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Royal Roads University

Proposed Siting Plan for a Used Nuclear Fuel Facility

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Moderated by Ann Dale

Participants

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Dr. Lenore Newman, Assistant Professor, School of Environment & Sustainability, Royal Roads University

Dr. Nola-Kate Seymoar, President, International Centre for Sustainable Cities

Dialogue

Ann Dale

I would like to welcome our panel members today as well as members of the e-audience.

The management of used nuclear fuel is a critical public policy issue for Canadians. All of our previous e-Dialogues on this subject have one unanimous consensus, that we need to do something, we cannot continue with the status quo. In 2007, the Government approved a plan for the long-term management of used nuclear fuel, grounded in adaptive phase management. Today, we are talking about the proposed siting process by the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) for identifying a safe and secure site in an informed and willing community. Specifically, we will be critiquing the proposed siting principles, the decision-making steps, the information and tools and what else needs to be considered?

I would like to inform everyone that this e-Dialogue will stay open for a week, to allow any interested Canadians who were unable to participate today to make their views known. It will be structured around the four questions the panel will discuss today, and I urge all of us to provide as many concrete changes as we can to our comments.

Could I ask each of our panellists to briefly introduce themselves before we start with the first question? I know that Dr. Newman has just landed in the Toronto airport and is setting up, and Jamie Doyle will be a few minutes late.

I look forward to our discussion and contributions we will make today to helping to ensure a secure, safe and equitable process for siting a used nuclear fuel facility. We will also take any interested questions from the e-audience in the last half hour.

Marilyn Hamilton Author: Marilyn Hamilton

I am the founder of Integral City Meshworks Inc and TDG Global Learning Connections. I am author of *Integral City: Evolutionary Intelligences for the Human Hive*. I call my work “meshworking”... I mesh, catalyze and inspire city well-being through living, evolutionary, whole systems approaches. I am faculty member at Royal Roads University, UFV, Banff Centre, California Institute of Integral Studies and Adizes Graduate School. I use an integral model with four quadrants (bio-psycho-cultural-social) and eight developmental levels as a framework to research evolutionary intelligences in the city, that grows both subjective/ inter-subjective capacities with objective/inter-objective capacities. I had the privilege of serving on one Dr. Ann Dale’s research teams (and another e-dialogue) on sustainable city infrastructures 2 years ago.

I am interested and challenged by this dialogue because it calls forth considerations for all 12 intelligences in the city – and is an outcome of a prime requirement for city existence, namely energy. The topic calls forth both ethical and practical considerations for the next steps of human evolution.

Jamie Doyle

My name is Jamie Doyle and I am a PhD candidate in Chemical and Environmental Toxicology at the University of Ottawa. However, in a previous life I have worked in the nuclear industry on decommissioning and waste projects and as a consultant preparing environmental assessments in energy sector projects.

Art Hanson

I guess that I should introduce myself as well. Former President of the International Institute for Sustainable Development. My first introductions to the topic were previous reports decades ago, as there were two major efforts to deal with it before the recent

NWMO reports. I also had the opportunity to go down 1400 into the deep hole in Pinawa, Manitoba set up to test deep hole burial.

Lisa Hardess

Hi, my name is Lisa Hardess. I am a sustainability planner, environmental scientist and educator. I am currently the Manager of Building Sustainable Communities - a program area at the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (a national First Nation non-profit organization). For this dialogue I am speaking with 7 years of experience working at CIER, but not on behalf of CIER. Looking forward to some stimulating conversation!

Lenore Newman

Hello from the airport! I'm Dr Lenore Newman and I research on the boundary between Social and Ecological Sustainability.

Robin Cox

My name is Robin Cox, I am an Associate Professor in the Disaster and Emergency Management program at Royal Roads University. My research focuses on the 'human' dimensions of disasters and large scale transitions with a particular focus on community disaster resilience and community engagement in disaster planning.

Art Hanson

This topic is definitely an intergenerational one, and so we must make it a special effort that our current generation does the best for those who follow. That is my starting point and why I get involved, even though I will be amazed if I see the end product in my lifetime.

Ann Dale

Yes, Art, this topic is definitely intergenerational, given the timelines associated with the waste.

Let's move to our first question, shall we? And could I ask you to be as specific as possible in your suggestions about what is missing and what should be added to the

principles and steps and the process.

