



Oral Presentation

Exposé oral

**Written submission from
James Wilkes**

**Mémoire de
James Wilkes**

In the Matter of the

À l'égard de

**BWXT Nuclear Energy Canada Inc.,
Toronto and Peterborough Facilities**

**BWXT Nuclear Energy Canada Inc.,
installations de Toronto et Peterborough**

Application for the renewal of the licence for
Toronto and Peterborough facilities

Demande de renouvellement du permis pour les
installations de Toronto et Peterborough

Commission Public Hearing

Audience publique de la Commission

March 2 to 6, 2020

Du 2 au 6 mars 2020

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laissée en blanc*

January 27th, 2020

Attn: Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission

To begin, I would like to acknowledge that the lands where I live and work, on which these proceedings are taking place and which will be affected by the actions of the CNSC and BWXT, is the traditional and present Territory of the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg (Mississauga People), who are the original caretakers and knowledge holders. I offer my thanksgiving to all First Peoples for their care for, and teachings about, the Earth and All Our Relations. As a guest in the Territory, I have a responsibility: to listen to the people and protocols of this place; to support the care and continuation of the Life that is this land; and to recognize the culture and language of this land as guides for my work in the region. May we all honour those teachings, relations, and responsibilities. Miigwech, Thank you.

In addition to these responsibilities, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission must also be reminded of the inherent, international, and Constitutional rights of Indigenous and Aboriginal Peoples. First Nations closest to Nogojiwanong (Peterborough) include Hiawatha First Nation, downstream of the BWXT factory. Please refer to Section 35 of Canada's Constitution Act (1982) regarding Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. Please also refer to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, of which Canada is a signatory, as well as the recommendations of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015).

My interest in BWXT's licence renewal and request for a permit to produce nuclear fuel pellets in Peterborough arises from a long-term interest in uranium mining and the nuclear fuel chain. As a cultural ecologist with a background in environmental science, ecosystem management, environmental assessment, resource extraction and mining impacts, Indigenous rights and responsibilities, Crown fiduciary responsibilities, and environmental decision-making generally, I was alarmed to hear that the company, BWXT, is applying for a permit to produce nuclear fuel pellets in the City of Peterborough. Not only is it unconscionable to work with this material so closely to a public school, but it also troubles me to learn that some of the airborne emissions and liquid effluent from these industrial processes contain radioactive uranium dioxide. I highly encourage the CNSC and any other regulating bodies to conduct a full environmental assessment before considering this licence.

Some people may argue that this issue is simply a nimby (not-in-my-backyard) concern. As a local resident, however, I am not writing for the sake of my health alone. I wish to assert that any level of the nuclear fuel chain – from uranium

exploration and extraction (mining), to uranium processing and fuel production, to military uses and nuclear waste storage (disposal) – should never take place in anyone’s backyard (nor front-yard), including First Nation lands and communities. Too often, uranium is taken from Indigenous lands without consent and at the risk of their wellbeing (and the health of the entire ecosystem), and then later disposed of in another Indigenous territory with limited consultation and zero consent.

As a Treaty partner, Canadian citizen and Peterborough resident, I expect more of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission. I specifically argue that amending the licence to allow pellet manufacturing at the Peterborough BWXT facility would be irresponsible and that a full environmental assessment must take place first and foremost. I also request that the CNSC deny granting a 10-year licence for the Peterborough facility and deny any licence that would allow pelleting in Nogojiwanong/Peterborough.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this intervention.

Sincerely,

James Wilkes, BES, MA, PhD Candidate

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