.

The NWMO is committed to periodically reviewing the implementation of the process with Canadians to ensure that it continues to meet needs and expectations, and to make process refinements, if required. The NWMO is committed to stepwise decision-making and will only proceed to the next step after careful consideration and with the support of communities participating in the process.

The NWMO will continue to build the organization to strengthen internal resources and capabilities, and support technical and social research programs to ensure continuous improvement and adaptation to new knowledge and best practices. The NWMO will continue to engage Canadians in these activities.

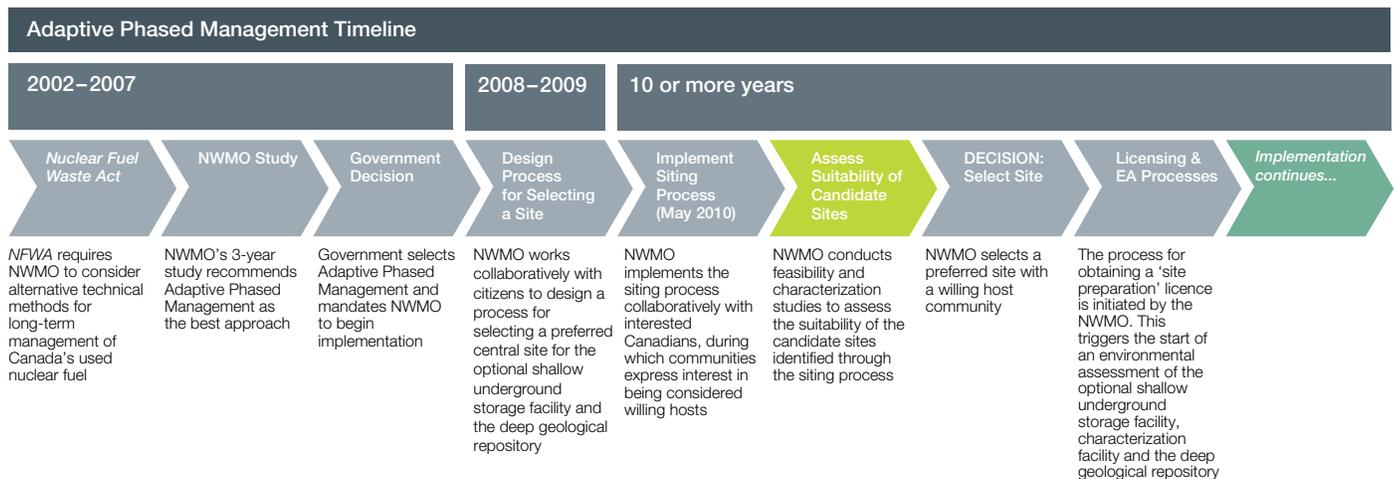
To ensure resources are available when required to manage requests for information and knowledge building, the NWMO has identified a number of milestones for the next five-year planning period.

These milestones include:

- » Completing desktop preliminary assessments for communities that have passed an initial screening and elect to proceed in the site selection process;
- » Engaging the surrounding communities and Aboriginal peoples in learning and consideration of the project;

- » Based on the results of this work, identifying the communities with the strongest potential to be suitable for the project to progress with the next phase of work involving preliminary field studies and engagement of surrounding communities and Aboriginal peoples in order to establish a foundation to proceed to implement the project together;
- » Conducting this work collaboratively with the communities involved; and
- » Based on the findings from preliminary field studies and assessments, identifying one or two communities to progress to the detailed site characterization phase of work.

Site selection for the Adaptive Phased Management project is, by design, a community-driven process in which potentially interested communities decide to engage with the NWMO to learn more and explore their potential suitability to host the project. Progress through the site selection process will necessarily evolve on timelines shaped by communities rather than schedules prescribed by the NWMO. For planning purposes, the organization has set out activities for the next five years to ensure that the NWMO is in a state of readiness to advance program implementation as communities move forward through different phases of the site selection process. A breadth of work programs and activities are planned for 2014 to 2018 to ensure the organization is prepared for future phases of field investigations and detailed assessments, transportation planning, and refined repository design and safety case development.



» Build Sustainable Relationships

The NWMO will build sustainable, long-term relationships with interested Canadians and Aboriginal peoples of Canada, and involve them in setting future directions for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel.

Engagement is one of the five fundamental values that guide the work of the NWMO. Involving Canadians and Aboriginal peoples of Canada at all stages and in key decisions is critical to meeting the challenges of the long-term management of used nuclear fuel. Through open, transparent and inclusive engagement processes, the NWMO will continue to build awareness and understanding of Adaptive Phased Management and will seek and respond to a diversity of views and perspectives. Interweaving of Aboriginal worldviews and knowledge systems with Adaptive Phased Management will strengthen the long-term management of used nuclear fuel. Our commitment to engagement and shared decision-making helps ensure that Adaptive Phased Management continues to respond to the values and concerns of Canadians. Building awareness and confidence in Adaptive Phased Management, and the NWMO as implementer, will continue throughout the planning period.

During the period 2014 to 2018, engagement will focus on strengthening established relationships to sustain program momentum. This includes engagement activities, such as information sessions, briefings, and joint projects and partnerships, which will be undertaken with municipal, provincial, federal and Aboriginal governments, and interested individuals and organizations. The organization will continue to work with

the NWMO Council of Elders and Municipal Forum. The NWMO will also work together with affected Aboriginal peoples as holders of Traditional Knowledge, users of environmental resources and environmental stewards, to be active participants in the site selection process and to share that knowledge with the NWMO to the extent they wish. The NWMO will also continue to build knowledge and understanding and establish relations with a broader audience through expanding its outreach to organizations, and the broader public at large, with engagement, provision of information and dialogue.

Over the past several years, much of the NWMO's work has focused on developing plans, policies and processes collaboratively with Canadians to support the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management. Our engagement activities related to the broad Canadian public. As the siting phase of the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management progresses, the engagement program is evolving to include more directly the communities interested in hosting the project in the area, surrounding communities and Aboriginal peoples, as well as transportation communities as a group with a shared interest. Engagement of youth is also a continuing priority given the long-term nature of the project and the need for intergenerational transfer of knowledge to support project implementation.

The NWMO recognizes that there are Aboriginal peoples in all areas of Canada where the NWMO's work will take place. The organization wishes to build long-term relationships with Aboriginal peoples that may be affected by the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management. The NWMO acknowledges, respects and honours that Aboriginal peoples – Indian, Métis and Inuit peoples of Canada – have unique status and rights as recognized and affirmed in s.35 of the *Constitution Act* (1982). Understanding the nature of any impacts of the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management on Aboriginal rights, treaties and land claims and how Aboriginal peoples should be accommodated as a result of any impacts is an important component of the NWMO's work. The NWMO needs to ensure effective consultation with Aboriginal peoples and that all those affected have the opportunity for meaningful involvement. The NWMO acknowledges that the Crown has a legal duty to consult and accommodate and will support the Crown's work to meet its obligations. Through all stages of program implementation, the NWMO seeks to work with Traditional Knowledge holders to bring this important and necessary complement to the project.

