

OPG's DEEP GEOLOGIC REPOSITORY FOR LOW AND INTERMEDIATE LEVEL WASTE- PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND ABORIGINAL ENGAGEMENT

Marie Wilson

Nuclear Waste Management Organization
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

ABSTRACT

Ontario Power Generation (OPG)'s Public Participation and Aboriginal Engagement Program for the proposed Deep Geologic Repository (DGR) for low and intermediate level waste (L&ILW) began with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2002 between OPG and the Municipality of Kincardine. The MOU set out the terms under which the two parties would jointly study the feasibility of different options for the long-term management of L&ILW at the Bruce nuclear site. A consultant, independent from both the Municipality of Kincardine and OPG, was retained to manage the assessment of options as well as a communication plan to ensure the public and Aboriginal peoples were kept apprised of all activities associated with the MOU. This early commitment to transparency and openness, with its ensuing opportunities for the public and Aboriginal peoples to become informed, ask questions, and engage in meaningful two-way dialogue about the early assessment of options, established the foundation and later became the hallmark of the DGR Project's Public Participation and Aboriginal Engagement program. This paper provides an overview of the development, nature and results of that program as it has evolved through the early investigative stages of options and through the environmental assessment and licencing process for the proposed DGR Project.

1. INTRODUCTION

Kincardine Mayor Larry Kraemer, in an April 2011 DGR Keeping You Informed newsletter, said, "Right from the inception of the DGR concept, Kincardine has been the subject of one of the most thorough and professional consultation efforts ever undertaken in Canada." Bruce County Warden Mike Smith, in the same article, said, "From the beginning of the idea in 2001 to date, Ontario Power Generation and the Nuclear Waste Management Organization have been in our communities seeking public input, providing specific information in a multitude of venues and have developed a very high level of trust with our residents". [1]

These statements from Bruce County community leaders reflect the strong commitment that Ontario Power Generation (OPG) made, from the very beginning of the process following the Memorandum of Understanding with Kincardine, to the values of transparency and openness. These values have been entrenched within annual communication plans that govern the delivery of the Public Participation and Aboriginal Engagement program for OPG's proposed Deep Geologic Repository (DGR) project for the long-term management of low and intermediate level waste (L&ILW). Numerous opportunities have been provided at a multitude of venues for members of the public and Aboriginal peoples to become informed, ask questions and participate through meaningful two-way dialogue about: a) the process leading up to the selection of the DGR Project as the preferred long-term option for L&ILW at the Bruce nuclear site; and b) key developments in the proposed DGR Project and its regulatory process. (Details about the Public Participation and Aboriginal Engagement program for the DGR Project are found in Chapter Two of the Environmental Impact Statement.) [2]

Inherent in the delivery of the program has been the acknowledgement that the public and Aboriginal peoples must have easy and convenient access to accurate and current information about the DGR Project to allow for their participation in the regulatory approval process. A proactive "Take the DGR Project to the People" approach has been utilized wherever possible along with more traditional public engagement activities. Participation in key decisions has been encouraged from the beginning i.e., a Hosting Agreement between OPG and the Municipality of Kincardine included a provision for a municipal show of support from Kincardine as a necessary first step in advance of the submission of the DGR Project Description to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC). Efforts were made to ensure views from the public and Aboriginal peoples were taken into account at key points in the regulatory approvals process, including, for example, the identification of Valued Ecosystem Components (VECs). Community Advisory Groups and Aboriginal peoples' working groups provided forums for input into the process.

As the DGR Project goes forward into the post-submission stage (the regulatory filing occurred on April 14, 2011), it does so with solid local support from all eight Bruce County municipalities. Documented stakeholder feedback from speaking engagements, briefings, media articles, open houses and comments made at DGR mobile exhibit events provides evidence of this support from both community leaders and members of the general public. The results of a recent 2009 community leadership survey and public attitude research also attest to this support. [3] Discussions are ongoing with the Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON) with respect to their participation in the regulatory approvals process and Participation Agreements have been signed with the Historic Saugeen Métis Community (HSMC) and the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO).

