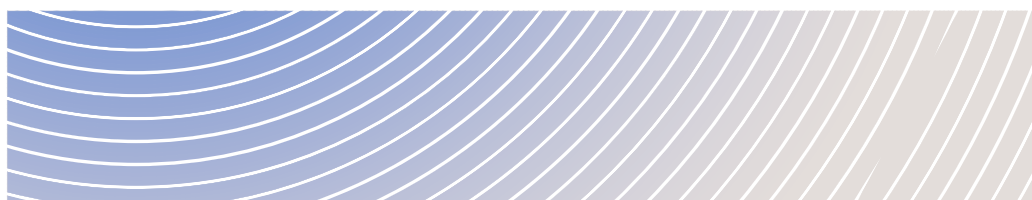


Cooperation Plan



DEEP GEOLOGICAL REPOSITORY FOR CANADA'S USED
NUCLEAR FUEL PROJECT

April 10, 2026

DRAFT VERSION



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1. Introduction

This document is a draft version of the Cooperation Plan for the integrated assessment of the Deep Geological Repository for Canada's Used Nuclear Fuel Project (the project).

On March 18, 2026, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) determined that an impact assessment is required for the project, pursuant to section 16 of the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA). On the same day, IAAC, on behalf of the Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Nature (Minister) referred the impact assessment to a review panel. The project includes physical activities regulated under the IAA and the *Nuclear Safety and Control Act* (NSCA). Pursuant to section 43 of the IAA, the Minister must refer to a review panel designated projects that include physical activities regulated under the NSCA. The review panel will conduct an integrated impact assessment (integrated assessment) that includes regulatory requirements from IAAC and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) and follows the framework outlined in the [Memorandum of Understanding on Integrated Impact Assessments Under the Impact Assessment Act between the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission](#) (MOU).

IAAC and the CNSC will cooperate with the common objective that both legislative requirements are achieved in a single integrated assessment, with an assessment outcome including both a decision under the IAA, and an initial licensing decision under the NSCA.

Although the project is under federal jurisdiction of the IAA and the NSCA, activities related to the project may be subject to provincial environmental assessment requirements and to provincial permitting and approval requirements that include an assessment of environmental effects.

The draft Cooperation Plan (the Plan) was developed by IAAC and the CNSC to set out intentions and plans for a cooperative assessment process for the project. The Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) and other potential participating Ontario ministries will be consulted during the preparation of the final version of this plan.

For anticipated federal permits required, please see the project's [Draft Permitting Plan](#).

2. Project

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (the proponent) is proposing a new underground deep geological repository (DGR) system designed to safely contain and isolate used nuclear fuel. Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation (WLON) and the Township of Ignace have been selected as the host communities for the proposed project, which is located 21 kilometres southeast of the WLON and 43 kilometres northwest of the Town of Ignace, Ontario along Highway 17. As proposed, the project would provide permanent storage for approximately 5.9 million bundles of used nuclear fuel. The project is expected to span approximately 160 years, encompassing site preparation, construction, operation and closure monitoring. The project assessment is being conducted in collaboration with the CNSC.

As part of the integrated assessment process, the proponent will be submitting the balance of the required information to complete the application for a licence to prepare site (LTPS). The proponent may



pursue subsequent licences to construct, operate, decommission at later stages, should the project be approved.

For more information on the project, please review the proponent's Initial Project Description. For more information on the integrated assessment of the project, visit the [Deep Geological Repository for Canada's Used Nuclear Fuel project page](#) on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry (the Registry).

3. Approach to cooperation

On December 18, 2025, the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario signed a Co-operation Agreement on Environmental and Impact Assessment. Through cooperation, IAAC, the CNSC and potential participating Ontario ministries (participating ministries) (see Appendix 1) will strive to increase efficiency and certainty for the proponent, as well as for the public and Indigenous Nations and communities, and ensure that the best available expertise is shared and applied. Where possible, IAAC and the CNSC may coordinate activities with any participating ministries, including harmonizing timelines and streamlining processes, in order to best share expertise and reduce redundancies in the review process. Each jurisdiction will retain its own decision-making authority in accordance with their respective legislative requirements.

The Plan is intended to be flexible and does not preclude IAAC, the CNSC or any participating ministries from making changes to the cooperative approach described in this plan in order to accommodate changes that may occur during this assessment process, or any provincial assessment or permitting process that may be required in the future – see Appendix 2.

4. Gathering and review of proponent information

The Government Review Team (GRT), comprised of federal authorities and any participating ministries who possess expert information or knowledge with respect to the project, has been established. IAAC and the CNSC will continue to involve relevant Ontario ministries as requested, as member(s) of the GRT. Proponent information will be shared with any participating ministries through the GRT. Frequent and timely review of proponent information by participating ministries will facilitate an efficient integrated assessment process, the review of the proponent's application for a licence to prepare site and allow for any necessary updates to the approach described in this plan, should changes occur that impact the Province of Ontario's role during the integrated assessment process.