Going Forward

In the period 2014 to 2018, the NWMO will:

- » Continue work to increase awareness among Canadians and Aboriginal peoples of Canada about Adaptive Phased Management, the site selection process and the NWMO;
- » Implement communications and media relations programs to help interested individuals and organizations understand Adaptive Phased Management;
- » Seek comment from interested individuals and organizations on the NWMO's plans and the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management;
- » Brief waste owners on plans for the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management so they may ensure their used fuel strategies are aligned with the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management;
- » Brief Canada's nuclear host communities about progress in implementing Adaptive Phased Management, including planning for eventual transportation of used nuclear fuel from their communities to the deep geological repository;
- » Develop and sustain relationships with communities that choose to engage in the site selection process, surrounding communities and Aboriginal peoples. This is expected to include working together in the conduct of studies;
- » Develop and sustain relationships with municipal associations to better understand local governments' points of view, and work with them to implement Adaptive Phased Management;
- » Develop and maintain relationships with the federal government, and provincial and local governments in nuclear provinces to help coordinate and support their roles in the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management;
- » Develop and maintain relationships with national, provincial and regional Aboriginal organizations, and keep them apprised of progress in the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management and the site selection process;
- » Continue to seek the advice of Elders and Aboriginal youth, and develop awareness and learning opportunities for NWMO staff about cultures, traditional practices, protocols and governance of Aboriginal peoples;
- » Continue to build the foundation of knowledge to ensure that informed choices can be made by Aboriginal communities;
- » Continue to work with affected Aboriginal peoples, including Traditional Knowledge holders, recognizing the diversity of cultures and languages, practices and approaches among Aboriginal communities; the identification of sacred areas; understanding traditional laws, practices and use of land; and protection of species to sustain community life;
- » Continue to work with Natural Resources Canada to implement the memorandum of understanding on the NWMO's obligations with respect to the Crown's constitutional duty to consult;
- » Build a multi-generational view of the long-term management of used nuclear fuel through engagement, education and outreach involving young Canadians, including Aboriginal youth;
- » Assess the effectiveness of the NWMO website and other communication vehicles to identify opportunities for improvement;
- » Assess effectiveness of NWMO engagement activities; and
- » Continue to report publicly on the input that the NWMO receives and how this advice has been considered.

In 2014, the NWMO will:

- » Provide briefings and information upon request to interested individuals and organizations about Adaptive Phased Management and the site selection process;
- » Continue to support communities and regions as they explore their early interest in the project and the siting process; the form of support provided will be determined in collaboration with these communities;
- » Provide briefings and information to governments to support their participation in the implementation of the site selection process and to ensure that they have the information needed to address inquiries from communities;
- » Meet on request with nuclear community organizations and their committees, such as the Canadian Association of Nuclear Host Communities (CANHC), and regional health committees;
- » Convene with municipal associations individually and as a forum through meetings, briefings, conferences, trade shows and special events;
- » Continue to seek advice on interweaving Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge into the NWMO's work and on respectful engagement of Aboriginal peoples;
- » Continue broad-based briefings for Aboriginal organizations and engagement of Elders;
- » Continue to develop communications materials, DVDs, exhibits and information kits to support the siting process and for a range of audiences;
- » Continue to implement the NWMO Corporate Social Responsibility Program;
- » Continue to develop and implement an NWMO education, outreach and capacity-building strategy for young Canadians and Aboriginal youth that incorporates both technical and social disciplines;
- » Continue to seek the perspective of Canadians with the use of web-based tools and other activities; and
- » Continue to participate in regional and national environmental initiatives.

» Collaboratively Implement the Site Selection Process

The NWMO will implement collaboratively with Canadians the process for siting a deep geological repository for the safe, long-term management of used nuclear fuel in an informed, willing host community.

In 2010, the NWMO initiated the site selection process. The development of the process began in 2008 with a variety of engagement activities to ensure that a diversity of perspectives was considered. The product of this collaborative process is described in *Moving Forward Together: Process for Selecting a Site for Canada's Deep Geological Repository for Used Nuclear Fuel*, May 2010, available on the NWMO website at www.nwmo.ca. Implementation of the process, including the selection of an informed and willing community and demonstration of a safe and secure transportation system, must meet the expectations of Canadians. It must also address their key issues, such as the protection of humans and the environment, fairness and regulatory oversight. Collaboration, shared decision-making and willingness underpin the siting process.

The decision about an appropriate site will be made over a series of steps (see *Steps in the Siting Process – At a Glance*, and the complete description of the siting process cited above). It is expected that individual communities will proceed through the process at a pace and in a manner that reflect their needs and preferences. The siting process begins with a period of learning and capacity building for communities. Preliminary assessments (feasibility studies) of potential sites will be done in partnership with communities as they come forward and express interest. A community may end its involvement in the process at any point up to and until the

final agreement is signed. Over time, refinements to the siting process may be necessary as experience is gained, and the process is designed to be adaptive.

As communities advance in the site selection process, a more regional perspective will become a focus. Work can proceed only with the involvement of surrounding communities and affected Aboriginal peoples. The deep geological repository and centre of expertise involve a large project that has the potential to benefit a large area. Planning at a broader area scale will ensure benefits associated with the project are maximized. It will also help ensure that questions and concerns are addressed and that the foundation is established to move forward together through the implementation of the project.

Through working with communities that have come forward to participate in the site selection process, and through initial outreach with surrounding communities and Aboriginal peoples, the nature and shape of the partnerships required to implement the Adaptive Phased Management project together are beginning to emerge. When we speak about "community", we understand this necessarily includes a network of relationships involving the community that entered the site selection process, its neighbours and affected Aboriginal peoples. This project will only proceed with the involvement of the interested community, surrounding communities and affected Aboriginal peoples.

