

# Enclosure 1: Federal Authority Advice Record (FAAR) - Deep Geological Repository (DGR) for Canada's Used Nuclear Fuel Project

Registry File: 88774

Please submit the completed form by **February 4, 2026** via email to [nuclearwaste-dechetsnucleaires@iaac-aeic.gc.ca](mailto:nuclearwaste-dechetsnucleaires@iaac-aeic.gc.ca)<sup>1</sup>. In order to be posted on the Registry, and to align with the Official Languages Act, IAAC is requiring that you submit the FAAR form, or a summary of it, in French and English.

## Department/Agency Contact Information

<b>Submission Date</b>	February 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2026
<b>Department/Agency</b>	Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)
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Review the draft Initial Project Description and answer the following questions:

1. Is your department or agency in possession of specialist or expert information or knowledge in its area of expertise that may be relevant to the conduct of an impact assessment of the project?

**No.**

Specify the specialist or expert information or knowledge.

Does your department or agency have additional information or knowledge on the project not specified above, including information on the geographic, environmental, economic or social context of the project? (e.g. location of protected or sensitive areas, previous history between local communities and proponent or similar projects, local or regional social or economic concerns)?

2. Will your department or agency exercise a **power, perform a duty or function**, or provide **financial assistance**, related to the project to enable it to be carried out in whole or in part?

**No.**

As relevant,

- a) Specify the power, duty or function, or financial assistance, and the likelihood that it will be required to construct the project, as either Required, Potential, Likely, Unlikely or Not Required
- b) Describe any associated Indigenous or public consultation, including timelines, and elaborate on any potential opportunities for consultation coordination with the impact assessment process, if an impact assessment is required
- c) Describe any associated information requirements (e.g., alternative means assessment, habitat offsetting), and specify those that may be coordinated with the impact assessment process, if an impact assessment is required
- d) Identify any associated project-specific guidance or issues of which the proponent should be aware, or information the proponent should provide
- e) Indicate whether your department or agency has identified any power that it will not be exercising or may be unable to exercise to allow the project to be carried out, in whole or in part, with reasons; if unsure, explain what must be resolved to increase confidence.

3. **Using Table 1**, identify project- and context-specific **key issues** based on the expertise within your mandate<sup>1</sup> and the information in your possession. Available information may include your access to databases and corporate knowledge, the draft Initial Project Description, any exchanges with the proponent or others related to the project and known means to address the effects.

**Please see ESDC's response in Table 1.**

For each key issue:

- a) Specify the key issue (e.g., specific species and location)
- b) Specify the project component or activity linked to the key issue
- c) Explain why it is a key issue based on:
  - i. biophysical effect pathway(s) from the specific project component or activity
  - ii. concerns unique to the project or a priority within your mandate
  - iii. the issue being material<sup>2</sup> to decision-making under the *Impact Assessment Act*
- d) Potential pathways from key issues that could lead to an impact on Indigenous Peoples and their rights
- e) Identify how the issue could be resolved, including through other means than an impact assessment (e.g., other regulatory oversight)
- f) Identify additional information the proponent could provide to build confidence about how the issue could be addressed through other means

DGRs are proposed in geology chosen for its technical suitability for containing radioactive waste. The proponent's proposed DGR would permanently contain 5.9 million bundles of used nuclear fuel, which will remain radioactive for thousands of years. It will be important to ensure the DGR's barriers designed to prevent releases are stable over the long-term. Adaptive management will be an important consideration to ensure adverse effects are avoided or minimized over the long term.

Key issues will vary depending on the phase of the project. According to the proponent's IPD, the site preparation and construction phases of the project are anticipated to take 13 years (planned over 2030-2042). Placement of nuclear waste into the repository will begin in the operations phase scheduled in 2043 and anticipated to occur over 50 to 60 years. Once operations are complete, there would be an approximate 100-year phase of extended monitoring, decommissioning and closure. The site would then be decommissioned and closed and the proponent would eventually apply to be released from CNSC licensing. The site would transition into the institutional control that would be established by the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario.