1.1 Transition of DGR Communications to NWMO

OPG, as the owner, licence applicant and future operator of the DGR, has accountability for the Public Participation and Aboriginal Engagement program. OPG administered the program in the early stages of the DGR Project; however, OPG contracted the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) to provide technical services and support for the DGR Project on January 1, 2009. Since then NWMO, with OPG oversight, has delivered the Public Participation and Aboriginal Engagement program.

2. COMMUNICATION PLANS

The delivery of the Public Participation and Aboriginal Engagement program for the DGR Project has been governed from the outset by detailed communication plans, which are developed annually to define communication objectives, the communication strategy, spokespersons, target audiences, key messages and communication activities. Communication plans are living documents that are adapted when necessary to reflect changing or emerging factors and issues related to the DGR Project.

2.1 Communication Objectives

Communication objectives overall reflect a commitment to seek out and maintain ongoing two-way dialogue with members of the public and Aboriginal peoples. Specific objectives are:

- Provide a wide range of opportunities for the public and key stakeholders throughout the Bruce municipalities to gain information, ask questions, provide comments and discuss concerns as they arise, including input to the EA studies;
- Inform and engage Aboriginal peoples to ensure they have an opportunity to participate in the regulatory approvals process, including input to the EA studies;
- Build Bruce County municipal awareness and understanding of the DGR Project to facilitate the EA and site preparation/construction licence approval;
- Inform and engage interested parties from outside the Bruce area who exhibit an interest in the DGR Project such as Michigan groups; and
- Monitor and gauge local support for the DGR Project.

2.2 Communication Strategy

The communication strategy for the DGR Project is to employ a planned, broad approach to actively seek comment from the public and Aboriginal peoples. In addition to traditional communication tools, a face to face “Take the DGR Project to the People” approach is utilized through the use of a mobile exhibit (see Figure 1), numerous speaking engagements, a website with contact information (both phone and email to encourage comments), an active local media relations program and open houses.



Figure 1 - Mobile exhibit - taking the DGR Project to the people.

The strategy also encompasses the formation of advisory groups such as the DGR Community Consultation Advisory Group, consisting of all eight Bruce County mayors, chief administrative officers as required and OPG and NWMO representatives. Regular meetings with community leaders provide a forum for the discussion of DGR developments and emerging issues, and the specific needs of various groups. For example, in-depth technical presentations about geoscience studies, engineering, safety assessment and environmental assessment results were provided to the eight Bruce County mayors, as well as other leaders and stakeholders to ensure an in-depth understanding of all aspects of the DGR Project.

Working groups exist with SON, HSMC and MNO in order to communicate information about the DGR Project and provide a means to participate in the regulatory process.

3. COMMUNICATIONS LATE 2002 - 2005: DEVELOPING AN OPTION FOR THE LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT of L&ILW

The Public Participation and Aboriginal Engagement program from the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in 2002 until late 2005 focused on keeping the public and Aboriginal peoples informed of key activities and milestones generated by the discussion between OPG and the Municipality of Kincardine around long-term options for the safe management of L&ILW at the Bruce nuclear site. Consultation efforts first focused on the Municipality of Kincardine (formation of the Nuclear Waste Steering Committee) and were later greatly expanded to include, at their request, Kincardine's four adjacent neighbours: Township of Huron-Kinloss, Municipalities of Arran-Elderslie, Brockton and the Town of Saugeen Shores. Consultation efforts were also ongoing with the Saugeen Ojibway Nation during this time period, and a protocol to facilitate the exchange of information between OPG and SON was established in 2004. It should be noted that the extensive Public Participation and Aboriginal Engagement program, ongoing throughout this time period, was initiated well before the commencement of the formal environmental assessment process. When the DGR Project Description was submitted late in 2005, there was already evidence of considerable support of the DGR Project (described in subsequent sections) which provided a favourable backdrop for engagement activities during the regulatory approvals phase.

3.1 Memorandum of Understanding

In 2001, the Municipality of Kincardine requested OPG to participate in discussions about options for the long-term management plan for L&ILW at the Bruce nuclear site. Both parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding in April 2002, which set out a work plan to jointly review the technical feasibility of four long-term management options. The MOU did not commit either party to pursuing any of the options, but it's important to note that the Municipality of Kincardine initiated what became a partnership with OPG to move from interim to long-term L&IL management.