Are the proposed siting principles, as outlined in pages 16 and 17 of the NWMO document fair and appropriate?

Jamie Doyle

Yes, indeed this is intergenerational. However, most waste issues are. The metals in our laptop batteries for example have are toxic indefinitely. I think we should keep this in mind as we deal with all our waste practices.

Marilyn Hamilton

I just left an interesting discussion in London about vital signs monitors for city wellbeing ... so the NWMO discussion will be interesting to think about in terms of what vital signs might look like across generations as well as disciplines.

Greetings to Art and Robin and Jamie (and special hellos to Lenore and Lisa :-) from connections in previous dialogues.

Lisa Hardess

Who is involved in identifying what needs protecting? Local communities would need to be involved (i.e. not just scientific experts) to understand how people interact with their environments. If we are talking about an Aboriginal traditional territory (and everywhere is someone's traditional territory) then even 'remote' locations should be assumed to be occupied by people some of the time (e.g. when people are out on the land, on their trap lines, in cabins, traveling from place to place).

Related to this we also need to think about protection of more than just the environment but of what this supports – habitat, trap lines, fishing, exercising of Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

What are the cultural values of a proposed site? This information can only be understood through relationship building, trust and community engagement.

Jamie Doyle

I agree with your concerns. I am more concerned over the potential impacts of siting (including the construction and operation) of such a facility on the local communities

than the technical issues around the repository. Given the implied emphasis on First Nation communities, what are the safety outcomes identified to ensure cultural safety/security?

Art Hanson

I agree with these comments. "Nowhere is a Place."

Ann Dale

Lisa, I guess what you are suggesting is that in identifying what is an appropriate site, that in addition to a site being "outside of protected areas, heritage sites, provincial and national parks", that it be broadened to include culturally sensitive sites? And you have raised the thorny issue of defining exactly what is a community?

Nola-Kate Seymoar

Hello everyone, I am Nola-Kate Seymoar, the President and CEO of the International Centre for Sustainable Cities, I am sorry I am a little late in logging on - I will try and catch up as we go.

Ann Dale

Welcome, Nola-Kate, we are talking about the first question. We now have people talking from England, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, the benefits of on-line dialogue.

Robin Cox

In response to the question of fairness, I guess one of the things that leaps out from the principles as they are stated is the difficulty in determining or defining "community" and how this process will ensure that voices that are often marginalized within official community decisions (i.e., at the municipal level) are included and heard. I can think of numerous instances in the recovery process following disasters, for instance, where a lack of analysis has resulted in the exclusion or marginalization of women's voices, the concerns of adolescents and children etc.

Ann Dale

Robin, a key point, should the principles then include one about "focus on due process"?

Robin Cox

Well, yes, I think they should but again I think that the more specific we are in language the more likely it will be that these concerns are addressed. So "due" process may or may not address these concerns. How about outlining a suggested practice for community engagement that addresses inclusivity, participatory decision making processes etc.?

Marilyn Hamilton

I think such a due process would be critical to define. So with the variety of potential governance systems in play I would like to see the involvement of community thought leaders, the public and policy makers at a minimum.

Lisa Hardess

Yes, I certainly think that cultural uses need to be considered and that only through working partnership can these been truly known and shared.

Building on what is 'community', what constitutes a community is 'demonstrating that it is willing to accept the project'?

How do we defined an interested community? What level of community support is required for the community to move forward? Is this defined by the NWMO or by the local governments? Would a community hold a referendum for this after having some public education and engagement?

Often we hear about leadership or politicians that are in support but it is unclear how much community support is behind them. For a decision like this with such long term implications this is critical.

Lenore Newman

Experiencing a bit of lag here in cyberspace but hopefully this gets through. I really like that the communities self identify in the first step, but it does raise the question of who within a community gets to approach NWMO and what sort of backing do they need to

be considered? Is support from a municipal council enough? What happens if a future council does not support the project?

Jamie Doyle

Good point, Lenore - reading the document I wondered how one was to determine a willing community from an unwilling community. No proposed test was provided (or did I miss one?).

Art Hanson

I had the advantage of sitting through several days of discussions twice at NWMO in a small group organized by Liz Dowdeswell. The second of these sessions in particular critiqued earlier drafts of the basic structure for the Moving Forward Together document. I felt that by the time the document was put together it was quite comprehensive. But that does not mean that it is perfect.

