

March 13, 2026

APM-CORR-00656-302966

Métis Nation of Ontario

CC:

Andrea Marcon, Manager – Lands, Resources and Consultations <contact information removed>

Theresa Stenlund, Regional Coordinator <contact information removed>

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 Ms. Marcon,

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) thanks the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community, represented by the Métis Nation of Ontario, for its submission to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) registry dated February 4, 2026, regarding the Initial Project Description (IPD) for the proposed Deep Geological Repository (DGR) for Canada's used nuclear fuel Project (Project). We acknowledge the care and consideration reflected in the review and the concerns raised. In this letter, we address the key issues in your submission identifying issues and concerns in the immediate vicinity of the DGR project site relating to the Impact Assessment (IA) process and the biophysical focus of the IPD.

Scope of the IA process: past and future engagement

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.

Engagement and relationship building with Indigenous communities, the public and interested parties is ongoing throughout the multi-year process, with multiple further opportunities to have input with the NWMO, the IAAC, and the CNSC.

The NWMO notes that it has not received copies of the Traditional Knowledge and Land Use studies referenced in the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community's submission. The NWMO welcomes the opportunity to learn from the Métis Nation of Ontario through these studies, should the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community choose to share them, to support the NWMO's understanding of any potential Project effects on the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community.

Biophysical Focus

Your submission raised questions about the value components that will be used by NWMO during the integrated Impact Assessment. As set out in Section 19 of 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. The IPD identifies biophysical and human environment components to guide the integrated Impact Assessment at this early stage and does not predetermine findings related to the exercise of Indigenous rights.

As the Project advances through the integrated Impact Assessment, IAAC's Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines and engagement with Indigenous communities will support consideration of how assessed environmental components interface with Indigenous rights, interests, and values, including resource-based, land-based, cultural, and governance considerations, where relevant to understanding potential Project effects and consistent with the development of the Impact Statement.

Next Steps

The NWMO welcomes the opportunity to continue discussions with the Northwestern Ontario Métis Community.

For additional information on the federal process, 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>.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Joe Gaboury, Director, Indigenous Engagement, by email at <contact information removed> or by phone at <contact information removed>.

Sincerely,

<Original signed by>

Jessica Perritt
Director, Indigenous Relations & Reconciliation
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