Steps in the Siting Process – At a Glance

Getting Ready	The NWMO publishes the finalized siting process, having briefed provincial governments, the Government of Canada, national and provincial Aboriginal organizations, and regulatory agencies on the NWMO's activities. The NWMO will continue briefings throughout the siting process to ensure new information is made available and requirements which might emerge are addressed.
Step 1	The NWMO initiates the siting process with a broad program to provide information, answer questions and build awareness among Canadians about the project and siting process. Awareness-building activities will continue throughout the full duration of the siting process.
Step 2	Communities identify their interest in learning more, and the NWMO provides detailed briefing. An initial screening is conducted. At the request of the community, the NWMO will evaluate the potential suitability of the community against a list of initial screening criteria.
Step 3	For interested communities, a preliminary assessment of potential suitability is conducted. At the request of the community, the NWMO will conduct a feasibility study collaboratively with the community to determine whether a site has the potential to meet the detailed requirements for the project. Regional engagement will be initiated, and an initial review of transportation considerations will be conducted. Interested communities will be encouraged to inform surrounding communities, including potentially affected Aboriginal communities and governments, as early as possible to facilitate their involvement.
Step 4	For interested communities, potentially affected surrounding communities are engaged if they have not been already, and detailed site evaluations are completed. In this step, the NWMO will select one or more suitable sites from communities expressing formal interest for regional study and/or detailed multi-year site evaluations. The NWMO will work collaboratively with these communities to engage potentially affected surrounding communities, Aboriginal governments and the provincial government in a study of health, safety, environment, social, economic and cultural effects of the project at a broader regional level (Regional Study), including effects that may be associated with transportation. Involvement will continue throughout the siting process as decisions are made about how the project will be implemented.
Step 5	Communities with confirmed suitable sites decide whether they are willing to accept the project and propose the terms and conditions on which they would have the project proceed.
Step 6	The NWMO and the community with the preferred site enter into a formal agreement to host the project. The NWMO selects the preferred site, and the NWMO and community ratify a formal agreement.
Step 7	Regulatory authorities review the safety of the project through an independent, formal and public process and, if all requirements are satisfied, give their approvals to proceed. The implementation of the deep geological repository will be regulated under the <i>Nuclear Safety and Control Act</i> and its associated regulations to protect the health, safety and security of Canadians and the environment, and to respect Canada's international commitments on the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Regulatory requirements will be observed throughout all previous steps in the siting process. The documentation produced through previous steps, as well as other documentation that will be required for a licence application, will be formally reviewed by regulatory authorities at this step through an Environmental Assessment, and if this assessment is successful, then licensing hearings related to site preparation (and possible construction) of facilities associated with the project. Various aspects of transportation of used nuclear fuel will also need to be approved by regulatory authorities.
Step 8	Construction and operation of an underground demonstration facility proceeds. The NWMO will develop the centre of expertise, launched in Step 4, to include and support the construction and operation of an underground demonstration facility designed to confirm the characteristics of the site before applying to regulatory authorities for an operating licence. Designed in collaboration with the community, it will become a hub for knowledge-sharing across Canada and internationally.
Step 9	Construction and operation of the facility. The NWMO begins construction of the deep geological repository and associated surface facilities. Operation will begin after an operating licence is obtained from regulatory authorities. The NWMO will continue to work in partnership with the host community in order to ensure the commitments to the community are addressed throughout the entire lifetime of the project.

The business plan assumes that over the five-year period, some communities will elect to move through sequential steps of preliminary assessments and site evaluations. As communities advance in the site selection process, work will proceed together with the involvement of surrounding communities and Aboriginal peoples. It is also assumed that the NWMO will select sites for detailed characterization and initiate this intensive phase of work in the latter half of the planning period. Work plans for the 2014 to 2018 period will ensure that the NWMO is prepared to support all aspects of the site selection process.

Successful implementation of the siting process will require a good understanding of regional priorities, politics and key players. The NWMO will assist interested communities in engaging surrounding communities, the region, and provincial and Aboriginal governments, in a regional study of environmental, social, cultural and economic effects, and detailed site investigations. Involvement of regional representatives will help ensure that the broad range of potential effects associated with implementation at a particular site are recognized and considered. Involvement of those along the transportation route, as a large group with a shared interest, will ensure that effects associated with the transportation of used nuclear fuel are taken into account in decision-making on a preferred site. The NWMO must work to assist provincial governments to become informed and ready to support community interest, and address inquiries about Crown land, and provincial regulations and approvals.

Throughout the siting process, the NWMO will support and assist communities to build understanding of Adaptive Phased Management, to address questions and concerns, including how used nuclear fuel will be contained and isolated from groundwater, people and the environment. The NWMO also supports communities to build understanding of how the project may affect a community's ability to achieve its long-term plan; to engage citizens, surrounding communities and Aboriginal peoples; and to assess community willingness to host the project. Funding will be provided to support interested communities as they work through each step. To assist communities in capacity building, the NWMO will provide funding and support through a program collaboratively

developed with communities involved in the site selection process.

In the next few years, technical support to the siting process will focus on assessing the suitability of potential sites through geoscientific characterization and evaluation studies in interested communities. Beyond ensuring safety, the NWMO's commitment is that the long-term well-being or quality of life of the community and area will be fostered through participation in this project. The technical program will be complemented by a phased and progressively more detailed assessment of the suitability of a site in terms of environmental, social, cultural and economic factors. The NWMO expects to be ready to begin detailed site evaluations on one or more sites, during the planning period, including further geological investigations, safety assessments, social and economic impact assessments, and the application of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge, all in collaboration with the interested communities and surrounding areas.

Transportation is an important consideration in the assessment of any site. As part of the process of selecting a site, a transportation route must be identified, or be capable of development, by which used nuclear fuel can safely and securely be transported to the site from the locations at which it is currently stored. Beyond safety, transportation is also an important consideration in identifying and assessing effects on community well-being. The NWMO will need to demonstrate the safety and security of any transportation system to the satisfaction of regulatory authorities, and citizens, before transportation of used nuclear fuel to the repository can begin. Work in this area will include engaging: regulatory authorities at all levels to understand their expectations; transportation experts and those working in the field to understand issues and concerns; nuclear station communities as they will be affected by any transportation plan; and communities along the transportation route as a large group with a shared interest to raise questions or concerns to be addressed in the process. Communication materials continue to be developed to support a new mobile exhibit and brochure, as well as DVDs, backgrounders and engagement activities, to respond to public and media concerns that are raised.

The NWMO is also developing the institutional policies, practices and structures required to support the different phases of the siting process.

The NWMO will work to ensure that implementation of the siting process is inclusive, fair and transparent, and continues to build trust and confidence in the NWMO and its operations. Any site that is selected to host this facility must be demonstrated to be able to safely contain and isolate used nuclear fuel for a very long period of time, and the community must be informed and willing to host the facility. The objectives of the site selection process and the main site evaluation stages are outlined below.

As we continue implementing the site selection process, we understand it will take our best knowledge and expertise and all of us working together to implement Canada's plan. Among the many challenges to be addressed along the way is the low level of familiarity with and understanding of used nuclear fuel, which leads to fear among some people becoming involved in learning about this project. Information and effective communication are key.

Preliminary Assessment of Potential Suitability (Step 3 in the Site Selection Process)

In 2014, many communities are expected to be involved in preliminary assessments as part of Step 3 in the site selection process.

These studies are designed to assess, in a preliminary way, the suitability of a community and associated site(s) to host the project. These studies are an opportunity for both the community and the NWMO to explore four key questions that will be important in assessing the suitability of communities for this project.