For example, one difficulty is whether the idea of having one storage site would work best, or whether more than one might make sense. Specifically, if there is nuclear power development in Alberta, as some propose. Or, if Saskatchewan really became interested.

Then there would be some interesting issues surrounding transportation through provinces that are not necessarily interested.

Another point that is of some concern is how to address continuity of community interest. What if interest drops off at some time after the deal is signed? That might be a very difficult problem.

These points are not really covered by the principles.

Ann Dale

Art, I would be delighted, given your expertise in adaptive phased management, if you would apply this knowledge to the discussion of the four questions?

Art Hanson

This phrase is not really well explained in the document, and should be. Simplest way of thinking about it is to proceed step by step, working with those most likely to be

affected, and being informed by the best science and other knowledge. The learning gained in this fashion then feed into, and shape the next step. This approach requires fully informed stakeholders, and the investment of time and money to ensure this is the case. Some people call adaptive management "learning by doing."

Ann Dale

You have moved into the steps, to try and answer Lenore and Jamie, the principles and the steps are meant to work together. The document talks about accountability and the final accountability is with the mayor and council, or in the case of Indigenous communities with the band council, but as well the steps involve a community engagement process as well. From my perspective, the process appears quite logical, however, Robin has raised a very crucial point, that of voices that are silenced or unheard, do any of you know a way to ensure that voices are heard? I think one tool that should be used, and here we are now jumping to question 3, is each community should be required as part of due process to prepare a stakeholder or social mapping exercise?

With respect to councils changing, that will have to be part of this process, as the process will take 6-8 and probably more years.

Marilyn Hamilton

Who are the leaders of interested communities? I am curious who will be deemed a leader and who will they be speaking for? What kinds of disclosures would be needed to identify the interests of the leaders, what are their values/motivations? What are their vested interests? What are the internal governance processes in the community who would appoint the leaders to inquire and/or express interest? This would be very relevant for communities with differing governance systems (if any).

Lisa Hardess

If interest drops off would the community withdraw as it has the right to? I think this is a good option to have but wonder how realistic or well received it would be. And as for determining willingness - who determines pulling out?

Jamie Doyle

How would you establish this - referendum?

Lisa Hardess

I wondered about the decision making process as well. Later on, the document talks about 'reasonable funding' (I know I am jumping ahead a bit) and include continued participated in the operations. Made me wonder where the ladder of participation this would fall - information or any role in decision making.

Ann Dale

Good questions, and then what constitutes a majority, 51%, a critical question for Canada and our issue of separation. Just as the community self-selects, I think we have to respect the accountable decision-making authority within a community, that is, the elected politicians, but again referring to the steps, they would also have to have a community engagement process, and as part of that process, define the decision-making authority this process would have?

A question I have, as part of their expression of interest, should a community at that stage, not also identify other communities of interest as part of their public commitment and adherence to the NWMO principle of inclusiveness?

Marilyn Hamilton

I think that dialogic processes will be necessary as well as referenda. Some way of keeping an open dialogue going as well as continuous? frequent sampling of community views. One must take a long term perspective and stretch some of our "sampling" approaches to include people in engaging each other. That is one of the ways that cross and inter-generational dialogue could happen.

Art Hanson

This is a key matter, especially if played out among a number of communities, say those along a transportation route. There also likely would be many challenges along the way (legal and otherwise) that might be difficult for a community to deal with either on its own or in conjunction with others.

Another issue is that communities operate under municipal laws, that are overseen by the province in which they are located. Yet under the arrangements outlined, there is relatively little attention given to the role of the province, which might have strong views. about siting, or about transportation routes.

Lisa Hardess

Councils changing will be an interesting challenge. What would stop a new council from changing their minds? I suppose the right to withdraw would remain.

Thinking about having a social mapping exercise to identify groups is interesting. Once this is done would it be the responsibility of the community or NWMO or both to engage them? In some ways it would seem like the Council / local committee would take on a proponent type role. I wonder about this.

Marilyn Hamilton

I am curious about the Safety Siting principle. How would the community define safety differently than NWMO – this might get into some of the cultural concerns that Lisa was referring to?