During the operations phase and extending into the decommissioning and closure phase of the Project, the potential for radiological releases from the Project as well as malfunctions, accidents, and malevolent acts will be key considerations.

IAAC has prepared the following **preliminary list of potential effects that are likely to be key issues** for the integrated assessment.<sup>4</sup> While completing **Table 1**, IAAC requests that, as appropriate based on your department or agency's mandate and expertise, you validate this list, add precision or rationale where appropriate, and recommend any additional key issues for consideration. For a federal work or undertaking, such as nuclear energy works, a broader range of effects are within federal jurisdiction, including socio-economic effects.

- Effects to Biological Environment: vegetation (terrestrial, riparian and wetland environments), wildlife, reptiles and amphibians, fish and fish habitat, birds, species at risk
- Effects to Physical Environment: geology and geochemistry, soils and sediment, ambient radioactivity, air quality/emissions, surface water quality/quantity, groundwater quality/quantity, effects to Lake Ontario
- Accidents and malfunctions and effects of the environment on the project
- Impacts to Indigenous rights, current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes, physical and cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples and sites of archaeological importance, with a focus on potential archaeological resources on land or water, and species of cultural importance

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to the [Memoranda of Understanding with IAAC](#).

<sup>2</sup> An issue is material to decision making if its analysis is anticipated to affect the conclusions on (1) whether adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or direct and incidental adverse effects (collectively adverse federal effects) are likely not significant, or of low, medium or high significance; (2) appropriate mitigation measures for significant adverse federal effects; or (3) justification in the public interest.

- Effects to the health, social and economic conditions and the positive and negative consequences of these changes that are likely to be caused by the carrying out of the designated project

**Eva Lazar – Executive Director,  
Strategic Integration, Policy and  
Partnerships Directorate (SIPPD) of  
the Skills and Employment Branch  
(SEB), Employment and Social  
Development Canada.**

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Name of Departmental / Agency  
Responder

**February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

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Date

**Table 1: Key Issues to inform the integrated assessment process**

This table should outline key issues to inform the integrated assessment process, including whether an impact assessment is required and, if so, the scope of the assessment and tailoring of the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines. Key issues are the major concerns directly related to a project component or activity, the analysis of which is anticipated to be material to decision-making under the *Impact Assessment Act*. Federal authorities' advice should be guided by the identification and resolution of key issues. If an impact assessment is required, it will be focused on key issues.

