



Nuclear Waste Management Forum

Navigating Nuclear Waste with Sovereignty and Self-Determination

MAY 26 & 27, 2026 • OTTAWA, ONTARIO

FORUM PROGRAM

Forum Objectives

Provide a platform for First Nations to assert their rights, share knowledge, and engage in meaningful dialogue on the management, storage, and transportation of nuclear waste and nuclear energy across Turtle Island.

Support collaboration between and within communities, industry partners, and governmental agencies while prioritizing First Nations sovereignty, self-determination, and the protection of lands and waters for future generations.

Receive feedback and identify evolving priorities for First Nations regarding used nuclear fuel, transportation, and storage in Canada.

Day 1 – Tuesday, May 26, 2026

Time	Agenda Item	Location
7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Forum Registration Open	Room 106 Atrium
7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Hot Breakfast	Room 106D
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Opening Ceremonies <i>Forum Chair: Shady Hafez</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Prayer by Verna McGregor, Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg • Chief Greg Sarazin, Algonquins of Pikwakanagan, on behalf of AFN Ontario Regional Chief Abram Benedict 	Room 106 ABC
9:30 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.	Address by AFN Regional Chief Willie Moore, Manitoba, on behalf of National Chief Cindy Woodhouse Nepinak	Room 106 ABC
9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Overview of the Day/Setting the Context <i>Forum Chair: Shady Hafez</i>	Room 106 ABC
10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Health Break	Room 106D
10:15 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Fireside Chat – Setting the Context <i>Presenter: Councillor Randall Kahgee, Saugeen Ojibway Nation</i> This Fireside Chat will reflect on environmental justice in the context of nuclear development and its impacts on lands and waters. Grounded in lived experiences and leadership, the discussion will explore how rights, responsibilities, and stewardship guide decision-making at the community level. Through an open and candid dialogue, the session will set the context for advancing approaches that respect First Nations' leadership and safeguard future generations.	Room 106 ABC



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Time	Agenda Item	Location
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	<p>Regulatory Oversight of Packaging and Transport of Nuclear Substances in Canada</p> <p><i>Presenters: Nana-Owusua (Nana) Kwamena, Director of Transport Licensing Strategic Support Division, Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC); Adam Levine, Director of Indigenous Consultation and Engagement Division, CNSC</i></p> <p>Canada’s nuclear industry is at a moment of growth and inflection with the proposal of multiple new large-scale projects across the country, including the Nuclear Waste Management Organization’s proposed Deep Geologic Repository project. In this session, the CNSC’s director of the Transport Licensing and Strategic Support Division, and the director of the Indigenous Consultation and Engagement Division will provide an overview of CNSC’s mandate and role with respect to regulating the packaging and transport of nuclear substances, including how they disseminate and engage with Indigenous Nations and communities.</p>	Room 106 ABC
12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.	Lunch	Room 106D
1:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Introduction to Concurrent Sessions #1 – #3	
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	<p>Session #1 – Questions and Answers: The Proposed Geologic Repository for Spent Nuclear Fuel in Canada</p> <p><i>Presenters: Dr. Allison Macfarlane, Professor and Director, School of Public Policy and Global Affairs, Faculty of Arts, University of British Columbia; Dr. Zoe Braden, Carleton University</i></p> <p>Canada has a significant amount of spent nuclear fuel from its nuclear power reactors that requires disposal in a deep geologic repository. Canada’s Nuclear Waste Management Organization selected a site to develop a deep geologic repository in late 2024. Now the site evaluation process has begun. Our session focuses on the proposed deep geologic repository for spent nuclear fuel in northwestern Ontario near Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation and the town of Ignace. We focus on questions about the site and the process: alternatives (if possible) to a deep geologic repository; criteria that characterize a good site; the geology and hydrology of the site and whether the Revell site meets these criteria; and, the repository design and how it is supposed to work and how this measures up to international experience.</p>	Room 106 ABC <i>Simultaneous Interpretation available</i>



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Time	Agenda Item	Location
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	<p>Session #2 – Understanding Canada’s Nuclear Waste Management Project: Context, Commitments, and Ongoing Dialogue</p> <p><i>Presenter: Joe Heil, Vice President, Indigenous, Municipal Relations & Transportation at the Nuclear Waste Management Organization</i></p> <p>This session will provide a clear, accessible overview of Canada’s nuclear waste management project, delivered from the perspective of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO). As Vice President, Indigenous, Municipal Relations & Transportation, the presenter will outline the mandate, governance structure, and current status of the project, with a focus on how Indigenous rights, sovereignty, and community decision making are embedded within the process.</p>	Room 209
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	<p>Session #3 – Nuclear Colonialism and Green Washing in the 21st Century</p> <p><i>Presenter: Dara Wawatie-Chabot (they/them), Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg</i></p> <p>In 2023, Iron and Earth’s Prosperous Transition Campaign (PTC) began research on the Near Surface Disposal Facility (NSDF) at Chalk River after calls from Algonquin community members to halt the project due to its proximity to the Kitchi Zibi. One thing became clear – they are not provided enough information to make informed decisions on these major projects.</p> <p>This presentation is intended to provide a snapshot of what their team learned about the nuclear industry and highlight why youth-focused projects, like the ones that will be hosted this year by Algonquin Youth Collective (AYC) and Iron and Earth, are essential to the long-term success of navigating Nuclear Colonialism.</p>	Room 210
2:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.	Health Break	Room 106D