Nola-Kate Seymoar

I was wondering about the criteria for selecting the community on page 25 - as nearly as I can tell this is an assessment of the risks that arise from the site (i.e. the land and rock formation but is not an assessment of the community itself as a risk factor. For example, the answers to the questions we are raising about the level of participation in the decision making process are very different for a cohesive, small community in an isolated area versus a diverse community in closer proximity to urban areas. If a relatively isolated cohesive community - Mennonite or Aboriginal - with a long history of remaining on the land and maintaining its current culture applied, I would expect that it would pose a lesser risk of policy changes in the future - or I suppose others could argue that it might be at higher risk of breakdown when it became less isolated. Perhaps this is another train of thought rather than the 51% issue.

Lenore Newman

The question of security is such an interesting one Nola-Kate. the report talks extensively about geography but I also assume defendability is an issue. Will the town need a military garrison nearby to protect the community form terrorist threat? The social side seems to be a little weak in my opinion.

Art Hanson

Communities of interest will form an important part of this effort, or should--yet they are given limited attention.

Should such communities be limited to those resident in Canada? What about the substantial number of people abroad who are interested in nuclear power?

Secondly, what about the physical communities located along transportation corridors, or who are attracted to the area seasonally, etc?

And, what should be the role of Canadians spread across the country, who may have an interest, but no actual attachment to the area? Certainly they are having an opportunity for input at this stage, but what should be the limits further down the line, and what boundaries should there be on their input?

Marilyn Hamilton

Art are you aware how other nuclear energized countries have handled this? have they developed principles and steps already?

Ann Dale

I am having trouble keeping you, dear colleagues, some very thoughtful ideas and suggestions. The issue of jurisdictional boundaries exemplifies the complexities of the socio-political issues raised by this issue, never mind most challenges in Canada. Can you keep thinking about due process as we move to the next question?

Are the proposed decision-making steps (page 29) consistent with selecting a site and making a fair decision? What changes, if any, should be made? Should learning by doing be factored in here anywhere or iteration?

Marilyn Hamilton

Neither the Principles nor the Steps address what form or level or body of justice would address issues of conflict? I can imagine conflict potentially arising at all stages of this process and it would be good for all parties to understand how conflict would be mediated. I would like to see it as a principle and not just a step.

Lisa Hardess

I have been thinking about the legal implications related to transportation routes and Aboriginal rights. Presumably there is no guarantee that rights will not be affected (unless NWMO could guarantee no problems) - so in effect this decision could affect rights. Without knowing what infringements exist, how does a First Nation community make an informed decision? look at rights and accommodations? this would require consultation which can only be done by government (representing the Crown) - when and how does this happen? I can't think of a siting location that doesn't involved an Aboriginal or Treaty right implication. I don't have the answers to this and am not a lawyer but it will undoubtedly come up.

Art Hanson

My realistic assumption about this point is that the courts would be involved at some point. I would be amazed if there were not points in time when this would not happen. And, another example would be along transportation routes. If the site were to be in an isolated area (not necessarily the case, I suppose), long roads might have to be constructed, which would make the process even more complex, with more interested parties and claims.

Ann Dale

Marilyn and others have raised an interesting point, I wonder if an independent community risk/benefit assessment should be one of the steps, again not wishing to be overly deterministic about a community process. Robin, any thoughts? As well, this highlights I believe the tension for accountability/responsibility for both NWMO and an interested and informed community, Nola-Kate, any thoughts from your experience about wanting to ensure prudence and probity by the responsible agency and yet not subverting the community, its social capital and agency?

Lisa Hardess

Perhaps one of the things they do "with funding available to seek independent advice and peer review, and to involve residents in the community, at each stage." ? I think this independent review would be important.

Robin Cox

A more holistic risk/hazard/capacity assessment would draw on many voices within the community to identify and map not only the risks and benefits (fiscal, social and cultural) but also the capacity and capability of the community to engage in the long-term decision making and review process. I think the answer to your previous question is that yes, an iterative process is required given that not only is the decision making process multi-year, but as the document states this is a multi-generation project.

Marilyn Hamilton

I wholeheartedly agree -- maybe there even has to be an advocate for community wellbeing?? kind of an ombudsman that looks after the interests of the whole -- someone with no vested interests, so that communities are not taken advantage of unfairly.

Lisa Hardess

This is an interesting idea. In part of the document it almost sounds like the community would convince the NWMO that is it a worthy partner / site. Yet there needs to be objectivity in the decision to be a 'willing' partner. Gets messy.

Jamie Doyle

I suggest a step that confirms/verifies that a community is indeed willing. Step 5 says that a community decides. I would like to see something that ensures this is real and not something that is getting rammed through by a rogue element in the community.

