

## IGNACE DECLARES ITSELF TO BE A ‘WILLING HOST’ TO ALL OF CANADA’S HIGH-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE

On July 10<sup>th</sup> the Township of Ignace passed a bylaw declaring themselves to be a “willing host” to the Nuclear Waste Management Organization’s proposed deep geological repository for high-level radioactive waste and associated transportation and on-site processing of an estimated 100,000 tonnes of nuclear fuel waste.

The July 10<sup>th</sup> decision by Ignace Council binds them to the “hosting agreement” signed on March 18 by the Township of Ignace and the Nuclear Waste Management Organization. That agreement will come into effect as a **binding contract** between the NWMO and the Township of Ignace if or when the Township delivers a statement to the NWMO that Ignace is a “Willing Host” and will come into force if or when the NWMO selects the Revell site as their preferred site. That decision is expected later in 2024.

The July 10<sup>th</sup> decision by Ignace Council and commits the Township to supporting the NWMO’s nuclear waste burial project but it **ALSO** means agreeing to all the obligations and surrendering of rights set out in the “hosting agreement” signed by the Township of Ignace and the NWMO on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The hosting agreement will become a permanent and binding contract if the NWMO selects the Revell site.

The Hosting Agreement is posted on the Ignace website at <https://www.ignace.ca/town-hall/willingness-dgr-process>.

Some key points in the March 18 agreement:

- it **binds future municipal councils**; elections and changes of councils won’t change the obligations the Township has signed up for with the March 18 hosting agreement
- it requires future councils to show up at the request of the NWMO at meetings, forums and hearings and speak in support of the project, **regardless of future concerns** or how future residents and councils view the project
- information about the implementation of the project will be **confidential**, limited to a very few; this includes scientific and technical information about the project and its impacts
- even communications from the municipality to its residents – that’s you – will be **subject to the approval of the NWMO**
- it commits the Township to providing support and services but **does not commit the NWMO to paying** for them.

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization intends to select a single site for a deep geological repository (DGR) for all of Canada’s high-level radioactive waste. The project will include transporting, processing, burying and eventually abandoning the highly radioactive wastes at the chosen site.

There will be radioactive releases during each of these sets of activities even without an accident. The project will bring new security concerns into the region. The effects of radiation affect us at a cellular level and can cause harm that shows up decades later and is passed on to our children and grandchildren.

The nuclear industry in Canada has been promoting the idea of nuclear waste burial for decades but the NWMO has not produced a detailed plan. In 2021 they published a “concept report” but important parts of the project are still not described or tested. There is no deep geological repository for high-level nuclear waste approved or operating anywhere in the world (DGR’s in Finland & Sweden’s are under review and do not have a licence to operate).

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization has repeatedly stated that it will only proceed with the selection of a site for their deep geological repository project where there is an “informed and willing community”.

- The NWMO’s “plan” to transport, process and bury high-level nuclear waste is not a complete plan. It includes several “concepts” that are still being developed, and there are large gaps in the information available about the project.
- The NWMO’s siting process requires that the community decide it is “willing” **before it gains important information through the federal impact assessment**, where a full plan would be presented and reviewed
- The NWMO has deemed Ignace to be the “host” community, but **the project puts many others at risk**: those living along the transportation route and those living downstream, including those living closer to the Revell site than residents of Ignace. Ignace is 45 km away and in a different watershed.