3.1.1 Independent Assessment Study: Communications

An independent consultant, Golder Associates, conducted an assessment of the geotechnical feasibility, safety, costs and potential environmental, social and economics effects of four options for the long-term management of L&ILW at the Bruce nuclear site - status quo (continued storage at the WWMF), enhanced processing, treatment and long-term storage, covered above-ground vaults and geologic disposal. The report, known as the Independent Assessment Study [4], was completed in 2004.

In addition to the technical studies, the investigations also included, beginning in 2003, a public and Aboriginal engagement program, which included stakeholder briefings, newsletters, the establishment of a website, five open houses (Kincardine and four neighbours) and Aboriginal engagement. The purpose of the plan was to provide residents of Kincardine and its four

neighbours, as well as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, with information about the purpose and process for the Independent Assessment Study to facilitate two-way dialogue involvement in the process.

Public attitude research was also conducted to encourage public feedback about both interim and long-term management options for L&ILW with respect to how people would view their community as a place to live, work and play if any of the options were implemented. The resulting research showed that “nuclear power and radioactive waste are not major issues of concern in Kincardine and the neighbouring municipalities” and “most of the respondents indicated that they are aware of the initiative for a long-term management facility but there was little concern about it within the community.” [4] The research also concluded that the long-term management options were unlikely to adversely affect the local economy, agriculture or tourism.

3.2 Kincardine Council Requests DGR option

Kincardine Council passed a resolution on April 21, 2004 to “*endorse the opinion of the Nuclear Waste Steering Committee and select the Deep Rock Vault option (later referred to as DGR) as the preferred course of study in regards to the management of low and intermediate level radioactive waste.*” (Kincardine Council Resolution #2002-232) [5].

It should be noted that Kincardine's decision was based on a review of the technical and social information found in the Independent Assessment Study and the Geotechnical Feasibility Study as well as technical and social information gained firsthand from tours of waste management facilities in Europe and the United States. The international visits provided council members with opportunities to view several different, feasible technologies, in action, for the long-term management of L&IL. The visits also provided them with several opportunities to discuss the social aspects of long-term nuclear waste management, including hosting agreements, community engagement and process with their municipal counterparts.

When Kincardine Council requested the DGR as its preferred method for L&ILW, it did so from a solid foundation of both technical and social information – much of it firsthand from independent, third party sources. Such information enabled Kincardine Council, on behalf of its residents, to request the DGR based on the knowledge that it provided the greatest margin of safety of any option, was consistent with best international practice, provided a permanent storage method for both L&ILW (i.e., DGR only option that can manage long-lived intermediate level waste) and provided economic benefits to the area.

3.3 DGR Hosting Agreement

A hosting agreement between the Municipality of Kincardine and OPG representatives was signed on October 13, 2004. The agreement, in keeping with international precedent, outlined benefits, including a payment structure to Kincardine and its four adjacent municipalities, a property value protection plan and the provision of new jobs in the community. Of key importance to the public participation process was a provision in the hosting agreement for a visible show of support from residents of the Municipality of Kincardine for the DGR Project; a mandate from residents was required in order for the project to proceed to environmental assessment. Kincardine residents were placed in a position of empowerment where their

participation and decision would ultimately influence the outcome of the process, and whether or not the DGR was to proceed to the regulatory process.

3.4 Kincardine Polling – Communications

Prior to the community polling, OPG and the Municipality of Kincardine provided additional communication resources to ensure that residents had opportunities to become informed, ask questions and provide meaningful comment through two-way dialogue about the proposed DGR Project. Heightened communication activities were provided to ensure residents had the necessary level of information upon which to make an informed decision, prior to the polling.

OPG and the Municipality of Kincardine jointly operated a Community Consultation Centre on the main street in Kincardine (See Figure 2), which provided easy access to information for the majority of residents. OPG and Kincardine representatives also provided presentations to various community groups and a copy of a booklet entitled *Keeping You Informed About the DGR Project* was mailed to every resident in the Municipality of Kincardine. Fact sheets were placed in local newspapers and extensive work with local media and community leaders was done to keep them apprised of the developments in the process.



Figure 2 – Municipal, provincial and federal representatives cut the ribbon for the DGR Community Consultation Centre.