Marilyn Hamilton

I wonder if the drafters of the steps considered how they would advise/approach the media? Once any discussion is initiated if there is not a communications plan in place for the media, they could really affect outcomes. I would recommend such a plan be an early step -- so media can be educated and informed and not just reactive.

Ann Dale

At the moment, NWMO is required by legislation to table reports (annual and tri-annual) to Parliament. Should anything be added as a result of the siting process? Should there be requirements to Gazette?

Jamie Doyle

Good point - independent peer review was essential in allowing the municipal government in Port Hope to properly assess the various nuclear projects being proposed in their community.

Ann Dale

Jamie, I am going to probe more deeply your mind:) I believe the community should decide, but I think in terms of public policy, that it should be very clearly defined, for example, elected officials decide, has to be confirmed by community engagement process, feedback back to elected officials, final vote, something like that?

Jamie Doyle

Yes indeed, something like that.

Lisa Hardess

With the work I do I suggest leadership first goes to the community to get their input on the idea, and then decide and define, confirm through engagement, etc. This gives people a chance to participate before a decision is made and the elected (or traditional) leadership to take the public pulse before they make a decision.

Robin Cox

Perhaps some definition of demonstration of adherence to core values/principles of public participation and a minimum standard of spectrum of participation needs to be outlined as part of the community decision process.

Marilyn Hamilton

I may be getting too granular here -- but thinking about the siting of remote mining communities (like Terrace for coal, or Ft McMurray for tar sands) when you bring in world-class experts, scientists, engineers, specialists to a site like this, they want to bring along families -- none of the steps address cultural/social concerns of how a community would change (if it already existed) and what transition supports would be put in place for current residents or for newcomers. If it is a new community then community design needs to embrace women and family values, needs, expectations -- not just NWMO core experts.

Lisa Hardess

Great point. And how to balance the needs and wants of these newcomers (who may not be there long-term) with the permanent residents? What are the social implications of construction camps and crews even?

Jamie Doyle

I don't think this is too granular at all - it is at the root of the real problem. The technical issues to a large extent have been addressed. The problem is the social aspect. For example, there is a proposed mine in the Nemiah Valley that would employ about 500 miners. The Xeni Gwet'in people number about 300. They have been isolated and still follow a fairly traditional lifestyle. If the mine is approved I fear that their community would be destroyed socially. This needs to be adequately addressed for the nuclear waste site. The proposed principles and steps seem to be driving the decision to have this facility sited in a remote area. Why? Why not site it near Sudbury or Toronto? The safety case would not be affected; it would only increase the potential for political fallout.

Ann Dale

Robin, when we get to tools and information that may be missing, could you give us some specific references, will be moving to that question shortly, as well as others, any references to community participation/engagement tools, perhaps Chris Ling could join us for this part as well?

Nola-Kate Seymoar

I think Robin's comments about assessing the community's capacity to participate in the decision making process over a long period of time is a significant criteria to add to NWMO's lists.

Also agree with Ann's comments about the verification process to probe the depth of community consensus, but if the proposal comes from the community in a process Lisa is suggesting, there would be a greater chance of having this depth in the first place.

NWMO should be given credit for the willingness it seems to have to provide support for these community based processes. (page 33) I would be more comfortable if in addition this were identified in terms of the dollars they are prepared to make available - as the process may not be cheap.

Art Hanson

I like the idea of adding depth of community consensus as a criterion, with the caveat that this can change quite dramatically (e.g. see poll on winter Olympic enthusiasm carried out recently.)

Concerning continuity of funding, I worry that the process is so long that any guarantee is problematic.

Lisa Hardess

I wonder how this relates to the ability to withdraw. I assume this ability exists until the agreement is ratified? what happens if consensus drops after this?

Nola-Kate Seymoar

is the agreement between the community and NWMO guaranteed by the feds? what happens if we get a shift in power supply from nuclear to renewables and the nuclear companies go bankrupt? who continues to fund the agreement?

Art Hanson

My understanding is that the nuclear companies are setting aside money as they go for dealing with the storage issue. But it is a point of concern that those enjoying the benefit should pay for the cost as they use the power, not for their children or grandchildren to pay. It could be stated as a principle (polluter pays principle) and be made more explicit. The document notes that the amount which looks so scary for the future comes down to under 7 billion in present value. I do not think NWMO has 7 billion at hand right now, however.