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Time	Agenda Item	Location
2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions #4 – #6	
2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	<p>Session #4 – A Case Study: Seeking Input And Feedback on Canada’s Proposed Siting Process For Canada’s Intermediate Level Waste And Non-Fuel High Level Waste</p> <p><i>Presenters: Joanne Jacyk, P.Eng., Director, Site Selection Ignace/ Northwest, Nuclear Waste Management Organization; Sara Loft, MPA, JD, BA, Principal Consultant</i></p> <p>Join the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) in an interactive dialogue about their two-year engagement process on the proposed approach to site selection for their second deep geological repository, a project designed to safely contain and isolate intermediate- and high-level radioactive waste, and potential new sources of used nuclear fuel. The presenters will use this input to refine and confirm their site selection approach before they launch the site selection process in 2028. This approach comes from 20+ years of continuous learning and listening to Indigenous People and Canadians.</p>	Room 106 ABC <i>Simultaneous Interpretation available</i>
2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	<p>Session #5 – Questions and Answers about Radioactive Wastes: Truths, Half-Truths, Omissions and Deceptions</p> <p><i>Presenters: Ole Henderickson, Concerned Citizens of Renfrew County and Area; Gordon Edwards, Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility</i></p> <p>What is radioactivity? What are radioactive wastes? Where do they come from? How do we know they are dangerous? Why are they hazardous even at low doses? Are they really dangerous for ten million years and more? Why do they last so long? How and why are Indigenous communities being targeted? Using drawings, photographs, and storytelling, the presenters will dispel some of the mystery surrounding this subject.</p> <p>Presenters will also discuss the environmental risks of nuclear waste storage and transportation in relation to the Chalk River Laboratories site on the Ottawa River, located on the unceded traditional lands of the Algonquin people.</p>	Room 209



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2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	<p>Session #6 – Protecting Sacred Sites and Waterways: First Nations Women Leading the Defense of Land, Life, and Sovereignty</p> <p><i>Presenters: Neecha Dupuis, Ojibway Nation of Saugeen 258; Darlene Necan, Ojibway Nation of Saugeen 258; Erin Bottle, Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation; Gladys Radek, Gitxsan and Wet’suwet’en</i></p> <p>This session brings together four Grass Roots frontline Anishinaabe women, Neecha Dupuis, Darlene Necan, Erin Bottle, and Gladys Radek, whose lived experience, legal knowledge, and community leadership form a powerful collective voice for the protection of sacred sites and waterways threatened by nuclear waste proposals across Northern Ontario. Grounded in sovereignty, inherent rights, and First Nations Knowledge Systems, this presentation examines how nuclear waste storage and transportation projects intersect with environmental risk, jurisdictional conflict, and the erosion of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent.</p>	Room 210
3:45 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.	<p>Panel – Readiness and Resilience: First Nation Leadership in Emergency Planning, Risk Assessment and Community Health</p> <p><i>Presenters: Former Chief Bernie Elkins (?Esdilagh First Nation), Arrowsmith Gold Inc.; Dr. Laura Jokinen, Arrowsmith Gold Inc.</i></p>	Room 106 ABC
4:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	<p>Reflections on Day One</p> <p><i>Forum Chair: Shady Hafez</i></p>	Room 106 ABC



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Day 2 – Wednesday, May 27, 2026

Time	Agenda Item	Location
7:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Forum Registration Open	Room 106 Atrium
7:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.	Hot Breakfast	Room 106D
8:45 a.m. – 8:55 a.m.	Overview of the Day <i>Forum Chair: Shady Hafez</i>	Room 106 ABC
8:55 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.	Day Two Opening and Reflections on Day One <i>Speaker: Knowledge Keeper Dr. Gwendolyn Point</i>	Room 106 ABC
9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.	Reconciliation in Energy Development: Building Trust through Meaningful Collaboration <i>Presenter: Saga Williams, Curve Lake First Nation, First Nations Major Projects Coalition</i>	Room 106 ABC
9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Health Break	Room 106D
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Panel – Water, Rights and Responsibility: First Nations Leadership and Consent in Nuclear Waste Decisions <i>Moderator: Kim Reeder</i> <i>Presenters: Traditional Wolastoqewi Grand Chief Ron Tremblay, Wolastoq Grand Council; Councillor Justin Roy, Kebaowek First Nation; Councillor Jessica Keeshig-Martin, Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation; Youth Anishinabekwe and Outreach Shoshanna Johnston-Ritchie, Saugeen First Nation; Chief Hugh Agaki, Peskotomuhkati Nation</i> This panel brings together First Nations leaders from across Canada to share their lived experiences navigating nuclear waste management and development in their territories. Grounded in the principles of rights, responsibilities, and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent, speakers will reflect on the challenges, opportunities, and realities of decision-making in their communities. Through these perspectives, the session will highlight the critical role of First Nations leadership in shaping approaches that protect lands, waters, and future generations.	Room 106 ABC