3.4.1 Community Polling

The community telephone poll of permanent and seasonal residents of Kincardine 18 years and older was conducted in January and February 2005 by an independent company called The Strategic Counsel. The question was, “*Do you support the establishment of a facility for the long-term management of low and intermediate level waste at the Western Waste Management Facility?*” The results of the polling drew a 71 per cent participation rate with the following results: 60 per cent – yes; 22 per cent – no; 13 per cent – neutral; and five per cent – Don’t know/refused to answer.

Based on the positive results of the community poll, which provided residents with a key opportunity to influence the decision for a long-term management facility at the Bruce nuclear site, OPG initiated the regulatory process for the DGR Project late in 2005.

Following the community polling, OPG increased its engagement efforts in the surrounding municipalities, at their request, and open houses were held in the Municipalities of Saugeen Shores, Arran-Elderslie, Huron-Kinloss and Brockton in the spring of 2005. Additional open houses, specifically designed to engage seasonal residents, were held in Point Clark, Southampton and Inverhuron during July. In addition to the open houses, the *Keeping You Informed* booklet was delivered by Canada Post mail drop to all residences in the four adjacent municipalities. Once the adjacent municipalities expressed interest in the DGR Project, they were included in the Public Participation and Aboriginal Engagement program.

4. COMMUNICATIONS 2006 AND ONWARDS: KEEPING THE PUBLIC AND ABORIGINAL PEOPLES INFORMED

The submission of the DGR Project Description late in 2005 signaled the beginning of the EA process for the DGR Project. Given a mandate, from the host municipality, to move forward to a regulatory process for the DGR Project, it was now necessary to re-evaluate the Public Participation and Aboriginal Engagement program against the backdrop of key regulatory approval milestones and DGR Project developments. Objectives of the program were enhanced to include the following:

- Opportunities to identify Valued Ecosystem Components with participation from the public and Aboriginal peoples;
- Identification of potential issues in the design, operation and decommissioning of the DGR with participation from the public and Aboriginal peoples;
- Prediction and mitigation of potential effects of the DGR Project with participation from the public and Aboriginal peoples;
- Delivery of key information and updates about engineering and conceptual/preliminary design, safety assessment, environmental field work, geoscience/geosynthesis studies and investigations, and developments in engagement;
- Delivery of information about the regulatory process and DGR Project schedule;
- Increased level of communications and engagement;
- Development of a DGR comment database for the recording and monitoring of all comments, correspondence and communications from the public and Aboriginal Peoples;
- Continued monitoring and evaluation of support for the DGR Project; and
- Broadened engagement area with the inclusion of Municipality of South Bruce, Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula and the Town of South Bruce Peninsula - the engagement area includes all eight municipalities.

It should be noted the inclusion of the three remaining Bruce county municipalities as part of the target audience is indicative of the continuous evaluation and adaptation of the Public Participation and Aboriginal Engagement program; these municipalities expressed a desire to have a larger role in engagement activities and OPG concurred with this request.

4.1 Methods of Engagement

Communication efforts from 2006 and onwards increased to provide additional and extensive opportunities for the members of the public and Aboriginal peoples to become informed, ask questions and engage in two-way dialogue about developments in the regulatory process and the DGR Project to ensure people could provide meaningful and informed comment about the proposed project. An overview of the adjustments to the program is provided below:

- A **DGR Speakers' Bureau** was created to actively seek out speaking engagements, especially in the expanded engagement area;
- A **DGR Mobile Exhibit** was developed, enabling staff to take the DGR to the people of Bruce County and beyond at community and special events where there would be a ready-made audience in attendance. The mobile exhibit was also used to increase the number of opportunities for seasonal residents to learn about the project;
- A **DGR website** was maintained and continually updated to provide current information about the DGR Project and contacts were provided for DGR comments and requests for information, with timely responses provided and documented. The website was initially accessed at: www.opg.com/dgr and was later linked to the NWMO website at www.nwmo.ca/dgr in 2009. Current information about the DGR and submission documents can be accessed at www.opg.com/dgr
- **DGR video** was developed for the mobile exhibit and for use during speaking engagements and on the website;
- **DGR Open Houses** were planned and held annually, beginning in 2007, with invitations delivered by Canada Post mail-drop to about 50,000 residences in Kincardine, Ripley, Walkerton, Port Elgin, Owen Sound, Chesley and Wiarton, and in the surrounding communities together with announcement in newspapers covering these areas;
- The **DGR booklet "Keeping You Informed About the DGR"** was updated and mailed to those on the DGR stakeholder list and used in engagement activities;
- The **DGR Annual Report** was issued annually, beginning in 2007 – 2009 (The EIS Summary booklet replaced this for 2010);
- **DGR Media Relations** increased;
- **DGR Media Days** were added;
- A monthly DGR article in **Bruce County Marketplace Magazine** was added;
- **DGR advertising** increased;
- **Sponsorship** increased with OPG's Corporate Citizenship Program and later in 2009 with NWMO starting its DGR Community Partnership Program; and
- **DGR Project Newsletters** (3 - 4 annually) were added.