Jamie Doyle

How are you going to integrate this process with the consultation process required under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act?

Ann Dale

Excellent questions everyone. We will post these questions in the week long continuing e-forum following our conversation, and I will ask NWMO to answer these questions on funding and any others they want to respond to for clarification.

Ann Dale

Lots of excellent suggestions for improving the process and for community accountability and decision-making authority, as well as implications for the interested community in terms of the effects of having a centre of excellence in terms of population and socio-cultural impacts. Perhaps in addition to a stakeholder mapping, there should be a critical infrastructure mapping done by the community to address some of these concerns. Moving to our third question, and could I ask you to please identify as concretely as possible any tools or information you think is missing.

Does the proposed process provide for the kinds of information and tools (outlined on pages 33 to 35) that are needed to support the participation of communities that may be interested? What changes, if any, should be made?

Chris Ling

Hi Chris Ling here - Ann has asked me to contribute with respect to tools and

community participation - I hope I'm not jumping the gun.

From my perspective there are two participation questions here.

The first is the more policy question of do we have a site here or not? The danger here is that the tyranny of the majority will indeed force the site to a remote area by a smaller more vulnerable community. But this process would involve different tools (for example search conferences) than the second question, which is: now we know we are hosting the site how can we plan for it's siting at the local scale, and associated construction and the expansion of our community. This would need a different set of tools (such as planning charettes and community green mapping) and would illicit different emotions. One thing I would suspect is that participation over this issue would not be too much of a problem - it is likely to be a great interest to the whole community.

Marilyn Hamilton

I heard James Lovelock interviewed recently about his book "The Vanishing Face of Gaia" and he accepted/supported the use of nuclear energy as being practical and rational (because of its efficiency). So if that's the case, then maybe one of the steps (and tools) that is needed -- is to develop principles that embrace future generations, i.e., Safety may be only defined in terms as viewed in this current generation; and maybe the siting criteria just fit with our current knowledge base? Maybe the learning that could come from NWMO needs to be cycled back into our whole knowledge/decision base about nuclear fuel use, in the first place -- so I am basically talking about a knowledge feedback tool.

Art Hanson

If this process were to reach some stage of completion, and there are many things that might derail it, then a centre of excellence not just to Canada, but to other parts of the world would be needed. And this centre of excellence should be integrative in its approach, covering the complex science, community engagement and development, etc. A key function in addition to guaranteeing safety would be monitoring of the broader impacts on the region and community both.

In terms of what is missing, I believe there is a huge emphasis on community but not enough on the region in which the facility would be located. Depending on the circumstances of the region, the benefits and costs to the region might be as great or greater than the location itself.

Nola-Kate Seymoar

I agree with Art's points.

One tool I would add is travel money to support the community in field trips, study tours or exchanges with other communities in other countries to see how their communities have been affected by similar kinds of projects or developments of this scale. Such travel funds could also bring a small group from these other communities into the potential host community.

The question of scale is itself one NWMO seems to be grappling with – i.e. should there be one site for all of Canada or a number of smaller sites? Perhaps I missed their conclusion on that but I thought it it was part of the dialogue.

Ann Dale

It would be interesting to see the risk assessment applied to the question of one site or many sites? And what about scale and adaptive phased management, would it not be prudent to keep the first experiment small and learn and assess, so many questions, so much learning? I hope to live long enough to see a society that when they invent something they also design for waste minimization and sustainable waste disposal, integrating the 4Rs.

Robin Cox

I agree regarding more clearly addressing the balance between community and region. This would include articulating a decision making process that addresses differences in governance and voice in governance. For instance, a regional government processes, could in effect result in a decision affecting a community in which that community has only one voice - one elected regional district representative. In turn this individual may or may not have or been seen to effectively represent the broad interests of the community and its various constituents.

Marilyn Hamilton

I agree with your suggestions Nola-Kate. And I didn't see that the report focused on one or many sites. BUT I got the distinct impression they bias was in favour of one site. I would wonder about the economies of scale for construction, operation and security (harking back to the military oversight, thinking about such things as terrorist activities). I

wonder if one site puts all our NWMO eggs in one basket or contains the risk?? that is not clear to me.

