

The La Ronge NORTHERNER

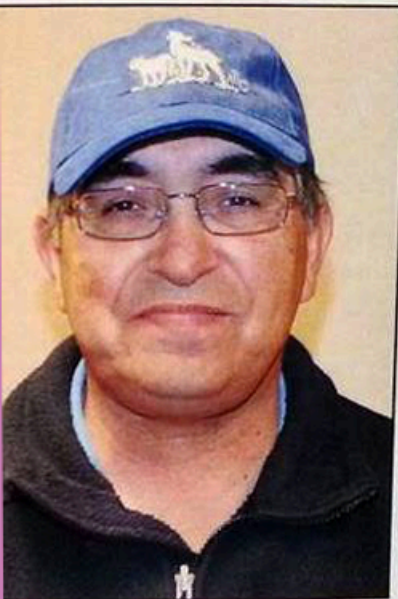
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PBCN says no to deep geological depository



BY VALERIE G. BARNES-CONNELL

The 10,000-strong Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation (PBCN) said no to any plans for the creation and development of a deep geological depository for spent nuclear fuel on its traditional territory.

"It is our understanding that the NWMO [Nuclear Waste Management Organization] maybe streamlining the potential host communities by this fall. Whatever the community, the PBCN will not be in support of such an endeavour." PBCN Chief Peter Beatty wrote in a letter addressed to Premier Brad Wall and dated Friday, Aug. 9, 2013, outlining the Band's position to the NWMO's Adaptive Phase Management (APM) process.

Coun. Eileen Linklater spoke about the PBCN decision at a presentation by the Committee for Future Generations in La Ronge on Thursday, Aug. 8.

In his letter Beatty quotes Wall speaking on Oct 27, 2011 in Meadow Lake as saying, "I'm just not sure it's needed at this point. The people of the province. I don't think, want this for Saskatchewan."

Beatty writes, "The Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation is in full support of your (Wall's) stance and the PBCN is also opposed to any Nuclear Waste site in Northern Saskatchewan within the traditional territory of the PBCN and the lands in proximity to said territory."

Beatty went on to outline his understanding of the NWMO process and where it is at presently.

"It is supposed to be a requirement to move forward in the site selection process. It's now 2013 and neither the NWMO or anyone else associated with this issue has bothered to properly contact the PBCN for our stance on the matter."

He spoke about "few attempts at meaningful consultation and one community meeting in one of our seven communities does not constitute appropriate dialogue that we feel is sufficient for our 10,000 strong membership to become informed."

Three Saskatchewan communities are involved in the APM process, Pinchouse Lake, English River First Nation and Creighton.

"The community of Creighton is in our

traditional lands with Sandy Bay, Pelican Narrows, Deschambault Lake, Amisk Lake and Sturgeon Landing being the closest communities that would need to be consulted with. This has yet to occur from NWMO or any other government entity. Any Creighton proposal would be met with stern resistance from our membership."

He also noted that as the prevailing winds throughout the PBCN communities mentioned, as well as the flow of the Churchill River, come from the west and travel eastward, the communities would be impacted by the involvement of the other two communities.

"Therefore, PBCN would oppose such sites as well."

Beatty ended the letter by saying, "[we] hope that your (Wall's) stance remains as it has in the recent past."

As *The Northerner* went to press this week, Mayor Bruce Fidler, of Creighton, had not seen the letter so was not prepared to speak on the issue. *The Northerner* will carry his reaction in a later edition.