These engagement tools have been maintained throughout the regulatory period to date and, where appropriate, materials such as the DGR video, *Keeping You Informed* booklet and van were updated to ensure accurate, up-to-date information.

The following list of activities provides a summary of the number of major engagement activities, which have taken place between April 2002 and March 2011 (note exceptions):

- 103 meetings and presentations with Bruce municipal councils, and advisory committees;
- 79 interactions with Aboriginal peoples including meetings, presentations, open houses and the exchange of written communications;
- 50 meetings with provincial and federal elected representatives, and agencies;
- 23 briefings and meetings with the Grey-Bruce Medical Officer of Health and Ministry of Environment;
- 15 briefings with Property and Ratepayers' Associations;
- Two series of briefings with Michigan stakeholders;
- Bi-annual meetings with local media (minimum);
- Meetings with NGO groups beginning in 2006
- 28 DGR Project newsletters;
- 50 DGR open houses (2005 – 2010);
- 151 DGR mobile exhibit event days; and
- 114 DGR speaking engagements.

4.2 Recurring Areas of Discussion

Discussions about the DGR Project with individuals in Bruce County as well as interested parties outside the area have been taking place for almost a decade. Throughout the course of hundreds of discussions, several recurring areas of discussion have been noted. There has been considerable interest in the proximity of the DGR to Lake Huron, the ability of the DGR to protect the water quality of drinking water and the Great Lakes, and if there is any potential for the DGR to accommodate high level waste also known as used fuel.

In answering these concerns, it was noted that the proposed DGR will be located about one kilometre inland from the shore of Lake Huron and 680 metres beneath the surface in low permeability limestone beneath a 200-metre-thick protection cap of low permeability shale. These multiple natural barriers will safely isolate and contain the waste for thousands of years and beyond. It was also emphasized that L&ILW waste is already at the Bruce nuclear site where OPG has been safely and responsibly managing it for over 40 years in a manner, which has gained the trust of local residents.

With respect to the ability of the DGR to protect the Great Lakes and drinking water, once people understood the geology of the proposed site and the relationship between the drinking water located in the upper 100 metres, well isolated from the DGR by multiple natural barriers, and the fact that the DGR will be located more than 400 metres beneath the deepest near-site point of Lake Huron, the majority of people were reassured and better understood how the DGR would isolate and contain the waste.

The question, "Will used fuel be placed in the DGR" was frequently asked and people were advised of the DGR hosting agreement between Kincardine and OPG, which specifies the DGR will only accommodate L&ILW from OPG-owned reactors. People were also informed that the EA and licencing process is only for L&ILW, the DGR isn't being engineered for used fuel and an approach, separate and distinct from OPG's DGR for L&ILW, exists for all of Canada's used fuel.

The majority of people were reassured by these discussions, which in most cases resolved any concerns about the proposed DGR Project.

5. STRONG LOCAL MUNICIPAL SUPPORT

From its inception, the DGR Project has received significant, local municipal support from the geographic host municipality as is exhibited by the 2005 successful polling of both seasonal and permanent residents of the Municipality of Kincardine.

Ongoing engagement efforts with Kincardine's neighbouring municipalities of Saugeen Shores, Huron-Kinloss, Brockton and Arran-Elderslie increased greatly after the 2005 polling and were later enlarged to include South Bruce, South Bruce Peninsula and Northern Bruce Peninsula by 2006. All eight municipalities have remained highly engaged in DGR communication activities such as participation in the DGR Community Consultation Advisory Group, and remain strongly supportive of the DGR Project as it moves forward as is exhibited in the results of independent community leadership surveys and public attitude research [3].