Key Questions to Be Addressed

<p>Safety, security and protection of people and the environment are central to the siting process. Is there the potential to find a safe site?</p>	<p>At a later step in the process (Step 5), the community must demonstrate it is informed and willing to host the project. Is there the potential for citizens in the community to continue to be interested in exploring this project through subsequent steps in the site selection process?</p>
<p>The project will be implemented in a way that will foster the long-term well-being of the community. Is there the potential to foster the well-being of the community through the implementation of the project, and what might need to be put in place (e.g. infrastructure, resources, planning initiatives) to ensure this outcome?</p>	<p>The project will be implemented in a way that will foster the long-term well-being of the surrounding area. Is there the potential to foster the well-being of the surrounding area and region, and establish the foundation to move forward with the project?</p>

The Two Phases of Work

Work will be conducted in two phases during the planning period with the opportunity for stock-taking by both the community and the NWMO at the end of each phase. Some communities with relatively low potential to be suitable for the project may be screened out of the process at the end of the first phase of work. Third-party review will also be conducted at the end of Phase Two by a review group established for this purpose. By the end of the second phase of work, one or two of the communities may be selected for the next step in the site selection process: detailed studies over a five-year period (Step 4). The communities selected for Step 4 detailed studies will be those that hold the most potential for successful implementation of the project based on work that the NWMO and community complete together to explore these key questions outlined above. Resources are available to communities participating in the site selection process to cover all costs associated with participation in the project, including seeking independent expertise and advice, throughout all phases of work.

Some communities will complete Phase 1 studies by the end of 2013; others will continue into 2014 with their studies. Based on the findings of these Phase 1 assessments, the NWMO expects to identify a subset of communities to be the focus of more detailed study.

Studies Conducted

Preliminary assessment studies involve work in a number of areas:

- » Geoscientific studies: Is there potential to find a suitable site in the community?
- » Engineering studies: Is there potential to safely construct the facility in the community?
- » Transportation studies: Is there potential for safe and secure transportation?
- » Environment and safety studies: Is there potential to manage any environmental effects and to ensure safety of people and the environment?
- » Social, economic and cultural studies: Is there potential to foster the well-being of the community and region and to lay the foundation for moving forward?

Review by Geoscientific Review Group

Geoscientific studies will be reviewed by the Adaptive Phased Management Geoscientific Review Group (APM-GRG). This group was established by the NWMO to provide advice and guidance on the approach, methods and findings of the geoscientific preliminary assessments that are part of the studies conducted in Step 3 of the site selection process. The five APM-GRG members are internationally recognized experts from Canada, Switzerland, Sweden and Australia. They bring a wide range of expertise and experience relevant to geoscientific site evaluations.

Going Forward

In the period 2014 to 2018, the NWMO will:

- » Continue work to explore technical safety considerations through illustrative postclosure safety assessments of the deep geological repository and preparation of generic used fuel transportation risk assessments, including disruptive scenarios;
- » Prepare for the development of emergency response preparedness plans;
- » Continue to support communities in developing capacity to consider their interest in the site selection process;
- » Continue to support communities in responding to the values-based requirements of the process, including appropriate engagement of citizens and transparency;
- » Continue to seek advice of municipal associations and Aboriginal organizations on materials and tools to support a community-driven siting process;
- » Continue to develop mobile exhibits and tools to support local and regional-based discussions of Adaptive Phased Management and siting;
- » Prepare generic options for transport of used nuclear fuel from interim storage sites to a long-term management facility to assess potential sites and transportation routes;
- » Refine tools and methods for geoscientific assessment of candidate sites in both crystalline and sedimentary rock settings;
- » Provide engineering designs to support evaluation of candidate sites;
- » Provide preliminary environment and safety assessments to support evaluation of candidate sites;
- » Refine tools and methods for assessment of sites in terms of environmental, social, cultural and economic factors, including factors identified by Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge and traditional approaches to land use mapping and planning;
- » Refine tools and methods for informing and engaging citizens in decision-making;
- » Engage interested communities in discussions to explore and help assess the extent to which the project might contribute to the well-being of the community;
- » Establish NWMO presence in communities that decided to enter the site selection process to provide information and support public engagement;
- » Conduct preliminary assessments (Step 3 – Phase 1 Preliminary Assessment) collaboratively with the communities that pass initial screening and decide to proceed to Step 3;
- » Upon conclusion of Phase 1 work, identify a smaller number of communities eligible to be carried forward to next phase of work (Step 3 – Phase 2 Preliminary Assessment) and seek their agreement to proceed to the next phase of work;
- » Initiate and complete preliminary field investigations, and engage surrounding communities and Aboriginal peoples (Step 3 – Phase 2 Preliminary Assessment);
- » Upon conclusion of Phase 2 work, select one or two siting areas to be the focus of detailed site characterization (Step 4) and seek agreement to proceed to the next phase of work;
- » Ensure readiness to begin detailed site evaluations (Step 4) and expanded regional studies in collaboration with communities;

- » Launch centres of expertise to support technical and social assessments and discussion of community well-being issues;
- » Identify preferred transportation modes and potential routes associated with each of these siting areas, and welcome existing nuclear station communities and communities along the transportation route as a large group with a shared interest to raise questions or concerns to be addressed in the process;
- » Conduct research on partnership and power-sharing frameworks for consideration in structuring of a formal agreement with the community and area, once selected; and
- » Explore long-term knowledge transfer considerations, such as markers and archives, as part of international collaborative research efforts (Nuclear Energy Agency).

In 2014, the NWMO will:

- » Continue to refine a generic used fuel transportation risk assessment;
- » Work in partnership with communities as they proceed through the siting process;
- » Implement, support and further develop the *Learn More Program* for community capacity building to meet the needs of communities, surrounding areas and Aboriginal peoples;
- » Conduct preliminary desktop assessments upon request of interested communities with potentially suitable sites (Step 3 – Phase 1). Continue desktop work to assess geoscientific, engineering, transportation, and environment and safety factors, as well as potential to foster well-being of the community and surrounding area, including factors identified by Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge;
- » Conduct field studies upon request of interested communities with relatively strong potential to meet the requirements of the project (Step 3 – Phase 2). Field studies will help advance the assessment of geoscientific, engineering, transportation, and environment and safety factors, as well as potential to foster well-being of the community and surrounding area, including factors identified by Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge;
- » Develop and implement local and regional outreach plans to deepen understanding of regional perspectives and build relationships with opinion leaders in the broader area;
- » Continue to seek opportunities to engage Aboriginal peoples at the local and regional level through collaborative work with communities, Treaty organizations, and regional or provincial Aboriginal organizations involved in the siting area;
- » Continue to advance coordination and collaboration with provincial governments aimed at identifying mechanisms and processes to address provincial areas of interest;
- » Continue to develop communication materials to support learning and dialogue on the project description, the safety of the repository, and transportation considerations;
- » Continue to advance dialogue on transportation considerations with regulatory authorities at all levels of government, transportation experts and those working in the field;
- » Continue to seek advice from municipal associations regarding ways to communicate transportation plans and engage with communities that may be on a transportation corridor for used nuclear fuel; and
- » Continue review of experience and best practices with transportation of hazardous materials, including transportation of nuclear wastes in Canada and internationally to identify lessons that apply to Adaptive Phased Management.

» Optimize Repository Designs and Further Increase Confidence in Safety

The NWMO will refine and further develop the generic designs and safety cases for a repository for used nuclear fuel in both crystalline and sedimentary rock formations, and conduct technical research and development to ensure continuous improvement, consistent with best practices.

