



ANISHINABEK NATION

NEWS RELEASE

Anishinabek Nation calls for healing and restoration of Mother Earth on Great Lakes Day

ANISHINABEK NATION HEAD OFFICE (April 22, 2021) – The Anishinabek Nation and Iroquois Caucus Alliance on Radioactive Waste have grave concerns that the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) will develop self-serving policies which will potentially impact the safety and health of all occupants of this land. On this Earth Day and Great Lakes Day, the Anishinabek Nation and Iroquois Caucus Alliance on Radioactive Waste are looking to the public for assistance in carrying forward their message as they call for protection of our Great Lakes Basin and Mother Earth in order to bring healing and restoration.

“Much like Mother Earth, the Great Lakes face many issues that include pollution and invasive species, demonstrating why a dedicated day is an added necessity to raise awareness and encourage all inhabitants of this land to take care of them in order to bring healing to Mother Earth,” says Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Glen Hare. “We need to protect our water bodies from anything that can harm them, and that includes toxic pollution such as nuclear waste. We have made our objections to putting the nuclear industry in charge of Canada’s Radioactive Strategy and believe that Canada should have an independent agency in place whose only concern is the environment and its inhabitants and not if the nuclear waste industry has any future or not.”

Canada is currently reviewing its Radioactive Waste Policy for the first time in 25 years; however, late last year, Minister of Natural Resources Seamus O’Regan wrote a [letter](#) to the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) requesting that the organization lead the dialogue and work on developing Canada’s Integrated Strategy for radioactive waste. Because it is owned by the nuclear waste producers, the NWMO is a stakeholder representing the nuclear industry. Indigenous people are not just stakeholders but rights holders and their views must be heard directly and not filtered through an industry lens.

In 2017, the Anishinabek Nation and the Iroquois Caucus of the Assembly of First Nations made a joint declaration against the transportation and abandonment of radioactive waste. In February 2021, the Chiefs of Ontario Leadership Council passed a motion to take a position on nuclear waste in Ontario. One addressed Nuclear Energy Disposal and Use and the other Small Modular Reactors and First Nations Energy Requirements.

“Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and nuclear power, in general, represent an unacceptable risk to our communities,” states Grand Council Chief Hare. “The Anishinabek Nation continues to vehemently oppose any effort to situate SMRs within our territory. The stance we have taken is in support of the seven generations to come. We demand that the nuclear industry abandon its plans to operate small modular nuclear reactors in Ontario and elsewhere in Canada.”

There are five Great Lakes: Superior, Huron, Michigan, Ontario, and Erie. Together they comprise the largest body of freshwater making up more than 20 per cent of the world’s freshwater supply, and stretch 750 miles from east to west, bringing drinking water to approximately 40 million people and providing a home to over 4,000 species of plants and wildlife.

“As First Nations people, we have a sacred responsibility to our lands and waters and call on all levels of governments to invest in renewable power generation and storage solutions alongside efficient energy transmission and distribution be utilized in place of nuclear energy,” says Ontario Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald. “Indigenous Peoples around the world are consistently sounding the alarm that water needs to be protected and we as First Nations people have a sacred relationship with water. Storing nuclear waste close to our water sources is not an acceptable option. We use days such as Great Lakes Day and Earth Day to raise awareness and encourage everyday Canadians to learn and join us in our calls to protect Mother Earth for future generations.”

Relevant Links:

- [Canada’s Radioactive Waste Policy Framework](#)
- [Integrated Regulatory Review Service](#)

The Anishinabek Nation is a political advocate for 39 member First Nations across Ontario, representing approximately 65,000 citizens. The Anishinabek Nation is the oldest political organization in Ontario and can trace its roots back to the Confederacy of Three Fires, which existed long before European contact.

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Laura Barrios
Communications Officer
Anishinabek Nation
Phone: 705-498-1957
E-mail: laura.barrios@anishinabek.ca