Robin Cox

In addition to travel funds, another tool would be some sort of community consultant who could provide practical (e.g., report writing, suggestions regarding process) and informational support (e.g., how to initiate an effective consultation process, or hazard/risk/capacity analysis). Many small and unincorporated rural communities do not have the capacity and/or capability to undertake some of these processes without such support.

Jamie Doyle

This was done for Port Hope in the siting of the uranium wastes from the Eldorado operation (now Cameco).

Marilyn Hamilton

I would like to see some tools like scenario planning, that could help citizens imagine the best and worst possibilities so that they could gain perspective in their decision making. This means moving participation into non-traditional locations like malls (if they exist), markets, local coffee shops and as Art says involves the whole eco-region. Such tools should not only report internally to each community but neighbouring communities should get feedback about what each other are thinking. (I've heard of travelling info/roadshows along a whole waterway/shed).

Chris Ling

I agree completely with Marilyn here - just involving the typical town hall meetings would neither be productive nor effective. There are a terrible way of engaging people - they are combative and polarizing. But there should be use of many different methods for a question as significant as this.

Jamie Doyle

I agree as well; they are also misleading as they lend a big voice to a small number of people.

Robin Cox

Here are some links to a couple of examples of the kinds of tools that might be of help.

International association for community participation: practitioner tools (including code of ethics, core values etc.) *This does not well address aboriginal issues however.

<http://www.iap2.org/>

New Zealand document re consultation process – specific to health but it also outlines a pretty good process that is general enough to be adapted) and includes a consideration of aboriginal issues (in this case Maori – but again could be adapted)

<http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/49ba80c00757b8804c256673001d47d0/6f050665da7e6246cc256c2b0077d71d?OpenDocument>

Lisa Hardess

Talking at the regional level there will likely be many different Aboriginal nations involved and even if there is a regional body, consultation with each as its own nation / government would need to occur. Good Aboriginal consultation tools would be essential. Asking the community directly is a good start as some have their own formally outlined protocols and processes.

Ann Dale

Lisa, governance has raised its head again and again throughout our conversation. I wonder if you would comment on the differences between consultation and dialogue?

Lisa Hardess

Sure. On decisions that have the potential to infringe on Aboriginal rights (affirmed under s.35 of the Constitution) government to government consultation is required. The Supreme court continues to rule on what this looks like but while proponents can be involved and certainly should engage the community in dialogue, Consultation can only be done by the Crown (provincial or federal governments). So, hosting a meeting in a First Nation doesn't necessarily 'count' as Consultation and Aboriginal people will tell state that quite clearly. So, when it comes to working with an Aboriginal community both Consultation and dialogue need to take place; these could happen in parallel streams even and cycle back and forth. This also means that sometimes different people are

required for different meetings (e.g. technical people versus political people).

CIER developed a document called Consulting with the Crown, which is a guide for First Nations:

<http://www.cier.ca/information-and-resources/publications-and-products.aspx?id=900>

Robin Cox

To add to this conversation there is a good table that describes some of the key differences between dialogue and consultation.

File attachment [consultation-dialogue-e.pdf](#) (11.06 KB)

Lisa Hardess

Where is this from?

And it becomes more complicated and has different meaning when we are talking about Aboriginal consultation.

Robin Cox

Sorry - thought I'd included the URL - government of New Brunswick website (www.gnb.ca)

Ann Dale

This idea of an eco-region is interesting, perhaps a way to look at an integrated plan for community, transportation corridors (if necessary), but perhaps politically impossible since the more levels of government involved, the more power and control issues there are? Sorry to be so cynical, thoughts, everyone.

As well, can we get back to the tyranny of the loud, any tools for ensuring equity of voice?

Art Hanson

There is the issue of tyranny of the loud. But my concern is how to give differential

weights to thoughtful commentary but not all of which should be treated equally (e.g. most proximal, those on transportation corridor, aboriginal, non-aboriginal. This is a key concern, and will need to be sorted out probably at earlier rather than later stages.

Marilyn Hamilton

How about mapping the whole values chain? multi-methodologically? That means connecting the nuclear energy using communities to the NWMO transportation corridors and final storage site. Make the invisible visible? Maybe there should even be a gratitude log? (I know this won't fit with your cynicism Ann -- but why not invite in the heart to open up the field of consciousness here??)

Art Hanson

Manitoba (Pinawa) had a small-scale version of what is proposed for the site to become, including a centre of excellence in nuclear waste, a vibrant community life, at least for the experts, and significant economic development centred around this effort.