5. Timelines and time management

Timelines for the integrated assessment process are legislated under the IAA. When possible, IAAC and the CNSC will provide the GRT with advanced notices of opportunities for cooperation. IAAC, the CNSC and the GRT may align milestones and activities during the integrated assessment process, when appropriate. IAAC and the CNSC will also work with the GRT to ensure that timely and effective communication occurs throughout the integrated assessment process.



IAAC recognizes that efforts to align respective timelines do not supersede legislative obligations concerning time limits, which are prescribed in the IAA, Ontario’s *Environmental Protection Act*, and other relevant provincial legislation.

6. Sharing of information

All information relevant to the integrated assessment of the project will be posted by IAAC or the review panel on the Registry. As such, participating ministries and regulatory boards will have access to the public record for the integrated assessment. The Registry contains all comments and submissions from participants in the assessment, including the public, Indigenous Nations and communities, federal departments, and provincial ministries, in addition to all information submitted by the proponent, except for protected or classified information.

IAAC, the CNSC, and participating ministries will respect requirements related to privacy and confidentiality, including protection of Indigenous knowledge and prescribed information, when sharing or publicly posting information.

IAAC, the CNSC and participating ministries will share, as appropriate, the following information obtained during the assessment of the project. More opportunities for cooperation may be identified and developed at each stage of the regulatory process:

Table 6.1 – Opportunities to share information with potential participating ministries during the integrated assessment process

Integrated Assessment Process *in collaboration with CNSC	Information Sharing Opportunities and Efficiencies
<p>Planning Phase</p> <p>IAAC accepts Initial Project Description (IPD).</p> <p>IAAC and the CNSC conduct engagement and develop the Summary of Issues (SOI).</p> <p>IAAC and the CNSC develop the Integrated Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines (the Integrated Guidelines), Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan (IEPP), Public Participation Plan (PPP), Permitting Plan, and the Cooperation Plan.</p> <p>IAAC determines if an impact assessment is required.</p>	<p><u>Documentation:</u></p> <p>Provide input on the development of technical documents (e.g., SOI).</p> <p>Provide Provincial Authority Advice Record.</p> <p>Collaborate on the development of the Cooperation Plan.</p> <p>Provide input on the development of the Integrated Guidelines.</p> <p><u>Information sharing:</u></p> <p>Share information as applicable on the development of the Cooperation Plan.</p>



Integrated Assessment Process *in collaboration with CNSC	Information Sharing Opportunities and Efficiencies
	IAAC shares information from review of technical documents (e.g., IPD, SOI)
IAAC and the CNSC prepare draft review panel Terms of Reference (TOR)	<p><u>Information sharing:</u></p> IAAC shares information on the development and content of the review panel’s TOR. There is opportunity for the review panel’s mandate to be broad and include consideration of provincial matters and requirements, if applicable, without use of a formal joint review panel mechanism.
<p>Impact Statement Phase</p> The proponent prepares and submits the Impact Statement which includes application for a licence to prepare site (LTPS). IAAC and the CNSC invite comments on the Impact Statement. IAAC leads the review of the Impact Statement, with input from the GRT to determine if it conforms to the Integrated Guidelines (IAA, Section 19(4) decision). CNSC reviews the application for a LTPS to determine if there is adequate information for staff to make recommendations based on regulatory requirements.	<p><u>Information sharing:</u></p> IAAC and the CNSC keep the GRT informed on any important issues. The GRT cooperates and leverages technical expertise and capacity during the review of the proponent’s Impact Statement, including the identification of potential deficiencies and information requests, and information sharing.



<p>Integrated Assessment Process *in collaboration with CNSC</p>	<p>Information Sharing Opportunities and Efficiencies</p>
<p>Impact Assessment Phase</p> <p>Review panel will hold a public hearing once it has determined that it has sufficient information.</p> <p>Review panel drafts potential conditions and makes them available for public comment.</p> <p>Review panel prepares Impact Assessment Report, which summarizes the integrated assessment process and considers the information and evidence provided by the proponent, IAAC, CNSC, the GRT, Indigenous Nations and communities, and the public.</p> <p>Review panel makes recommendations and submits its report to the Minister.</p> <p>IAAC prepares recommendations to assist the Minister, including the Consultation and Accommodation Report.</p>	<p><u>Information sharing:</u></p> <p>The GRT cooperate and leverage technical expertise and capacity during the review of the proponent's information.</p> <p>The GRT provides complete and timely information to the review panel, as appropriate.</p> <p>The GRT shares information in advance of any submissions to the review panel to avoid duplication and ensure consistency/alignment, to the extent possible.</p>
<p>Decision-making Phase</p> <p>Governor in Council makes public interest determination.</p> <p>Minister issues Decision Statement.</p>	<p><u>Information sharing:</u></p> <p>IAAC shares decision statement, when issued, with any participating ministries.</p>

