

Identifying a site for the deep geological repository

By Greg Plain, Senior Engagement Advisor, Aboriginal Relations, NWMO.

This is the fifth of six columns.

In the last installment, I talked about the NWMO's unique Indigenous Knowledge policy. The policy provides guidance on interweaving Indigenous Knowledge with Western science and helps to ensure that as the NWMO implements Adaptive Phased Management, it values, respects, and honours the beliefs and learnings of Indigenous people.



Here, I'll describe where we are now in the site selection process.

Since 2010, the NWMO has been engaged in a process to identify a site where Canada's used nuclear fuel can be safely contained and isolated in a deep geological repository. The project will only proceed in a location where the municipality, the First Nation and Métis communities and the surrounding communities are interested in working in partnership to implement it.

The NWMO is currently involved in dialogue and learning with a number of communities that expressed interest, along with their First Nation, Métis and municipal neighbours. We are working towards identifying a single preferred site in the next few years. This is being done by evaluating potential sites through a series of progressively more detailed scientific, technical and social assessments.

Our staff work closely with First Nation and Métis communities and local guides to ensure fieldwork such geological mapping is carried out in a way that is respectful of the land and Indigenous traditions.

At every step in the process, resources to support community learning and well-being are available.

You can always get more information at www.nwmo.ca, or by contacting us at askthenwmo@nwmo.ca.