

Lake Huron nuclear dump site blocked by Canadian government

FROM Politically Speaking

Environmentalists fighting a plan to bury nuclear waste near the Lake Huron shoreline in Canada scored a big victory today when the Ontario Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Catherine McKenna, blocked the long-awaited project.

McKenna instructed the utility Ontario Power Generation to provide additional information on its proposed deep geologic waste site, including alternate locations.

U.S. opposition has built for years as critics pointed out that the nuclear waste dump would be located downstream from the drinking water plants of millions of Americans and Canadians. Michigan environmental activists and legislators had urged Secretary of State John Kerry and the U.S.-Canadian International Joint Commission to intervene.

But the project moved slowly forward under former Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Conservative Party. The October election of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau may have been the turning point.

The "low and intermediate" nuclear waste to be buried 2,200 feet below the surface at the Kincardine, Ontario, site — located across the lake from Alpena, Mich. — includes hazardous materials, some of which could remain radioactive for nearly 100,000 years.

The proposed underground depository, surrounded by limestone, is situated within about a half-mile of the Lake Huron shoreline. It is planned for the grounds of Ontario's Bruce power generating station.

McKenna gave the utility until April 18 to decide whether it will respond to her request for more information. The [Deep Geologic Repository \(DGR\) Project for Low and Intermediate Level Radioactive Waste](#), the minister said, must address three environmentally sensitive aspects of the proposed project: alternate locations, cumulative environmental effects, and an updated list of commitments to clean up any adverse ecological effects that result from the depository. Until those matters are addressed, the proposal is on pause.