



NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION
SOCIÉTÉ DE GESTION DES DÉCHETS NUCLÉAIRES

March 13, 2026

APM-CORR-00650-302967

Chief and Council
Iskatewizaagegan No. 39 Independent First Nation

CC:

Leon Mandamin, Chief
Finn MacDonald, Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (nuclearwaste-dechetsnucleaires@iaac-aeic.gc.ca)

RE: Response to Correspondence Regarding the Deep Geological Repository (DGR) for Canada's Used Nuclear Fuel Project

Dear Chief and Members of Council,

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) thanks Iskatewizaagegan No. 39 Independent First Nation (Nation) for its submission regarding the Initial Project Description (IPD) for the proposed Deep Geological Repository (DGR) for Canada's used nuclear fuel Project (Project). We appreciate the opportunity to respond directly.

In this letter, we seek to address the key issues in your submission identifying Project issues and concerns across the broader region.

Scope of Impact Assessment process

On January 5, 2026, the NWMO IPD was posted on the IAAC registry. Submitting the IPD formally initiates the rigorous integrated IA and nuclear licensing regulatory process for the Project. The IPD also supports IAAC in identifying potentially affected Indigenous communities, informing engagement planning, and establishing the scope of the assessment. There will be numerous opportunities for engagement before a decision is made about the Project. As reflected in the IPD, the Project has been assessed at a screening level, and the risk of residual adverse effects is anticipated to be low with effects primarily associated with localized Project activities.

After receiving NWMO's IPD, as required by the Impact Assessment Act (IAA), IAAC prepared the Summary of Issues, which the NWMO received on Monday, February 16, 2026. The Summary of Issues outlines the key issues for the federal integrated IA process raised by the public and Indigenous communities during the 30-day comment period on the IPD.

The integrated process follows strict requirements and will include the identification and assessment of potential pathways of interaction and will consider how the Project as described in the Initial Project Description could affect, among other things, the environment, human health, and Indigenous rights before the Project can be approved. As part of this process, the IAAC and the CNSC will develop the requirements

for the integrated assessment, requiring the NWMO to engage with the potentially affected Indigenous communities specified by the IAAC and the CNSC.

Potential present and future impacts

At this stage, NWMO has confidence in the safety of the Project and its ability to protect people and the environment. This confidence will be examined through comprehensive safety and environmental assessments under the independent oversight of IAAC and the CNSC, with opportunities for public and Indigenous participation.

Studies to date indicate the Project will result in minimal impacts and negligible cumulative effects. The screening-level residual effects risk assessment is presented in Section 19 of the IPD. Further assessment will be undertaken through the integrated impact assessment and initial nuclear licensing process, as well as further nuclear licensing processes, to confirm these conclusions prior to the applicable regulatory decision-making. The NWMO remains committed to respectful engagement on Indigenous rights and interests as part of, and to supporting Indigenous engagement in, these processes.

Next Steps

The NWMO appreciates the opportunity to respond to the Nation's views and welcomes the opportunity to meet with your community to better understand how the Project may potentially affect your community. Please contact Joe Gaboury, Director, Indigenous Engagement, by email at <contact information removed> or by phone at <contact information removed> at your convenience if you are interested in meeting in this regard.

In the meantime, for additional information regarding the Project, we refer you to the NWMO's response to the Summary of Issues provided by IAAC based on the IPD. The NWMO's response is available on the IAAC's registry website for this Project at: <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/88774>.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss next steps at your convenience.

Sincerely,

<Original signed by>

Jessica Perritt
Director, Indigenous Relations & Reconciliation
<contact information removed>