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Natural Resources Canada

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The Provincial Council of Women of Ontario (PCWO) welcomes the opportunity to have input to Natural Resources Canada's Review of Canada's Radioactive Waste Policy. The Provincial Council of Women of Ontario is an organisation with the mission to work for the betterment of the lives of women, their families, their communities and society. The exploration and use of their country's natural resources and the resulting effects and risks to the environment, and subsequently also to families and communities have been of the utmost concern, since our inception in 1923. As such, we have commented on, and presented briefs regarding many nuclear activities since the early 1980s and we are well aware that Southern Ontario has carried the greatest life cycle nuclear risk burden in Canada such as:

- The Bruce, Darlington and Pickering nuclear reactor stations located near the edge of two Great Lakes, Ontario and Huron.
- The aging, more dangerous, Pickering reactors located close to millions of people in Toronto and surroundings, having a less than adequate shut-down system, and lying over an active geologic fault –line.
- NWMO plans for deep geological repositories for high-level non fuel nuclear waste in either Ignace or South Bruce.
- Planned further transport of liquid high level nuclear waste containing weapons grade Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) on highways that run through Niagara fruit lands and urban areas and over waterways, from Chalk River to Savannah River South Carolina.
- The continued use of a very old Slow Poke nuclear reactor on the McMaster University campus in Hamilton.

- The Canadian Nuclear Laboratories private sector plans for an above –ground 4 storey nuclear waste dump near the Ottawa river in identified earthquake and Tornado -risk area and open to the elements until the final cover is laid.
- The development of a small modular nuclear reactor at Chalk River and possible reprocessing of nuclear waste .
- Potential for multiple small modular nuclear reactors in isolated rural areas, mainly in the north.
- Planned siting of NWMO’s deep geologic repository for high-level nuclear waste in Ignace or South Bruce.

All of these nuclear activities have a huge risk in common. That is nuclear waste, which is extremely dangerous when mined, in transport , in reactor operations , decommissioning and in its final in-situ storage or deep burial site. .

Therefore PCWO urges Natural Resources Canada to recommend a precautionary nuclear waste policy that looks 7 generations forward, and has the most stringent regulations for the complete and interwoven nuclear life cycle operations.

And, most importantly, nuclear waste management in the years ahead, should be overseen, as recommended by the Seaborn Commission in the 1980s after 9 years of hearings, by an independent arms-length Commission to ensure public and worker health and safety, environmental protection, and commercial and social welfare for the many thousands of years necessary to reduce inherent dangers of nuclear waste radioactivity .

This last recommendation is vital. For what good will be served if the NWMO continues to manage the current system in their own interest; CNSC facilitates private sector proposals; and Natural Resources Canada and the Government of Canada continue to promote and fund risky nuclear ventures?

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Ottawa, ON ██████████  
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