Comment ID	a) Key issue	b) Project component or activity	c)(i) Biophysical effect pathway(s)	c)(ii) Concern unique to the project or a priority within your mandate	c)(iii) Material to federal decision-making	d) Impacts on Indigenous Peoples and their rights	e) Means for issue resolution	f) Additional information from the proponent
<p><i>Identify each comment by your organization's acronym and a sequential comment number.</i></p> <p>e.g.: IAAC-01</p>	<p><i>Specify each key issue (e.g., specific species and location).</i></p>	<p><i>Identify the project component or activity linked to the key issue.</i></p> <p><i>Be specific about the nature, scale, novelty and complexity of the component or activity.</i></p>	<p><i>Identify the specific effect pathway between the project component or activity and the affected environmental or human receptor (including Indigenous Peoples).</i></p>	<p><i>Describe why it's a key issue within the mandate of your department or agency, including in terms of priorities of the federal government and in terms of anticipated likelihood, severity or uncertainty of effects.</i></p> <p><i>Identify if the key issue is common for project activities of this nature or in this sector, or whether it is unique to this project due to the project's complexity, size or novelty; a sensitive or rare receiving environment; and/or proximity of sensitive environmental or human receptors (including Indigenous Peoples).</i></p>	<p><i>Describe why the key issue is material to decision-making as either:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>an adverse effect within federal jurisdiction, or a direct or incidental adverse effect, that may be significant based on available evidence including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>federal experts' knowledge and experience with past project assessments;</i></li> <li>○ <i>presence of sensitive species, habitats or human receptors (including Indigenous Peoples);</i></li> <li>○ <i>novel or complex project activities, components or technologies;</i></li> <li>○ <i>high uncertainties in effects or in the effectiveness of mitigation measures;</i></li> <li>○ <i>unknown or unproven mitigation; or</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>a factor for the justification in the public interest anticipated to be material to decision-making such as a likely positive effect contributing to sustainability, to Canada's environmental obligations or climate change commitments or in supporting governmental priorities, such as reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Describe how key issues you have identified within your mandate and expertise may lead to impacts on Indigenous Peoples and their rights.</i></p> <p><i>This advice must be informed by knowledge and input from Indigenous Nations and communities during the comment period, or within the Initial Project Description to support a more accurate, respectful and collaborative assessment.</i></p>	<p><i>Describe how the key issue could be resolved or addressed by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Any means, including powers, duties, functions, frameworks, policies or guidance for which your department or agency is responsible;</i></li> <li>• <i>Any means, including powers, duties, functions, frameworks, policies or guidance from another jurisdiction, including the province;</i></li> <li>• <i>Common, proven, well-understood or standard mitigation measures to mitigate the effect or effect pathway(s); or</i></li> <li>• <i>Commitments made by the proponent (e.g., in the Initial Project Description).</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Describe information the proponent could provide, or commitments the proponent could make, that would provide confidence that the issue can be resolved by existing means (to be considered for the final Initial Project Description, future Summary of Issues and response, or (potential) Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines.</i></p> <p><i>Consider whether information, studies, analyses or collaborative work with other authorities would be required to address the issue beyond existing means.</i></p>
ESDC-01	Economic Impacts	16.9 Economic Conditions, page 47.				This section of the summary IPD does not provide any detailed information regarding the changes the proposed Project will have on the impacted community's local employment, contracting opportunities,	The proponent could be asked to provide detailed information regarding the economic impact of the Project with respect to the impacted community's local employment, contracting opportunities, labour	<input type="checkbox"/> How the project would economically benefit the community as a whole and equity - deserving groups in the community's labour market at

						labour income and the regional economy. This section of the summary IPD only provides a general overview of the region's current economic conditions and does not make a direct link between it and the proposed Project.	income and the regional economy and how they are relevant to its current economic conditions.	the local, regional, and national levels.  <input type="checkbox"/> Explicit indication of the anticipated time frame for the construction and completion of the project and its anticipated lifespan - including consideration of potential risks and mitigation measures related to boom-bust economic cycles.  <input type="checkbox"/> Project's approximate budget and how much will be spent locally on construction and operation phases including the contracting that will be made to local businesses and the labour force.
ESDC-02	Employment	4. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH ANISHINAABE PEOPLES OF WABIGOON LAKE OJIBWAY NATION AND OTHER INDIGENOUS GROUPS IN CANADA, subsection 4.2.2.				In this section of the summary IPD, the proponent asserts the following: "Continued emphasis is being made on creating economic development opportunities, such as wage employment and sustainable resource use.", (p.11). However, the proponent does not	It is recommended that the proponent provide a description of the employment initiatives it intends to introduce to assist impacted Indigenous Peoples to take full advantage of employment opportunities associated with the proposed Project.	<input type="checkbox"/> Forecast of the number of jobs to be created, their job categories (i.e. contractual, part-time, or full-time), and the timeframe of these jobs during the construction phase and operation phases of the project.

		Social, Economic, and Cultural Well-Being, p.11.				specify any employment initiatives, such as education and job training, that it intends to introduce in order to ensure that impacted Indigenous Peoples can take full advantage of employment opportunities associated with the proposed Project.		<input type="checkbox"/> Labour force characteristics of the community and local workforce (i.e., employment rate, participation rate, income distribution, level of education), broken down by gender, age, equity deserving groups (ie. Indigenous Peoples, racialized groups, persons with disabilities, newcomers) and any other relevant socioeconomic characteristics.  <input type="checkbox"/> Adverse effects to local employment - how would they be managed or mitigated (mitigation measures); what employment related programs will be made accessible to those negatively affected by the project (e.g. ESDC employment and training programs), such as job skills and employment training or re-training.
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								<input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive inclusive workforce strategies that outline plans to hire and retain local residents and identify and reduce employment barriers to improve the labour market outcomes of Indigenous Peoples and equity deserving groups.  <input type="checkbox"/> Assistance to be provided to former employees when the project's facility will permanently shut down (ie. severance pay, retraining/skilling, an offer of another job, or an early retirement package).
ESDC-03	Training and Apprenticeships	16. HEALTH, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT, subsection 16.9 Economic Conditions, p. 47.				In this section of the summary IPD, the proponent asserts the following: "The Project is expected to create employment, potentially affecting labour force characteristics, income, <b>education, training, business opportunities, municipal finances, and the cost of living.</b> ", (p.47). The proponent, however, does not provide a description of the kind of education and training	It is recommended that the proponent be asked to provide a description of the education and training opportunities that can be associated with the proposed Project.	<input type="checkbox"/> Employer-sponsored training of employees and potential employees – how this will be facilitated, particularly for Indigenous Peoples and equity-deserving groups.  <input type="checkbox"/> Engagement with the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET)