Probably some lessons to be learned on from this earlier initiative. And probably some other lessons to be learned on the community and aboriginal involvement side from other areas, such a diamond mining in the north, various transportation corridors, such as the current and past efforts for pipeline in the Mackenzie Valley. What are the current best practices in Canada that might help out with this long-term effort? And I would add to that some initiative taking place in suburban areas, or at least on landscapes that include cities and towns. I don't think all the potentially available sites would be in wilderness or near isolated communities.

Ann Dale

Our last question, dear colleagues, before we adjourn for the night and the afternoon. There is no way I can sum up such a great diversity of ideas and suggestions, but our conversation will be published on this website within five working days.

As well, I would like to reiterate again, that this e-space will stay open for another five days to allow as many people as possible to contribute to the siting process plan. And we will add a list of the outstanding questions you raised during this conversation, and I invite NWMO staff to respond to our questions in the forum.

Chris Ling

Room design can help - by not having a panel up front facing the audience but having more roundtable, small group set ups creates a more collaborative atmosphere.

Also quality not quantity - inviting (and possibly paying) representative of different groups within the community to attend planning/workshop sessions (provided they are transparent of course) can ensure all viewpoints are heard.

Depending on community size more smaller neighbourhood meetings are usually more productive than single on off meetings.

Jamie Doyle

I have found that for CEAA consultation, many small open houses with several returns (i.e., not just once per community but several times and throughout the entire life of the project) helps let the quiet have an opportunity to participate. You need adequate representation to answer questions at each meeting. This requires considerable commitment on the proponent but I believe it is worth it. Note that this method should be combined with other methods as well.

Lisa Hardess

I agree. And having opportunities for people to meet in groups they are already comfortable in as well as groups that mix people up. For example, bringing the topic to the local knitting group, or the bridge club - as well as having a dinner drop-in.

Robin Cox

Agree re the size and location - there are some good examples in the international aid world of community-based participation that builds from existing practices and cultures of gathering in order to elicit meaningful participation integrating a consideration of gender, age, ability etc.

Marilyn Hamilton

What else needs to be considered? Is this our last question?

I wonder about considerations of needs for nuclear fuel in the north of the world? What characteristics of climate change might affect choice of potential communities and sites? I see climate as a separate vector than environment and even eco-region.

Nola-Kate Seymoar

There are many tools for effective public engagement at all scales of community size. Some such as co-design's visualization techniques are not dependent on literacy and other involving storytelling and drama likewise can reach different groups. I think NWMO is already very sophisticated in this field - it is making the tools available to the communities that is the issue. Helping communities to share their own participation experiences would be a first step in peer to peer learning.

If I may add in closing, that I like the idea of using adaptive management from the beginning by starting with one community and testing the waters, learning as the process unfolds.

Ann Dale

Well, colleagues, that was one of the most challenging e-Dialogues I have moderated, quality and speed of your conversation was outstanding. Thank you for your time and commitment to making a difference on this subject. I think we also introduced some novel public administration questions for the future? I would particularly like to thank Robin Cox for her participation in her first e-Dialogue and I hope we haven't scared you off from future conversations.

Your contributions are invaluable and I will try and produce a summary report for NWMO, which will be public and published on this site, that honours each and everyone of your voices. In French, we say a hundred, thousand thank you, une mille fois merci.

Jamie Doyle

Must run - take care all.

Lisa Hardess

Thanks everyone for a great discussion and lots of food for thought.
My 3 year old has walked in the door so I change hats and say until next time :)

Robin Cox

I too must away to another conference call.
Cheers and thanks for the stimulating conversation.

Marilyn Hamilton

Thanks Ann -- I appreciate the invitation to participate and really appreciated learning from everyone. We were blessed with good fast connections in many ways (and condolences to Lenore). cheers from Merry Olde England.

Art Hanson

The focus on the process of moving forward with interested communities clearly depends on the full commitment of a whole chain of players beyond the community level, and perhaps key issues such as trans-provincial cooperation. It will without a doubt require consideration of a variety of aboriginal inputs. These interests get a bit lost in the current document.

Thanks for the opportunity to participate. I have enjoyed the interaction in this e-dialogue.

Chris Ling

Thank you everybody - I will now close this panel. The Open discussion will stay open for a week for additional comments on both the report and the panel comments.