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Time	Agenda Item	Location
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	<p>Nuclear Fuel Transportation: Risks and Preparedness</p> <p><i>Presenters: Erik Kremer, Senior Advisor, Transportation & Repository Safety Engagement, NWMO; Stephen Ellsworth, Director – Policy, Regulations and Technical Services Branch, Transportation of Dangerous Goods, Multimodal Safety and Security Directorate, Transport Canada; Daniel Daigle, Analyst, Special Regulatory Projects, Transportation of Dangerous Goods, Multimodal Safety and Security Directorate, Transport Canada</i></p> <p>This session will provide a clear, practical overview of nuclear fuel transportation in Canada, focused on risk management, emergency preparedness, regulatory oversight, and long term accountability. The discussion is intended to support informed dialogue by explaining what is planned, how risks are managed, and what communities can reasonably expect over time.</p>	Room 106 ABC
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch	Room 106D
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions #7 – #9	
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<p>Session #7 – Leading with Strength Requires Leading with Heart, Together</p> <p><i>Presenter: Trisha L. Cowie, Hiawatha First Nation & First Nation Consulting</i></p> <p>The nuclear industry has First Nations divided but not conquered. From uranium mining to conversion plants, to generating stations, to transportation, to waste management and disposal—we are all interconnected by land, water, rights, interests, values, purpose, and impact, but disadvantaged by a lack of nuclear-specific policy, process and organization to meet our needs. This is a significant challenge given that one Nation’s actions impact the well-being and rights of many. This presentation will reflect on the ways in which we are impacted by the nuclear industry, how First Nation peoples are responding, and open a conversation about how we can better protect each other by committing to implementing our shared values and leading together.</p>	Room 106 ABC <i>Simultaneous Interpretation available</i>



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1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<p>Session #8 – Defending Aboriginal Rights in the Context of Nuclear De-Regulation</p> <p><i>Presenter: Laura Bowman, Senior Counsel, Macpherson Law LLP</i></p> <p>The presentation will provide an overview of federal nuclear waste regulation and the assessment of potential environmental impacts from nuclear waste. It will cover existing processes in Canada for facilitating the duty to consult and accommodate and free, prior and informed consent. Recent regulatory changes, including major projects bills and 'regulatory sandboxing', pose special challenges for protecting Aboriginal rights. The presentation will cover high-level strategies that First Nations can use to protect their territories in the current regulatory environment.</p>	Room 209
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<p>Session #9 – The Right Of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) with Respect to Radioactive Waste</p> <p><i>Presenter: Katie Tucker, Partner, JFK Law LLP</i></p> <p>The right of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) with respect to the storage and disposal of hazardous materials is clearly and unambiguously protected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Despite Canada's commitment to take all necessary measures to ensure that its laws are consistent with UNDRIP, it has thus far failed to meaningfully address this right. Given Canada's commitment to support and promote the expansion of nuclear energy across the country, it is troubling that article 29(2) of UNDRIP is nowhere to be found in the current UNDA Action Plan. Canada's position that the right of FPIC is met through deep consultation aimed at achieving consensus does not uphold this right.</p>	Room 210
2:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Health Break	Room 106D



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Time	Agenda Item	Location
2:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	<p>Panel – Saugeen Ojibway Nation’s Membership Engagement Approach and Building Consensus in Decision-Making on Nuclear Power and Waste Projects</p> <p><i>Presenters: Owen Tanner, Energy Manager, Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON); Councillor Paul Jones, SON; Miikah Keeshig, Youth and Energy Associate, Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation & Temagami First Nation; Councillor Jessica Keeshig-Martin, Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation</i></p> <p>The Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON) is facing a multitude of nuclear power and waste issues within Saukiing Anishnaabekiing. SON must be a decision-maker on potential nuclear power projects and waste storage developments within the Territory. Unacceptably, SON’s rights were not respected by the Crown and nuclear industry when the power plant was planned, approved and constructed. Over the last several decades, SON has fought for the right to be heard and respected when it comes to such major developments in the Territory and, in many ways, the fight is not over. Current political landscapes have indicated that free, prior, and informed consent of First Nations in major projects as a minimum standard has yet to be recognized across the board. SON has had some wins and is moving forward to ensure SON Members are determining the future of nuclear projects in the Territory. The development of the consensus-based decision-making model is a move in an exciting direction. This presentation and panel discussion will share perspectives as well as the challenges and opportunities experienced and those that may lie ahead.</p>	Room 106 ABC
3:15 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.	<p>Forum Closing – Reflections on the Forum</p> <p><i>Forum Chair: Shady Hafez</i></p>	Room 106 ABC
3:25 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	<p>Closing Prayer</p> <p><i>Verna McGregor, Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg</i></p>	Room 106 ABC