

OPG's Proposed Nuclear Waste Dump at Lake Huron will Not be Implemented

Background:

February 1 2020

The Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON) has voted against Ontario Power Generation's Deep Geological Disposal (DGR) project, planned to house all of Ontario's Low and Intermediate Level Waste at a site within a mile of the shore of Lake Huron.

To prevent confusion: there are two DGR (Deep Geological Disposal) Projects that have been under consideration in Ontario in recent years.

One proposed DGR is for all of Canada's irradiated nuclear fuel (called "High Level Waste (HLW)"). That project is managed by the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) acting under the authority of Canada's Nuclear Fuel Waste Act. The NWMO site selection process has recently (late 2019) narrowed the field to two sites (potential "willing host communities") from the original 22 candidate sites.

One of the remaining candidate sites is at Ignace, Ontario, north of Lake Superior, about 300 km east of the Manitoba border. The other candidate site is at South Bruce, quite close to the Bruce Nuclear Power Station, right beside Lake Huron. The process of finding a home for Canada's HLW is still at a relatively early stage even though it has been going on for decades — over 20 years under NWMO, and another 20 years before that under AECL, Ontario Power and the Seaborn Panel.

But the following article has to do with yet another DGR project, completely different from the first. It is a separate facility proposed by Ontario Power Generations (OPG, a provincial crown corporation that owns all of Ontario's nuclear power reactors). The OPG DGR is NOT intended for high level waste (HLW), but for storing Ontario's low level radioactive waste (LLW) and intermediate level radioactive waste (ILW), from all of Ontario's nuclear reactors -- with the exception of "decommissioning waste", for which there is at present no designated approach. The OPG DGR was intended to be built at a precise selected site close to Lake Huron, not far from Kincardine Ontario, which is in the vicinity of the Bruce Nuclear Power Plant.

Now the OPG DGR project — intended for Ontario's Low and Intermediate Level Wastes (LILW) — was given a green light in 2017 by an Environmental Review Panel that held public meetings on the matter. However the federal government has delayed giving its approval for various reasons — and that approval is necessary before the project can proceed. In recent months, the major remaining stumbling block has been the lack of explicit agreement from the Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON) on whose unceded territory the OPG DGR would be located. Ontario Power Generation has pledged repeatedly that the project will not proceed without the approval of SON, and the federal government has been awaiting word from the SON.

SON has now spoken. The answer is "No". There will be no implementation of the OPG DGR project at the site beside Lake Huron that was selected for that purpose.

However, the OPG project for LILW has no direct bearing on the NWMO DGR project for HLW that was described in paragraphs 3 and 4 above. NWMO will continue to search for a willing host community to build a DGR to house all of Canada's irradiated nuclear fuel, including one candidate site in the same general neighbourhood as the OPG DGR project which has now been rejected.

The nuclear waste issue is nothing if not complicated! And the Age of Nuclear Waste is just beginning....

Gordon Edwards.

Saugeen Ojibway Nation Votes No on DGR

Saugeen Ojibway Nation, January 31 2020

<https://finance.yahoo.com/news/saugeen-ojibway-nation-votes-no-031600205.html>

SAUKIING ANISHNAABEKIING, ON, Jan. 31, 2020 /CNW/ -

Collectively, the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation and the Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation are referred to as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON).

Our Territory encompasses much of the Saugeen Peninsula, extending down south of Goderich and east of Collingwood . Between the two communities, we have over 4,500 members.

We were not consulted when the nuclear industry was established in our Territory. Over the past forty years, nuclear power generation in Anishnaabekiing has had many impacts on our Communities, and our Land and Waters, including the production and accumulation of nuclear waste.

In 2013, Ontario Power Generation committed to SON that it would not build the DGR without our support.

This vote marks a historic exercising of our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and free, prior and informed consent in our Territory. The Communities have voted against the DGR. The vote results are as follows:

170 yes

1,058 no

4 spoiled ballots

1,232 total votes

"This vote was a historic milestone and momentous victory for our People. We worked for many years for our right to exercise jurisdiction in our Territory and the free, prior and informed consent of our People to be recognized," said Chief Lester Anokot - Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation.

"As Anishinaabe, we didn't ask for this waste to be created and stored in our Territory, but it is here. We have a responsibility to our Mother Earth to protect both her and our Lands and Waters. Today, our People have voted against the DGR; tells us that we must work diligently to find a new solution for the waste."

"We will continue to work with OPG and others in the nuclear industry on developing new solutions for nuclear waste in our Territory. We know that the waste currently held in above-ground storage at the Bruce site will not go away. SON is committed to developing these solutions with our Communities and ensuring Mother Earth is protected for future generations. We will continue to ensure that our People will lead these processes and decisions," said Chief Greg Nadjiwon - Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation.

SON will now begin working closely with OPG and others in the nuclear industry to find an acceptable solution for the waste. This process may take many years.

SOURCE Saugeen Ojibway Nation