The ability of the deep geological repository to safely contain and isolate used nuclear fuel relies on the form and properties of the waste, the engineered barriers placed around the waste and the natural barriers provided by the rock formation in which the repository will be located. The preferred site will be in a rock formation with desirable characteristics (geological, hydrogeological, chemical and mechanical) that support containment and repository performance to meet or exceed the regulatory expectations of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC), the guidance of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the experience in other countries.

The NWMO's technical program supports Adaptive Phased Management in three key areas: siting, conceptual engineering design and costing, and safety assessment. Underlying work in these key areas is a base program in which technical program activities in geosciences, safety assessment, repository engineering, environmental sciences and regulatory affairs are carried out in Canada and with international partners to ensure that the best knowledge and understanding are being applied. The NWMO's technical program objectives are reviewed and updated annually to ensure that they are consistent with the strategic direction from the NWMO Board of Directors and planning assumptions related to progress in implementing Adaptive Phased Management. The Plan incorporates feedback from the Independent Technical Review Group (ITRG – described on page 33). A strong technical program ensures that Adaptive Phased Management benefits from knowledge and innovation in the long-term care of used nuclear fuel from Canada and abroad, including Finland, France, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. It also ensures that NWMO staff sustain the expertise required to implement the adaptive program.

As part of the Adaptive Phased Management technical program, the NWMO undertakes joint research projects with its counterparts in other countries, most notably those of Sweden (SKB), Switzerland (Nagra), Finland (Posiva) and France (Andra). Work includes testing and

demonstration of repository engineering technology and processes at underground research laboratories in Sweden (Äspö Hard Rock Laboratory) and Switzerland (Mont Terri), and geoscientific investigation of glacial processes. As well, the NWMO continues to participate in international projects with the European Commission and the Nuclear Energy Agency. These activities will ensure that the NWMO is employing best practices and continuing to learn during implementation of Adaptive Phased Management.

The NWMO is enhancing its technical program in engineering design and optimization. Over the next five years, physical prototypes of the long-lived repository containers will be designed and manufactured. This work is being undertaken in conjunction with Canada's universities and national research laboratories. It will incorporate the best available design practice and the state-of-the-art in manufacturing technologies, and demonstrate our ability to meet the rigorous engineering requirements of the repository environment. Further, a container engineering and test facility will be established for both the repository and transportation containers. This facility will be used to continue to investigate manufacturing technologies and for prototype testing. In the course of the conduct of preliminary assessment studies, potential routes and modes will be assessed and discussed. The NWMO will also work closely with waste owners in planning for future transport of used nuclear fuel from the facilities where it is currently stored on an interim basis.

In order to support understanding and broad dialogue on safety considerations, and in particular the development of the safety case, communication materials written in plain language will be prepared. This material will include periodic reports on work to date as well as discussion of the parameters and assumptions being used in the safety assessments and how detailed information about a site, once known, will be used to refine work in the future.

Going Forward

In the 2014 to 2018 time period, technical program activities will complete work to update repository designs and safety assessments, complete CNSC pre-project review in both crystalline and sedimentary rock, and begin a proof test program to qualify a Canadian-engineered barrier system in advance of submission of site preparation and construction licences. Further studies, analyses and joint activities will continue with international partners to improve understanding of key processes and confidence in the safety case for a deep geological repository.

In the period 2014 to 2018, the NWMO will:

- » Complete CNSC pre-project reviews of postclosure safety assessments of a used fuel deep geological repository in crystalline and sedimentary rock;
- » Complete optimization study of repository container geometry and used fuel capacity;
- » Assess copper coating technology for repository containers;
- » Complete preliminary design, fabrication and testing of prototype repository containers;
- » Complete the update to the conceptual design and cost estimate for Adaptive Phased Management;
- » Complete an integrated review of the microbiological process that could occur within the repository environment in support of corrosion models;
- » Continue work to explore technical safety considerations through preparation of generic used fuel transportation risk assessments, including assessment of used fuel transportation modes;
- » Maintain and improve safety assessment models, including groundwater flow, containment release and transport, and coupled thermal-hydraulic-mechanical processes;
- » Further enhance scientific understanding of processes that may influence repository safety;
- » Continue the NWMO's involvement in joint research activities and international programs at the Äspö Hard Rock Laboratory in crystalline rock in Sweden and at the Mont Terri Laboratory in sedimentary rock in Switzerland; and
- » Establish a prototype test facility for engineered barrier evaluations.

In 2014, the NWMO will:

- » Complete assessment of copper coating and welding technologies for repository containers;
- » Establish an engineered barrier test and demonstration facility;
- » Review alternative repository container emplacement technologies;
- » Investigate the manufacturing process for producing buffer materials;
- » Further investigate the potential for rail transportation of used fuel; and
- » Complete annual review of the NWMO's Adaptive Phased Management Technical Program by the Independent Technical Review Group (ITRG).

Focus on Safety

Safety Assessments

The NWMO's safety assessment program includes work to update repository designs and safety assessments, complete CNSC pre-project review in both crystalline and sedimentary rock, and begin a proof test of the engineered barrier system.

Used Fuel Repository Container

The NWMO's container technology optimization and demonstration program focuses on integrating state-of-the-art manufacturing and materials technologies related to geometry (container size and shape), corrosion barrier (coating and fabrication) and welding (solid state and thermal) to ensure the overall safety of the repository system.

Preparing for the Transportation of Used Nuclear Fuel

The NWMO's technical program includes planning for the transportation of used nuclear fuel in the future. Work to explore technical safety considerations includes refinement and testing of package design including using 'beyond design' scenarios, development of transportation mode and route scenarios, and development of emergency management processes and plans.

» Provide Financial Surety

The NWMO will ensure funds are available to pay for the safe, long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel.

Canadians expect that the money necessary to pay for the long-term care of used nuclear fuel will be available when it is needed and will be fully funded by the waste producers. Financial surety has the objective of determining what costs can reasonably be expected to occur over the life of the project, along with a contingency for unexpected events, and then designing a system that collects enough money from the waste producers and protects this money to ensure that the entire cost can be covered under a variety of social and economic circumstances, and within the required time frame.

The Adaptive Phased Management project will be implemented in phases and spanning many decades. It has an estimated cost of \$16 billion to \$24 billion (2010 \$).

The NWMO completed a full update of these estimates in 2011. The updated cost estimate covers many decades of Adaptive Phased Management lifecycle activity for the deep geological repository and related transportation of used fuel. For planning purposes, a cost estimate for the deep geological repository and used fuel transportation system has been developed which assumes an inventory of 4.6 million used CANDU fuel bundles. The specific volume of Canada's used fuel to be placed in the repository will be agreed with the community using the best information available at the time and an open and transparent consultation process involving surrounding communities and others who are interested and potentially affected. The current estimated cost is \$21.2 billion (2010 \$), with a present value of \$7.7 billion (2010 \$). These cost estimates include costs to develop, construct and operate a central long-term facility, including a deep geological repository and transportation for the used nuclear fuel to the repository,

which are carried out and funded by the NWMO. Reactor site storage is carried out and directly funded by the individual waste owners.

