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NEWS RELEASE

"When will the government stand up to OPG?"

OPG ignored government yet again, says SOS Great Lakes

SAUGEEN SHORES, ON--Ontario Power Generation's repeated failure to adequately consider alternate sites for nuclear waste storage and its numerous violations of environmental laws are all the grounds the Minister needs to deny the project, a leading opponent of plans to build a permanent nuclear waste dump on the shore of Lake Huron said Sunday.

"This is the fifth time that OPG has side-stepped a specific government request to study alternative sites to bury nuclear waste," Rod McLeod, a former Deputy Minister of Environment for the Province of Ontario and a Director of SOS Great Lakes, said in response to OPG's latest submission to the Federal government. "At what point is the Federal Government going to stand up and do its job?"

In addition to what he termed "a completely inadequate response to the Minister's request for further information," McLeod accused the government of compounding the issue by ignoring OPG's numerous violations of Canadian Environmental Assessment laws and by arbitrarily limiting public input on the discussion.

"The government gave OPG 11 months to provide further information. Now they give the Canadian public 30 days to review and comment on a 500-page report. It appears to me the government perhaps does not care to hear what the public thinks on this issue," he said.

In March 2016, the Canadian Minister of Environment and Climate Change ordered OPG to provide information on alternate sites for the nuclear waste dump. In its response filed with the government last week, OPG told the Minister that there was majority public support for the project in Ontario and that the issue was of little concern to people. “OPG claims to have a public opinion poll showing the people of Ontario do not care if highly radioactive nuclear waste is stored beside their drinking water supply, even though every other deep burial site in the world has failed to contain its waste.

“I do not believe their claim is accurate,” McLeod stated. “There is already a documented history of highly-biased public opinion research and very distorted results about this project,” (see [biased public opinion research](#)). Their claim is in direct conflict with evidence presented at the environmental hearings as well as ongoing public opposition. The [Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative](#) of American and Canadian mayors representing many of the 40 million people who draw water from the Great Lakes, the Michigan State Legislature and the [Great Lakes Legislative Caucus](#), are all on record as being strongly opposed to this project, not to mention an online petition with close to 100,000 people opposing the project or the fact that 97 % of the comments received by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency in September 2015 on the public record also were against the plan. Given this ongoing opposition, it is hard to believe that OPG is correct in its assessment. We look forward to reviewing their methodology and the actual findings.”

McLeod said SOS Great Lakes are studying OPG’s report and will provide a complete response once that study is finished.

“To risk contaminating the Great Lakes with nuclear waste that will remain highly radioactive for more than 100,000 years is unthinkable, particularly when you consider that more than 40 million Canadians and Americans rely on the Great Lakes for drinking water.

Ontario Power Generation is awaiting permission to bury more than 200,000 cubic metres of radioactive nuclear waste less than one kilometer from Lake Huron using unproven technology. For more than 50 years, countries around the world have attempted to build safe nuclear waste disposal sites underground. Every attempt has failed to prevent radiological waste from escaping into the surrounding environment. This record of failure includes the most recent attempt by the United States to store nuclear waste underground in Carlsbad, New Mexico in a DGR riddled with

accidents and malfunctions.

SOS Great Lakes (www.sosgreatlakes.org) is a bi-national volunteer organization formed to oppose permanent disposal of nuclear waste in the Great Lakes basin. It has reviewed volumes of information, data and testimony related to this project and is in the process of summarising and making this information public.

Our [open letter](#) to the Minister can be found on the SOSGL website (www.sosgreatlakes.org/sos-updates).

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