Integrated Assessment Process *in collaboration with CNSC	Information Sharing Opportunities and Efficiencies
<p>Public engagement and Indigenous consultation (throughout assessment process)</p>	<p><u>Information sharing:</u></p> <p>If participating ministries determine they have consultation obligations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information, where appropriate, on Indigenous Nations and communities, preliminary consultation information, including contacts, protocols and potential impacts to rights where possible. <p><u>Indigenous consultation and engagement:</u></p> <p>If applicable, coordinates engagement and consultation activities (to the extent possible), including comment periods and Indigenous consultation to avoid consultation fatigue and ensure Indigenous Nations and communities have the capacity to meaningfully participate</p> <p><u>Public engagement:</u></p> <p>If applicable, coordinates engagement activities, including comment periods (to the extent possible) to avoid engagement fatigue and to support participation.</p>
<p>Post-decision Phase</p> <p>The Review Panel, as the Commission, decides on the LTPS under the NSCA including proposed conditions.</p>	<p><u>Information sharing:</u></p> <p>CNSC to share record of decision on the LTPS, when issued, with any participating ministries.</p>

7. Public participation and participant funding

If the province or proponent identify any comment periods for potential provincial environmental assessment processes or for any permits and approval applications that may be required, IAAC and the CNSC will collaborate with any participating ministries to align comment periods with the integrated assessment, to the extent possible, and include links to each others' websites, coordinate public notices, and share comments received, where appropriate.



Funding to support public participation in the integrated assessment process is available through IAAC's Participant Funding Program. For information about the activities that are eligible for funding or to apply for funding please see the National Program Guidelines and application on the following page <https://www.canada.ca/en/environmental-assessment-agency/services/public-participation/participant-funding-application-environmental-assessment.html>.

For further information on public participation and engagement activities, please see the project's [Draft Public Participation Plan](#).

8. Indigenous consultation and engagement

IAAC will lead Crown Consultation on behalf of the Government of Canada for the assessment, in collaboration with the CNSC. If applicable, Ontario would be responsible for Crown Consultation for applicable provincial decisions.

IAAC will coordinate, to the extent possible and as desired by Indigenous Nations and communities, with the province while respecting the principles of Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP) and Indigenous Data Sovereignty.

Where participating ministries also have consultation obligations, federal and provincial consultation and engagement can be aligned, where appropriate and supported by Indigenous Nations and communities, to minimize consultation fatigue and share information, while ensuring Indigenous Nations and communities have the capacity to meaningfully participate.

For further information on proposed Indigenous consultation and engagement activities as part of the integrated assessment process, please see the project's [Draft Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan](#).

9. Decision Statement

If applicable, IAAC, the CNSC and the GRT will consult with each other regarding draft Integrated Assessment conditions to ensure consistency of conditions and improve regulatory efficiencies.

10. Interpretation

This Plan is not a legal document and does not change any existing federal, provincial, or Indigenous legislative or regulatory jurisdiction, right, power, privilege, prerogative or immunity by virtue, nor does it create any new legal powers, duties or legally binding obligations.



11. Contact Information

The IAAC office designated for administering the integrated assessment of the project in collaboration with the CNSC is:

Integrated Assessment for the Deep Geological Repository for Canada's Used Nuclear Fuel
Project

Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

Review Panel Division

160 Elgin Street, 22nd Floor

Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H3

Phone number: 343-598-5270

Email: nuclearwaste-dechetsnucleaires@iaac-aeic.gc.ca



Appendix 1

Table A1. Ontario Ministries Potentially Participating in the Integrated Assessment

Provincial Ministry	Areas of Expertise	Contact Information
<p>Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks</p>	<p>Air quality, noise impacts, groundwater and surface water, drinking water sources, species at risk, environmental spills (land and surface water), alternatives assessment, and Aboriginal and treaty rights.</p>	<p>Environmental Assessment Services 135 St Clair Ave W Toronto ON, M4V 1P5</p>
<p>Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism</p>	<p>Cultural heritage resources, including archaeological resources, built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes. Archaeological resources include artifacts, archaeological sites, and marine archaeological sites. Leads the implementation of the Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties (PHP S&Gs, prepared under sec. 25.2, Ontario Heritage Act) and regulates archaeology in Ontario (Part VI, Ontario Heritage Act).</p>	<p>Heritage Planning Unit Heritage Operations Branch Citizenship, Inclusion, and Heritage Division 56 Wellesley St W, 16th Floor Toronto, ON M5S 2S3 heritage@ontario.ca</p>
<p>Ministry of Natural Resources</p>	<p>Ontario's fish and wildlife resources, management of Ontario's Crown lands, Crown forests, water, oil, gas, salt and aggregates resources, and renewable energy on Crown lands and natural disasters.</p>	<p>Dryden Fort Frances Atikokan District, Dryden Work Centre 479 Government Street Dryden ON, P8N 3K9</p>



