

Community Engagement Session - Summary Report
Blind River, June 18

The objective of the Integrated Strategy for Radioactive Waste's (ISRW) community engagement sessions is to invite and facilitate broad dialogue to develop a strategy for managing Canada's radioactive waste, in particular low- and intermediate-level waste. We approach this goal by listening to the perspectives of attendees across multiple Canadian communities. The development of the strategy is grounded in a range of guiding principles and objectives as we explore key questions and issues discussed at our events. This summary report details what we heard from the participants at the session focused on the community of Blind River.

The session began with a brief land acknowledgement, recognizing and expressing gratitude for the land we are on. This was followed by an introduction and an overview of logistics for the evening. The event offered several opportunities for attendees to participate, give feedback and ask questions about various topics.

Despite broad geographical advertising through traditional and social media, and having several registrations from Blind River community members, only media attended the community engagement session.

A question was asked as to how many sites we were looking for. We responded that the ISRW is not a siting process, and we do not have a pre-determined solution for low- and intermediate-level waste.

Through our engagement, we are seeking input on a number of options including what we should do with the waste, should we have a special facility for it, or should we keep the waste at surface level and continue to monitor it until it is no longer hazardous? We reminded participants that intermediate waste can be hazardous for a thousand years or more.

We explained that important feedback for us would include learning community members' views on building a facility in proximity to where the waste is stored today or if a centralised location based on the type of waste would be best, and who should be responsible for implementing the strategy. At present, each waste owner is responsible for their own waste.

We heard surprise from the attendees that we were, as of yet, so early in the process of planning. This provides the opportunity for communities to collaborate and share feedback before a plan is decided upon and implemented.