

Monday July 20th, 2026

The Right Honourable Mark Carney Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
Ottawa, Ontario

RE: Fast Tracking Major Projects and Rigorous Environmental Protection

Dear Prime Minister Carney,

On behalf of the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC), an organization with more than a century of advocacy for environmental stewardship and the public good, we are writing to express our deep concern regarding the Government of Canada's recent actions to significantly weaken environmental protections and accelerate the approval of so-called "Major Projects."

NCWC joins thousands of concerned Canadians in questioning the government's increasingly expedited approach, which appears to prioritize speed over due diligence, and risks proceeding without clear, evidence-based assurances of environmental safety or long-term economic benefit. Of particular concern is the June 24 announcement identifying three potential "Projects of National Interest" prior to the close of the public consultation period on the Discussion Paper, *Getting Major Projects Built in Canada: Proposed Legislative and Regulatory Policy Reforms*, which invited responses until July 22***. This sequence of actions appears premature and undermines public confidence in the integrity of the consultation process.

We are especially troubled by the designation of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization's proposed Deep Geological Repository (DGR) in northern Ontario as a "Project of National Interest" while the Impact Assessment Agency (IAA) review process remains underway. This raises serious concerns about the independence and credibility of the assessment process.

Further, provisions within Bill C-5 suggesting that determinations for such projects are effectively presumed to favour approval, along with the possibility of ministerial decisions being made prior to the completion of IAA hearings, represent a significant departure from established principles of transparent, evidence-based decision-making.

In light of these concerns, NCWC respectfully urges the Government of Canada to take the following actions:

- Ensure that no ministerial decision is made regarding the DGR or any other designated project until the full Impact Assessment process, including public hearings, has been completed.

- Uphold the rights of all First Nations to fully protect their environmental, health, and economic interests, consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), including access to fair processes and, where necessary, judicial review.
- Reinstall independent scientific oversight, consistent with the recommendations of the 1985 Seaborn Panel, to ensure rigorous, unbiased evaluation of nuclear waste management proposals.
- Undertake comprehensive, transparent analysis of the full lifecycle costs and long-term economic implications associated with nuclear energy and waste management.
- Prioritize and invest in well-established, lower-risk renewable energy alternatives, including solar, wind, geothermal, energy efficiency, and storage technologies, which offer cleaner, more cost-effective pathways to meeting Canada's climate commitments.
- Maintain and strengthen the independent regulatory role of the Impact Assessment Agency in all current and future projects with significant environmental implications.

At a time marked by accelerating climate change, ecological degradation, and economic uncertainty, it is essential that Canada demonstrate leadership grounded in precaution, transparency, and sustainability. Strong environmental protections are not an obstacle to progress; they are fundamental to the long-term health, prosperity, and resilience of our communities.

NCWC urges your government to halt further environmental deregulation and to work collaboratively with Canadians to advance solutions that are environmentally responsible, economically sound, and socially just.

Respectfully,

Penny Rankin
NCWC President

Gracia Janes
NCWC VP Environment

cc. *The Honourable Julie Dabrusin, Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature*
The Honourable Tim Hodgson, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources
The Honourable Rebecca Alty, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations
The Honourable Mandy Gull-Masty, Minister of Indigenous Services
The Honourable Sean Fraser Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada
The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc Minister Intergovernmental Affairs and One Canadian Economy
The Honourable Pierre Poilievre Leader of the Official Opposition
Don Davies Parliamentary Leader (NDP)
Yves-François Blanchet MP, Leader of the Bloc Québécois
Elizabeth May MP, Leader of the Green Party Parliamentary Caucus

NCWC Mission:

To empower all women to work together toward improving the quality of life for women, families, and society through a forum of member organizations and individuals