



Supplementary Information

Presentation from the MRC Pontiac

In the Matter of the

Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL)

Application from the CNL to amend its Chalk River Laboratories site licence to authorize the construction of a near surface disposal facility

Commission Public Hearing Part 2

May 30 to June 3, 2022

Renseignements supplémentaires

Présentation de la MRC de Pontiac

À l'égard des

Laboratoires Nucléaires Canadiens (LNC)

Demande des LNC visant à modifier le permis du site des Laboratoires de Chalk River pour autoriser la construction d'une installation de gestion des déchets près de la surface

Audience publique de la Commission Partie 2

30 mai au 3 juin 2022

Submission to Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) concerning the licensing of the Near Surface Disposal Facility (NSDF) proposed by CNL

By Warden Jane Toller, MRC Pontiac

June 3, 2022

Pontiac County

As the Warden, I represent Pontiac County with its eighteen municipalities and a population of 14,000 residents.

We are the first down-stream county on the Quebec side.

The MRC Pontiac is a large agricultural and forested region in southwestern Québec, in the heart of the province's deciduous and mixed forests.

The Kichi Sibi or Ottawa River and its tributaries form vital natural, cultural, and recreational aspects of our communities. Also, it is a source of drinking water for many Pontiac communities.



MRC Resolution

We are unilaterally against the Near Surface Disposal Facility (NSDF) proposed by CNL Chalk River. On December 15, 2021, our mayors unanimously passed the following resolution:

Considering Motion 161-2021 adopted by the Council of the Municipality of Sheenboro; Considering the importance of the issue of the Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL) near surface nuclear disposal facility;

It was moved by Regional Councillor and pro-warden Ms. Sandra Armstrong and resolved that the Council of the and to have the Director General send an accompanying letter addressed to the federal Minister of Natural Resources providing a summary of the rationale for requesting this action by the federal government. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

This resolution states that the NSDF is located too close to the Kichi Sibi/Ottawa River. The nature of the site with creeks flowing into the river, and the region's susceptibility to earthquakes, tornadoes, and now heavy rains due to climate change, render the site and the mound unacceptable to us. Furthermore, residents and officials are concerned about the long living radionuclides and hazardous materials to be stored in the mound and if they leach in the river, it will impact the health of our communities.



Lack of consultation

CNL failed to consult the Mayors and Warden of Pontiac County on the NSDF and whether we agreed on the concept and the location near the river at the beginning of the process.

CNL visited several communities and shared information about it. By then it was the facility being put forward and under consideration today.

Despite the nature (building near a river) and magnitude (approximately 1 million tons of waste) of this project along with a new type of disposal facility proposed for the Ottawa Valley, **we were not consulted.**

Why should a site on the Ottawa River become Canada's nuclear waste dumping ground being transported from other sites across Canada? Furthermore, CNL unilaterally made this decision with no engagement and consultation with Indigenous communities, local governments, and citizens. **There was no consultation with my predecessor, the Mayors of the Pontiac, or our citizens on this matter. Four of our municipalities and our entire MRC passed resolutions opposing the acceptance of other waste at Chalk River.**



Health of Pontiac County Residents

The Pontiac County has the worst health in any of Quebec's counties where residents experience cancer, respiratory and heart disease, and diabetes. A health organization confirmed this fact about Pontiac County.

Residents' health is already compromised and the NSDF, a flawed nuclear waste disposal facility, to be situated 1 km from the river could further jeopardize the health of Pontiac residents.

The Kichi Sibi/Ottawa River and its tributaries flow through our communities providing drinking water, groundwater for wells, recreation (including swimming) and tourism.

For the past five years, letters to the editors in our local papers (Pontiac Equity and Pontiac Journal) have expressed their serious concerns and opposition to the NSDF.

At a public forum on April 26, 2022, residents acknowledged that CNL is an employer of some of our residents but they are concerned that the NSDF is too close to the Ottawa River.



Destination Pontiac

During the COVID pandemic, new people or former residents moved to Pontiac County for its unharried lifestyle, beautiful scenery, and friendly communities. We launched our Destination Pontiac (destinationpontiac.ca/en) a promotional campaign showing people why they should move to Pontiac County. Real Estate sales for our county were up 50%.

Many of the photos in our campaign show the Kichi Sibi/Ottawa River.

Having a NSDF upstream that takes in waste from across the country and is located 1 km from the river is a deterrent to attracting families to the Pontiac.

Events in the Ukraine and public knowledge about Chernobyl, 3 Mile Island and Fukushima Nuclear Disaster raise public concern about living near a site especially a nuclear waste site that the public has opposed.



Consortium and public consultation

It is disillusioning that our federal government has cut the cheque and handed over the responsibilities for nuclear waste management to a consortium that makes decisions unfettered by the democratic input of citizens and their elected officials.

Furthermore, the lack of an independent agency to develop and oversee a strategy for Canada's nuclear waste that meets international standards is enabling this ill-conceived NSDF proposal to go forward for review by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC).

Until that happens, I recommend that the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) does not approve the NSDF. Our main concern is that the NSDF will result in leaching into the Ottawa River; documentation has proven that deep storage is preferable because it can be better contained.

As an elected official, I ask you as a regulatory body to listen and be accountable to the people living downstream, especially when our current level of health is so fragile. Many residents are concerned that the high rate of cancer in our region may be caused by the Ottawa River.

