

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NWMO to Focus Field Studies on Fewer Communities  
No more geological studies planned in Central Huron and White River,  
both to continue to play a role**

*TORONTO, June 23, 2017* – The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) is narrowing its focus to fewer communities as it prepares to further advance the next set of activities in the selection process for a deep geological repository for Canada’s used nuclear fuel.

The Municipality of Central Huron and the Township of White River will no longer be considered a potential host for the project. Both will continue to play a role as activities continue in nearby communities of Huron-Kinloss and South Bruce in the southwest, and to the northwest in the vicinity of Hornepayne and Manitouwadge.

“As we work toward identifying a single preferred site, we need to increasingly focus on specific locations that have strong potential to meet safety requirements and a foundation for sustained interest in exploring the project,” said Dr. Mahrez Ben Belfadhel, Vice-President of Site Selection. “Central Huron and White River have each made a significant contribution on behalf of Canadians to this project, and their continued leadership will be invaluable as we work together to plan next steps in their regions.”

The next activities in the areas of Huron-Kinloss and South Bruce; and Hornepayne and Manitouwadge will involve planning for more geological studies and initial discussions about visioning and partnership. Regional engagement will continue, as the project will only proceed with interested communities, potentially affected First Nation and Métis communities, and surrounding communities working in partnership to implement it.

Studies continue in areas around Ignace, Blind River and Elliot Lake, Ontario, which are also engaged in the process for siting the national infrastructure project. Ongoing field activities and engagement with municipal, First Nation and Métis communities in those regions are not affected by today’s decision.

The NWMO will continue the process of narrowing down potential sites to host the project until it arrives at one preferred safe and socially acceptable site as the focus of more detailed site characterization. The preferred site must have a suitable rock formation in an area with an informed and willing host.

**About the NWMO**

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) is implementing Canada’s plan for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel. The organization was created in 2002 by Canada’s nuclear electricity producers. Ontario Power Generation Inc., NB Power Nuclear and Hydro-Québec are the founding members, and along with Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, fund the NWMO’s operations. The NWMO operates on a not-for-profit basis and derives its mandate from the *Federal Nuclear Fuel Waste Act*.

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