



# The Corporation of the Township of Huron-Kinloss

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## Staff Report

**Report Title: NWMO – Oct. 2024 Site Selection Update**

**Date: Nov. 4, 2024**

**Report Number: CAO-2024-11-35**

**Department: CAO**

**File Number: C11 CAO 24**

**Prepared By: Mike Bartlett, Administrative Coordinator**

**Attachments: none**

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### **Recommendation:**

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report CAO-2024-11-35, prepared by Mike Bartlett, Administrative Coordinator.

### **Background:**

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) has been searching for a site to store spent nuclear fuel since 2010. Known as a Deep Geological Repository, or DGR, the storage facility would be built more than half a kilometer underground, at an estimated cost of \$26 billion.

The process for the \$26 billion project has been narrowed down to two sites, Ignace in northern Ontario and South Bruce, and the NWMO has said both the local municipality and the First Nation in those areas will have to be willing, informed hosts.

In July, Ignace became the first community to make its decision known. At a Special Meeting of Ignace Council, Council unanimously accepted and endorsed a set of recommendations from the Willingness Ad Hoc Committee. Ignace Council then immediately passed a resolution addressed to the NWMO that indicated that the Township of Ignace is indeed a willing host community for their potential siting of a deep geological repository in Northwestern Ontario.

South Bruce announced they would be holding a referendum to decide community willingness and voting would begin on October 21<sup>st</sup> and end on Oct. 28<sup>th</sup>.

Several other countries, including the United States, United Kingdom, France and Japan are also pursuing construction of DGRs. Finland's ONKALO repository is the first to have been constructed; Its operator, Posiva Oy, has been running storage trials at the facility this year.

Once completed, the deep geologic repository will see more than 50,000 tonnes of spent nuclear fuel, currently stored in temporary facilities in Manitoba, New Brunswick, Ontario, and Quebec, transported to be stored 600 metres below ground. The radioactive waste would be contained behind multiple barriers and the NWMO has estimated that roughly 650 shipments would be made to the repository every year from the temporary sites over a span of 50 years.

### **Discussion/Analysis/Overview:**

South Bruce residents began voting on October 21<sup>st</sup> and were asked to vote online or by phone. Polls closed Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup> at 8pm, with officials reporting that evening that 51% of voters were in favor of the municipality hosting the Deep Geological Repository (DGR), and that voter turnout was over 69% of eligible voters, making the results binding.

South Bruce council will formally receive the referendum results at a special Council meeting on Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> at 5pm. The South Bruce Community Liaison Committee will hold their next meeting on November 18<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.

Attention now will turn to Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation in northern Ontario and Saugeen Ojibway Nation, to see if they share the same willingness as Ignace and South Bruce. Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation has stated they will hold a referendum in November, while the Saugeen Ojibway Nation has yet to announce its own plans but have indicated they may not hold a community vote until next year.

The Administrative Coordinator will continue to monitor the project and include new information in future reports to Council.

**Financial Impacts: N/A**

**Performance Measurement: N/A**

**Strategic Area:**

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|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Embrace a thriving rural lifestyle      | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance Municipal Service Delivery |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prepare for Inclusive Growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure Financial Stability         |

**Strategic Goal: Build Community Capacity**

**Respectfully Submitted By:**

**Mike Bartlett, Administrative Coordinator**

**Report Approved By:**

Jodi MacArthur, Chief Administrative Officer