5.1 Leadership Survey and Public Attitude Research

The results of a 2009 Bruce County community leadership survey, conducted with 23 community leaders from various fields, including media, elected representatives, tourism, Chamber of Commerce and municipal administrators, showed strong support for the DGR with leaders, in 2009, rating their support on average at 9.0 out of 10. Leaders said they were both familiar with the DGR and felt comfortable discussing it with members of the public. Overall they believed NWMO, on behalf of OPG, was doing either an excellent or good job of addressing questions about the DGR. When asked to name the top-of-mind issues in their communities, economic issues and healthcare led the list of 11 issues; nuclear waste management and the DGR Project were not included on the list. (Details of the Community Leadership Survey and Public Attitude Research are found in the Socio-Economic TSD) [3].

Public attitude research was conducted in 2009 in the Municipality of Kincardine (Local Study Area) and the Regional Study Area, which included Saugeen Shores, Huron-Kinloss, Arran-Elderslie and Brockton. The results, reflective of the 2009 community leaders' survey, showed that the DGR and nuclear waste management issues weren't top-of-mind issues; healthcare and economic issues surfaced as the top issues on the public agenda. Overall, the majority of people expressed a high level of knowledge and confidence in the current waste management practices with nine out of 10 respondents saying the WWMF has had no impact on their daily life. Of those who cited an impact, more than half believed the impact was positive because of economic benefits. The majority of people interviewed expressed confidence in the safety of the DGR. They didn't anticipate that the proposed DGR would change their level of commitment to their

community or level of satisfaction with living in the community, nor did they anticipate any changes in their attitude towards feelings of personal health or safety as is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – 2009 results from Public Attitude Research

Level of Satisfaction	% Respondent Anticipate No Change	
	LSA	RSA
Level of commitment to living in their community	92%	86%
Level of satisfaction with living in the community	82%	77%
Feelings of personal health or sense of safety	79%	75%
Use and enjoyment of private property	96%	91%
Nature activities along shoreline	87%	80%
Use of beaches or boating	85%	76%

As shown by the results of the 2009 community leadership survey and public attitude research, municipal support for the DGR Project is very strong and more importantly, the DGR Project isn't a top-of-mind issue with Bruce area respondents.

6. ENGAGEMENT WITH ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

OPG and NWMO have encouraged the ongoing engagement and participation of Aboriginal Peoples in the regulatory process for the proposed DGR with the following objectives:

- Provide opportunities for Aboriginal Peoples to be informed and updated, ask questions, provide comment and have concerns or issues addressed;
- Provide capacity to participate in the regulatory review process for the DGR Project;
- Determine if the DGR poses any potential effects to Aboriginal interests; and
- Support or complement the CNSC's process in exercising its formal duty to consult.

6.1 Saugeen Ojibway Nation Engagement (SON)

Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON) is the collective name for the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation and the Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation. OPG engagement efforts with SON began in 2003 with presentations about the feasibility study of options for L&ILW, followed by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between SON and OPG in 2004, which outlined the terms and a process for communications about the Independent Assessment Study (IAS) for L&ILW management options. Engagement activities included WWMF tours, roundtable meetings, SON peer review public meetings, SON open houses, funding assistance for the establishment of a SON Environment Office in Cape Croker with an environmental co-ordinator. Following completion of the IAS and OPG's submission of a Project Description for a DGR, engagement activities continued through meetings with SON and attendance at Saugeen and Nawash pow wows with a DGR display.

6.1.1 Protocol Agreement – 2009

A Protocol Agreement was signed between SON, OPG and NWMO early in 2009, which ensured a process to provide SON with the necessary tools and resources to participate in the regulatory approvals process for the DGR Project. A Joint Liaison Committee between SON, OPG and NWMO provided a mechanism for direct communication. Discussions are ongoing between SON, OPG and NWMO with respect to the DGR Project.