The eventual cost of this project may differ from these estimates, depending on a number of factors, including the location of the facility, surrounding infrastructure, the rock type and characteristics, the design of the repository, the volume of used fuel to be managed, and the period of extended monitoring following used fuel placement. The NWMO must estimate what costs can reasonably be expected to occur over the lifetime of the project, along with a contingency for unexpected events. The NWMO is committed to providing regular assessments on all these factors to ensure that sufficient funds are set aside.

The NWMO will also be monitoring any development in new reactors and new owners of used nuclear fuel, applying the appropriate principles to the update of the funding formula when the specific circumstances arise.

The Adaptive Phased Management program is implemented with waste owner funds collected from ratepayers through the sale of electricity and with funds from Atomic Energy of Canada Limited commensurate with its small volume of used fuel that will need to be managed. The NWMO is committed to the prudent use of these resources.

As required by the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act*, the Annual Report of the NWMO must outline the funding formula for the next fiscal year to ensure funds required to cover the full cost of implementation of Adaptive Phased Management is borne by the waste producers and an explanation of assumptions is provided. Trust funds must be maintained and annual contributions made by major waste producers, reflecting the updated funding formula.

The Nuclear Fuel Waste Act

The *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act (NFWA)* assigns responsibility to the major owners of used nuclear fuel to make financial provisions for its long-term management. The *Act* required each of the four waste owners to make annual deposits to trust funds established for this purpose.

The *NFWA* built in explicit provisions to ensure that the trust funds are maintained securely and used only for the intended purpose.

Going Forward

In the period 2014 to 2018, the NWMO will:

- » Annually assess all factors that impact Adaptive Phased Management cost estimating and funding requirements;
- » Update the total cost estimate for Adaptive Phased Management no later than 2017;
- » Continue to publish the audited financial statements of the Members' nuclear fuel waste trust funds as they are provided by the financial institutions (see www.nwmo.ca), and provide updates to confirm that the waste owners are meeting their financial obligations;
- » Estimate and publish the financial implications of potential future scenarios of varying volumes of used nuclear fuel, when available; and
- » Monitor the development of new reactors and new owners of used nuclear fuel, applying the appropriate principles to update the funding formula when the specific circumstances arise.

» Adapt Plans

The NWMO will adapt plans for the management of used nuclear fuel in response to new knowledge, international best practices, advances in technical learning, evolving societal expectations and values, and changes in public policies.

A fundamental tenet of Adaptive Phased Management is the ongoing incorporation of new learning and knowledge to guide decision-making. We are committed to re-evaluating decisions where warranted, maintaining the option to change course and being prepared to act on new knowledge or information. Developments throughout the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management may pose technical and ethical challenges. The NWMO's approach and response to these challenges will be critical to the success of Adaptive Phased Management.

The NWMO has identified five fundamental values – integrity, excellence, engagement, accountability and transparency – that inform all its work. A series of principles to guide the siting process, identified in dialogue with Canadians, further builds on this framework. Through regular engagement of citizens, specialists and potentially affected communities, the NWMO monitors, reviews, reports and discusses the challenges of Adaptive Phased Management and changes in the management of used nuclear fuel, especially in the areas of technology development, societal expectations, and energy and environmental policy.

The NWMO continues to learn from best practices and experience with project implementation in Canada and other countries. Through its ongoing participation in the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the NWMO regularly reports on its work and participates in an exchange of best international practices in such areas as safety case development, community-based site selection processes and citizen engagement. This includes participation in the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency's Radioactive Waste Management Committee, Integration Group on the Safety Case, and Forum on Stakeholder Confidence. The NWMO also participates in international research projects.

A program that is implemented over a long time will have many opportunities to improve safety and performance, enhance effectiveness, build understanding, reduce uncertainty and address societal concerns. One of the strengths of Adaptive Phased Management is the incorporation of new learning and knowledge.

Developments in environmental and energy policies are particularly relevant to Adaptive Phased Management. For example, nuclear reactor refurbishment projects and new nuclear reactor units would produce new quantities of used nuclear fuel, potentially with different characteristics. The NWMO has a process for ongoing monitoring, review and discussion of the potential implications of these developments on the quantities and characteristics of used nuclear fuel that the NWMO may be asked to manage in the future. During the planning period, it is anticipated that industry plans to move forward with nuclear new build may result in requests for the NWMO to confirm its understanding of and readiness to address a range of used fuel types and volumes for long-term management. The NWMO will work closely with waste owners to stay abreast of industry plans for nuclear new build. The NWMO will work cooperatively with the industry to exchange plans, best practices and experiences in managing different types of radioactive waste in Canada. The NWMO will continue to engage Canadians to ensure continued alignment with values and expectations.

Consistent with the NWMO Transparency Policy and Engagement Procedure, the NWMO reports regularly on its progress in implementing Adaptive Phased Management and especially in response to the advice of Canadians and the changing external environment.

The NWMO also seeks formal opportunities, such as House of Commons Standing Committees, for open and transparent review of the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management at key milestones and decision points.

Continuous Learning

One of the cornerstones of the Adaptive Phased Management program is a commitment to continuous learning from new developments and experience, and adapting and refining plans for all aspects of the long-term management plan for Canada's used nuclear fuel. The NWMO continually monitors and reviews international research, experience, activities and events for lessons learned and as an opportunity to reflect on whether refinements are needed to our plans.

Going Forward

In the period 2014 to 2018, the NWMO will:

- » Support the site selection process by furthering understanding of best practices in engagement, capacity building, impact assessment and sustaining community well-being;
- » Advance learning and exchange experiences on such issues as retrievability, monitoring, and intergenerational knowledge transfer through collaboration with interested academics and organizations in Canada and internationally, including the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency's Radioactive Waste Management Committee, Integration Group on the Safety Case and Forum on Stakeholder Confidence;
- » Continue to research citizen priorities and concerns relating to Adaptive Phased Management;
- » Build understanding of the interweaving of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge and other assessment approaches into implementation;
- » Post research papers and the results of engagement activities on the NWMO website;
- » Publish reviews of developments in used nuclear fuel reprocessing and alternative used nuclear fuel management technologies;
- » Publish an annual update on current and future potential inventories of used nuclear fuel quantities and types;
- » Publish a preliminary technical assessment of Generation III reactor (CANDU type and other) used fuel on deep geological repository design and safety;
- » Seek the input of Canadians on how the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management should be adapted in response to current and projected inventories of used nuclear fuel;
- » Continue to monitor developments in energy and environmental policy;
- » Continue to monitor, assess and discuss the impact of potential new nuclear reactor units on the long-term management of used nuclear fuel;
- » Continue to monitor, assess and plan for changes in industry waste management activities and plans; and
- » Continue work to identify and plan for a range of scenarios reflecting possible changes in societal capacity to implement Adaptive Phased Management in the future.