						that will be created because of the proposed Project. This is directly relevant to creating potential employment opportunities for Indigenous Peoples who will be impacted by the proposed Project (please see comment ESDC-02).		and the Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF) First Nations and Métis service delivery providers in the region throughout the project's lifespan.  <input type="checkbox"/> Details on the types of skills and knowledge that may be required to support the completion of the project throughout each stage of the project's lifespan (from construction to operation) and how to assist the local workforce in acquiring them, particularly for Indigenous Peoples and equity-deserving groups.  <input type="checkbox"/> The availability and accessibility of training programs to effectively train the local population and potential workers from surrounding areas (e.g. ESDC employment and training programs).
ESDC-04	Socio-economic conditions for Indigenous Peoples	Indigenous Economic Conditions, page 63.				These sections of the summary IPD do not provide any detailed information regarding the changes the proposed	The proponent could be asked to provide detailed information regarding the socio-economic conditions for Indigenous	<input type="checkbox"/> Specific strategies to increase hiring and training of Indigenous people

		Indigenous Social Conditions, page 63.				Project will have on local employment and contracting opportunities for Indigenous peoples.	peoples regarding the changes to local employment and contracting opportunities that result from the proposed Project.	of varying socioeconomic characteristics, such as through the ISET and the SPF programs. These strategies must include an estimation of the total number of employees expected from local Indigenous communities and the elimination of existing barriers to participation of Indigenous peoples.
ESDC-05	Socio-economic conditions	Initial Project Description Conclusions, section entitled Socio-economic and cultural outcomes, page xii.				<p>The summary IPD asserts the proposed project will “generate lasting socio-economic and cultural benefits, particularly for municipalities and regional economies.” (page xii) but does not explicitly state what those benefits are and what portion of the population will benefit from them.</p> <p>The summary IPD states the following:</p> <p>“Uncertainty remains regarding potential effects to Indigenous Peoples based on baseline data collection to date and therefore cannot be ruled out as carrying a non-negligible risk of significant</p>	<p>The proponent could be asked to provide a greater degree of detail in its IPD with respect to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The anticipated socio-economic benefits associated with the proposed Project; and</li> <li>2. The potential non-negligible risk for Indigenous Peoples associated with the proposed Project.</li> </ol>	<p><input type="checkbox"/>The social and economic context of the region of study (i.e. main economic industries, similar projects in the area) in relation to the project.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>Details on any commitments to maximize the positive socio-economic outcomes of the project for local communities and all segments of their populations, such as employment and enhanced social services.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of the availability and affordability of</p>

						<p>effects. These potential impacts will be a central focus of the Impact Statement and addressed through assessment studies with Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation and ongoing engagement with potentially affected Indigenous groups.”, page xii.</p> <p>What these non-negligible effects are that have been derived from the baseline data could be made explicit within the Project’s IPD in order to address them early on in the Impact Assessment (IA) process.</p>		<p>childcare services for workers that provides details on the number of childcare spaces available, costs and how the project will impact access to early learning and childcare programs and services to the broader community.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>An assessment of essential wraparound supports and community services (education, transportation, access to social services) that are available to the project’s local workforce.</p>
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*Please insert additional rows as necessary*