6.2 Historic Saugeen Métis Community Engagement

Engagement efforts, which provided the Historic Saugeen Métis Community (HSMC) with opportunities to become informed, ask questions, provide comment and discuss any potential effects the DGR could have on HSMC interests, were initiated in 2008. An Open House for community members was held jointly by HSMC and NWMO, at the Storefront in March 2010. A Participation Agreement between HSMC, OPG and NWMO was signed on August 16, 2010. The agreement provided a framework, and capacity for HSMC's participation in the DGR regulatory approvals process.



Figure 3 - Historic Saugeen Métis Community tour the core storage facility at the WWMF

6.3 Métis Nation of Ontario Engagement

Engagement efforts, which provided the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) with opportunities to become informed, ask questions, provide comment and discuss any potential effects the DGR could have on MNO interests, were initiated in 2008. A Participation Agreement was signed with MNO in August 2011, which forms the basis for continued communications and engagement by MNO on the DGR Project.

7. MICHIGAN ENGAGEMENT

Engagement was conducted with U.S. stakeholders in Michigan to provide them with opportunities to become informed, ask questions, provide comment and engage in meaningful two-way dialogue about the DGR Project. Several Michigan NGO groups and individuals

expressed interest in the DGR Project early in the regulatory process during key regulatory milestones. Given the inclusive nature of the public participation program, which extends to groups and individuals outside of Bruce County with an interest in the project, Michigan stakeholders were placed on the DGR designated mailing list to ensure they would be kept apprised and updated about the progress of the project, and opportunities for participation in the process. Two series of briefings (with different stakeholders for the most part) were also held with Michigan elected representatives, members of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and several NGO groups in 2009 and 2011. All those who received briefings expressed their appreciation of the information and OPG's proactive engagement efforts for the DGR Project.

8. POST-SUBMISSION ENGAGEMENT

The submission of the Environmental Impact Statement, Preliminary Safety Report and supporting documentation for the DGR Project was made to the CNSC (for the Joint Review Panel) on April 14, 2011. It should be noted that the Public Participation and Aboriginal Engagement program will continue at the same level of activity, albeit some changes will be implemented to address changing circumstances in the process. (Details of this program are described in Chapter 12 of the Preliminary Safety Report.) [6]

9. SUMMARY

OPG's two-phased Public Participation Program and Aboriginal Engagement program for the DGR Project has been in place for almost a decade. Its delivery has been characterized by openness and transparency and a planned broad approach, which utilized a wide array of venues to provide opportunities for the public and Aboriginal peoples to become informed, ask questions and engage in meaningful two-way dialogue about the DGR Project, and the process which led to its selection as the preferred method of long-term storage for L&ILW. Public participation has been sought at key milestones in the early process and the regulatory process for the DGR Project, and on several occasions, this participation was empowered with the ability to greatly influence the decision-making process going forward. As the DGR Project moves forward towards the public hearing process, it does so with a solid base of municipal support. Evidence of this support can be found in documented feedback from community leaders and the public along with the results from an independent, community leaders' survey and public attitude research. Discussions are ongoing with the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, and DGR Participation Agreements are in place with the Historic Saugeen Métis Community and the Métis Nation of Ontario to facilitate their participation in the regulatory approvals process.

REFERENCES

- [1.] Wilson, M., "Community Leaders Show Their Support for DGR Project", *OPG's Deep Geologic Repository for Low & Intermediate Level Waste Keeping You Informed Newsletter*, April 2011, page 3.

- [2.] Golder Associates Ltd. "OPG's Deep Geologic Repository for L&ILW Environmental Impact Statement – Volume 1: Main Report", 00216-REP-07701-00001-R000, March 2011.
- [3.] AECOM Canada Ltd. "OPG's Deep Geologic Repository for L&ILW Socio-economic Environment Technical Support Documents", NWMO DGR-TR-2011-08, March 2011.
- [4.] Golder Associates Ltd. "Independent Assessment of Long-term Management Options for Low and Intermediate Level Wastes at OPG's Western Waste Management Facility", 03-1115-012, February 2004.
- [5.] Golder Associates Ltd. "OPG's Deep Geologic Repository for L&ILW Environmental Impact Statement – Volume 2: Appendices (Part 1)", 00216-REP-07701-00001-R000, March 2011, Appendix D3.
- [6.] Ontario Power Generation, "Preliminary Safety Report", 00216-SR-01320-00001R000, March 2011, Chapter 12.