In 2014, the NWMO will:

- » Continue to advance the framework for preliminary assessments (feasibility studies, Step 3 – Phase 2) with advice and input from Aboriginal organizations, incorporating Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge provided by Traditional Knowledge holders;
- » Publish a review of developments in used nuclear fuel reprocessing and alternative used nuclear fuel management technologies; and
- » Publish an update on current and future potential inventories of used nuclear fuel quantities and types.

» Ensure Governance and Accountability

The NWMO will maintain an accountable governance structure that provides confidence to the Canadian public in the conduct of the NWMO's work.

The NWMO's governance comprises the Member organizations, the Board of Directors and its Advisory Council. The NWMO is subject to the requirements of the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act (NFWA)* and oversight by the Minister of Natural Resources Canada. The NWMO's implementation of a repository as part of Adaptive Phased Management will be regulated under the *Nuclear Safety and Control Act (NSCA)* and its associated regulations to protect the health, safety and security of Canadians and the environment, and to respect Canada's international commitments on the peaceful use of nuclear energy. A licensing decision by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) on an Adaptive Phased Management repository can only be taken after the environmental assessment has been completed under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*. All aspects of the NWMO's work will meet or exceed all applicable regulatory standards and requirements for protecting the health, safety and security of humans and the environment.

MEMBERS

Ontario Power Generation, NB Power and Hydro-Québec are the founding Members of the NWMO. The Membership Agreement and bylaws set out Member roles and responsibilities in supporting the objectives of the *NFWA* and NWMO's implementation mandate. The NWMO regularly briefs its member organizations.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is responsible for oversight of the organization and taking a leadership role in the development of the corporation's strategic direction. The Members appoint the Board of Directors. There are currently nine members of the Board of Directors, representing a range of perspectives from both within and outside the nuclear industry, including capabilities in ethics, Aboriginal culture and finance management. The membership of the Board is profiled on the NWMO website.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The *NFWA* requires that the governing body of the NWMO appoint an Advisory Council to review and comment on its work as part of the NWMO's triennial reports. In addition to fulfilling its legislated reporting requirements, the Council meets regularly with the NWMO's senior management, closely following the development of the organization's plans and activities, and providing ongoing counsel and advice. At any time, the Council may choose to deliberate in camera. The Board of Directors appointed the Advisory Council in 2002, with membership renewed at regular intervals.

In 2012, the Council's membership was renewed and included the appointment of a new member, Dr. Wesley Cragg, an internationally recognized expert in applied ethics. Current membership of the Advisory Council represents a broad range of expertise, including geosciences, nuclear engineering, strategic communications, business ethics, environment, medicine, political science and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge. This group of individuals is knowledgeable in nuclear waste management issues and experienced in working with citizens and communities on a range of public policy issues. The membership of the Advisory Council is profiled on the NWMO website.

The NWMO Board continues to ensure appointments remain consistent with the requirements of the *NFWA* and take into account the range of expertise required to support the regional and local activity associated with Adaptive Phased Management site selection. As the NWMO's work leads to the selection of an informed and willing host community, and as affected Aboriginal organizations and host region are identified, the *NFWA* requires that representatives from these communities be included in the Advisory Council. This is in addition to members with expertise in a broad range of scientific, technical and social scientific disciplines, as well as expertise in Traditional Aboriginal Knowledge, as outlined in the *Act*.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Since 2010, the NWMO has maintained ISO 9001:2008 certification covering its quality management system for activities in support of site selection and development of repositories for the long-term management of nuclear waste. In addition, the NWMO is in conformance with the requirements of CSA N286-12, Management System Requirements for Nuclear Facilities, as they apply to the development of a deep geological repository.

In 2012, the NWMO received certification that its health and safety governance is in compliance with CSA Z1000:2006 Occupational Health and Safety Management, and that its environmental governance is in accordance with ISO 14001:2004 Environmental Management Systems. Monitoring, auditing and management review activities to maintain these certifications will occur in 2014 and beyond.

INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL REVIEW GROUP

The Board of Directors established the Independent Technical Review Group (ITRG) in 2008 to regularly review the NWMO's technical research program on used nuclear fuel. The ITRG conducts annual reviews to inform the Board and Advisory Council whether the NWMO technical program is based on credible scientific and technical approaches and methodologies; is consistent with international practices; and will broaden and advance the NWMO's technical knowledge to adequately support implementation of Adaptive Phased Management. The four members bring extensive internationally recognized expertise in the technologies associated with nuclear waste geological repository projects acquired through experience in Canada, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Switzerland. Members of the ITRG are appointed by the NWMO Board on a three-year basis. Appointments were recently renewed for another three-year term. The members are profiled on the NWMO website. Reports of the group are also published on the NWMO website.

PEER REVIEWS

The NWMO will continue to seek opportunities for peer review of its work and to invite independent comment. This will benefit program design and delivery, contribute to overall program quality, and help to enhance public confidence in the NWMO's implementation plans and decision-making.

REPORTING

The NWMO maintains high standards of reporting to demonstrate integrity, excellence, engagement, accountability and transparency in the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management. The NWMO reports regularly on its progress and especially in response to the advice of Canadians and the changing external environment.

The *NFWA* requires the NWMO to issue annual reports and triennial reports. In each case, reports are to be submitted to the Minister of Natural Resources Canada and to the public at the same time. The Minister must table the reports in Parliament and issue a statement on each report.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

The NWMO will continue to report internationally on its progress at meetings of the *Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management (Joint Convention)*. Under the *Joint Convention*, Canada must demonstrate that it is meeting international commitments to manage radioactive waste and used nuclear fuel safely. The NWMO will contribute to Canada's reporting at the 2015 convention as part of the delegation led by the CNSC.

Triennial Report

The *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act* sets out very specific reporting requirements for the triennial reports. The first triennial report was issued in 2011, and the next triennial report will be issued in 2014. The triennial reports include:

- a) a summary of [the NWMO's] activities respecting the management of nuclear fuel waste during the last three fiscal years, including an analysis of any significant socio-economic effects of those activities on a community's way of life or on its social, cultural or economic aspirations;
- b) its strategic plan for the next five fiscal years to implement the approach that the Governor in Council selects under section 15 or approves under subsection 20(5);
- c) its budget forecast for the next five fiscal years to implement the strategic plan;
- d) the results of its public consultations held during the last three fiscal years with respect to the matters set out in paragraphs a) and b); and
- e) the comments of the Advisory Council on the matters referred to in paragraphs a) to d).