<p>Ministry of Emergency Preparedness and Response</p>	<p>Nuclear / radiological emergency planning, Indigenous engagement, technical planning, emergency planning zones, protective actions, nuclear response, recovery and exercises.</p>	<p>Nuclear, Radiological and Scientific Response Program 25 Morton Shulman, 5th Floor Toronto, ON M3M 0B1</p>
<p>Ministry of Transportation</p>	<p>Moving people and goods safely, efficiently and sustainably.</p>	<p>Highway Operations, Corridor Management 615 South James St Thunder Bay, ON P7E 6P6</p>

Appendix 2

Table A2. Ontario Ministry Regulatory Mechanism References

Regulatory Mechanism	Reference
<p>Provincial Environmental Assessment requirements (class EAs) under Ontario’s <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i> may apply for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource Stewardship and Facility Development Projects • Transmission Facilities (transmission line, transformer station) • Provincial Transportation Facilities and Municipal Highways (highway turn off) <p>Note: In addition, some activities may trigger requirements for emergency diesel generators if they do not meet the exemption criteria.</p>	<p>https://www.ontario.ca/page/class-environmental-assessments-approved-class-ea-information</p> <p>https://www.ontario.ca/page/class-ea-resource-stewardship-and-facility-development-projects</p> <p>https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r24050</p>



Regulatory Mechanism	Reference
Permit to Take Water under the Ontario Water Resources Act and/or Environmental Activity and Sector Registry – Environmental Protection Act	https://www.ontario.ca/page/permits-take-water
Environmental Compliance Approvals for Air, Noise and Industrial Sewage works under the Environmental Protection Act and Ontario Water Resources Act	https://www.ontario.ca/page/environmental-compliance-approval https://www.ontario.ca/page/environmental-activity-and-sector-registry
Permit for Species at Risk under the Endangered Species Act or Authorization under the future Species Conservation Act	https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-get-endangered-species-act-permit-or-authorization https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/25s04b https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-0380
Review of Technical Cultural Heritage Studies (archaeological, built heritage and cultural heritage) under the Ontario Heritage Act	https://www.ontario.ca/page/standards-and-guidelines-conservation-provincial-heritage-properties https://www.ontario.ca/page/archaeology
License to Collect Fish for Scientific Purposes under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act	https://www.ontario.ca/page/licence-collect-fish-scientific-purposes
Wildlife Scientific Collector's Authorization under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act	https://forms.mgcs.gov.on.ca/en/dataset/fw1030
Authorization to Interfere With/Destroy a Black Bear or Furbearing Mammal Den, Beaver dam, Black Bear in a Den under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act	https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/97f41/v8
Authorization to destroy/take/possess nests and eggs under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act	https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/97f41/v8



Regulatory Mechanism	Reference
A burn permit to enable burning of materials from forest clearing under the Wildland Fire Management Act	https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90f24
Land Use Permit, work permit or agreement to use and occupy provincial public lands and authority to dispose of crown land under the authority of the Minister of Natural Resources under the Public Lands Act	https://www.ontario.ca/page/crown-land-management-policies-public-lands-act-work-permits-policy https://www.ontario.ca/page/application-review-and-land-disposition-process-policy https://www.ontario.ca/business/permits-licences/building-and-land-use-permit
Potential aggregate resource permit for construction and operation activities may be required under the Aggregate Resources Act	https://www.ontario.ca/page/aggregate-resources
Potential permit to remove Forest Resources under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act	https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/94c25 https://www.ontario.ca/page/using-trees-crown-forests-commercial-purposes
Entrance Permits, Encroachment Permit and traffic impact study in accordance with the Guidelines for preparation of traffic impact study and prepared by MTO prequalified engineering service through the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act	https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p50 Ontario Ministry of Transportation Library: Traffic Impact Study
Permits for utilities crossing, access roads and signage under the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act	https://www.ontario.ca/page/highway-corridor-management
Leave to Construct under the Ontario Energy Board Act	https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/98o15
Licence to Operate under the Shortline Railways Act	https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/95s02



Regulatory Mechanism	Reference
Provincial Nuclear Emergency Response Plan under the <i><u>Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act</u></i>	https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e09
The <i><u>Invasive Species Act</u></i> related to the prevention and control of invasive species in Ontario	https://www.ontario.ca/page/managing-invasive-species-ontario