Going Forward

In the period 2014 to 2018, the NWMO will:

- » Convene regular meetings of NWMO Members, Board of Directors, Board Committees and Advisory Council;
- » Coordinate annual reviews of the NWMO's technical program by the Independent Technical Review Group, and publish the reports of the Review Group;
- » Conduct assessments and audits of internal governance to maintain and achieve certifications to management system standards for quality, safety and environmental management;
- » Interact with the CNSC on Adaptive Phased Management in the pre-licence application period consistent with the terms of the service agreement that identifies the CNSC's early involvement in the Adaptive Phased Management Project prior to submission of a licence application. These areas include participating in public meetings to provide information on the regulator's role, identifying regulatory requirements for a repository and providing regulatory review of conceptual Adaptive Phased Management safety assessments;
- » Report to Canadians on its progress in implementing Adaptive Phased Management. The NWMO will submit its Annual Report to the Minister of Natural Resources Canada and the public in the first quarter of each year, including its second triennial report in March 2014;
- » Publish the five-year strategic plan, *Implementing Adaptive Phased Management*;
- » Publish the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors, the Advisory Council, and the Independent Technical Review Group and their reports;
- » Report internationally on progress for the long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel at the 2015 meeting of the *Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management*; and
- » Undertake membership review, and make appointments to the Advisory Council to ensure members bring a broad range of expertise.

» Build and Sustain a High-Performing Organization

The NWMO will build and sustain an effective organization with the social, environmental, technical and financial capabilities for the safe, long-term management of Canada's used nuclear fuel.

Management of used nuclear fuel is a very long-term responsibility. The NWMO must be steady, stable and long term in its outlook and actions. The NWMO must have access to a sufficient and sustainable number of trained and skilled personnel. This requires investment in the organization to ensure resource capacity, capability, expertise, and sound administrative and management policies and practices, that provide a foundation for operations and demonstrate commitment to staff development.

The NWMO has a strong set of skills and competencies resident in its current staff. It will be important to ensure this expertise is retained and further developed over the years to come. The long time frames associated with management of used nuclear fuel give rise to the additional priority of intergenerational knowledge management. Qualified human resources will be required to support program implementation and operations spanning decades. The preservation and transfer of knowledge and institutional memory across generations will be integral to supporting lengthy decision-making processes and the integration of technical, scientific and social information over long periods of time.

We will require expertise and capabilities in a range of fields, including, but not limited to, repository design and construction, environmental assessment, socio-economics, ethics, finance, public engagement, Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge, siting, information management and waste management technology. Investment in human resources, skills training and networks of specialists will be important to build and sustain a capability for inquiry, assessment and decision-making to support the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management. These specialists will be critical to implementing the siting process, developing host community interest and partnerships, and undertaking the technical and socio-economic site investigations.

As the NWMO proceeds with the implementation of Adaptive Phased Management and builds partnerships to facilitate this implementation, capacity at the local and regional levels to participate in the implementation of the deep geological repository and associated facilities will become a critical component of the larger organization required to implement Adaptive Phased Management. Capacity building at the local and regional level will be important.

Going Forward

In the period 2014 to 2018, the NWMO will:

- » Continue to grow and develop its staffing and contractor capability through initiatives, such as focused recruitment campaigns when appropriate, alliances with appropriate educational institutions, development of third-party expertise, training and development programmes, and succession planning;
- » Continue to invest in business systems and processes throughout the business planning period to support the growing organization;
- » Continue to ensure hiring plans include recruitment of recent university graduates as well as those with appropriate graduate degrees, to support maintenance of institutional memory and the transfer of information to future generations;
- » Take into account future needs for regionally based staff and local information offices to support the site selection process in communities electing to enter the process; and
- » Continue to work with potential host communities and regions to build capacity to participate in the site selection process, and ultimately for the host community and region to participate in the implementation and operation of the deep geological repository and associated facilities.

The Road Ahead

The NWMO invites all Canadians and Aboriginal peoples of Canada to stay involved in Adaptive Phased Management of Canada's used nuclear fuel. *Implementing Adaptive Phased Management* is updated annually to guide the five-year planning period ahead. As such, the Plan is regularly assessed, strengthened and redirected, as needed.

Adaptive Phased Management will proceed as expeditiously as Canadians, successful technology demonstration and the regulatory authorities allow. Implementation of the site selection process for the deep geological repository for used nuclear fuel has begun. This community-led process is supported by the resources and work programs described in this plan.

Glossary

Deep geological repository is a facility for the placement of used nuclear fuel deep underground where both natural and engineered barriers contain and isolate it from humans and the environment. There is the potential for retrieving the used nuclear fuel.

Fuel bundle for CANDU nuclear reactors is manufactured by sintering uranium oxide powder into pellets. The pellets are loaded into Zircaloy (an alloy of the metal zirconium) tubes, which are then welded into a bundle of tubes – a fuel bundle. Each bundle contains about 1,000 uranium oxide pellets.

Intermediate-level nuclear waste consists primarily of used reactor core components, and resins and filters used to keep reactor water systems clean. It requires shielding to protect workers during handling. Intermediate-level waste is stored mainly in steel-lined concrete containers that have been set into the ground.

Long-term management of used nuclear fuel involves containment and isolation of the radioactive material. The radioactivity decreases substantially with time, due primarily to the decay of short-lived radionuclides. The radioactivity of used nuclear fuel decreases to about one percent of its initial value after one year, decreases to about 0.1 percent after 10 years and decreases to about 0.01 percent after 100 years. After approximately one million years, the radioactivity in used nuclear fuel approaches that of natural uranium.

Low-level nuclear waste consists of common industrial items that have become contaminated with low levels of radioactivity during routine cleanup and maintenance at the nuclear generating stations. Low-level waste includes mops, rags, paper towels, temporary floor coverings, floor sweepings, protective clothing and hardware items such as tools. It consists of paper, plastics, metal, rubber, cotton and other miscellaneous materials. Low-level waste can be safely handled using normal industrial practices and equipment without any special radiation protection.

Optional shallow underground storage facility would involve building a shallow rock cavern storage facility at the chosen site for the deep geological repository. This is included in Adaptive Phased Management as an option, should it be needed, to provide a contingency in the event of unplanned circumstances.

Retrievability is the ability to remove the used nuclear fuel from where it has been placed. Retrievability is an important component of Adaptive Phased Management and was included on the direction of Canadians. It is part of a risk management approach to allow corrective action to be taken if the repository does not perform as expected or to take advantage of new technologies which may emerge in the future; for instance, technologies which might reduce the hazard associated with used nuclear fuel over the long term.

Safety is the protection of individuals, society and the environment, from the harmful or dangerous effects of used nuclear fuel, now and in the future.

Used nuclear fuel means the irradiated fuel bundles removed from a commercial or research nuclear fission reactor. Used nuclear fuel is classified as a high-level nuclear waste.

Share Your Thoughts on

Implementing Adaptive Phased Management 2014 to 2018



DRAFT FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

1. The draft Plan is built around seven strategic objectives. Are the objectives that we have identified appropriate? Have we missed key areas?

2. The draft Plan identifies work and activities we propose to undertake to accomplish these objectives. Have we set out appropriate activities?

3. The draft Plan is intended to anticipate the challenges ahead and plan for them. Over the next five years, what are the key challenges that will need to be addressed?

4. What will the NWMO need to put in place to respond to these challenges?

5. Other comments, questions or suggestions?

Name (optional): _____

Organization (if appropriate): _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Tel: _____

Would you like your comments posted on the NWMO website? Yes No

Please reply by
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