

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CNL COMPLETES SAFE LONG-TERM STORAGE OF WASTE AT PORT GRANBY SITE

Clarington, Ontario (November 04, 2021) – Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL), Canada’s premier nuclear science and technology organization, is pleased to announce the capping and closure of the engineered aboveground mound at the Port Granby Project Long-Term Waste Management Facility. The Port Granby Project is being undertaken as part of the Port Hope Area Initiative (PHAI).

The final layers of topsoil and grass were placed on the storage mound in September 2021, following the final transfer of low-level radioactive waste excavated from the Lake Ontario shoreline in Southeast Clarington to the engineered facility for safe, long-term storage. Now complete, the facility is one of several environmental remediation projects being undertaken by CNL, including the design and construction of a similar facility proposed for the Chalk River Laboratories site, known as the Near Surface Disposal Facility (NSDF), which is currently undergoing an environmental assessment.

“CNL is cleaning up and safely managing this historic waste on behalf of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, and that is a responsibility we take very seriously” said Joe McBrearty, CNL President and CEO. “In pursuit of that goal, CNL is applying proven engineering containment methods that have been used internationally to tackle challenging environmental issues like the cleanup in Port Granby.”

The capping and closure of the engineered storage mound is a major milestone for the Port Granby community and the PHAI. It also marks the transition of the project to Phase 3, long-term monitoring and maintenance. The landscaping of the new long-term facility and the former waste management site is expected to be completed by summer 2022.

"This project and the collaboration it inspired will support and strengthen other nuclear waste management initiatives – in Port Hope, across Canada and around the world," said Fred Dermakar, President and CEO of AECL. "It will also enable ongoing stewardship and relationship-building with Indigenous and local communities, spurring opportunities for future partnerships as we work together to build a collective vision for these lands for generations to come."

Construction of the storage mound began in 2016 and involved the installation of multi-layered base liner and cover systems to safely isolate the waste from the environment. In November 2020, CNL completed the excavation and safe transfer of historic waste from the former site on the shore of Lake Ontario. More than 1.3 million tonnes of contaminated soil and industrial waste that had been located on the unstable site for decades were placed in the mound for safe, long-term storage. Dedicated systems within the mound and around the perimeter of the facility will allow maintenance and monitoring of the facility’s safety and performance for hundreds of years into the future.

“This challenging and complex project, the first of its kind in Canada, could not have happened without the collaboration, problem solving, and technical expertise of our municipal partners, contractors and staff,” added McBrearty. “We are committed to bringing the same level of rigor,

public transparency and collaboration that has been shown here to other CNL waste management projects.”

CNL is implementing the PHAI on behalf of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL), a federal Crown corporation.

ABOUT THE PORT GRANBY PROJECT

The Port Granby Project involves the relocation of approximately 1.3 million tonnes of historic low-level radioactive waste from the legacy storage site on the shoreline of Lake Ontario in Southeast Clarington, to a new, engineered aboveground mound. Ongoing maintenance and monitoring will continue for hundreds of years. The historic waste resulted from radium and uranium refining operations of the former Crown corporation Eldorado Nuclear and its private sector predecessors, which operated from the 1930s to 1988.

ABOUT THE PHAI

The Port Hope Area Initiative (PHAI) represents the federal government’s commitment to respond to the community-recommended solutions for the cleanup and local, long-term, safe management of historic low-level radioactive waste in the municipalities of Port Hope and Clarington. Through its Historic Waste Program, Canadian Nuclear Laboratories is implementing the PHAI on behalf of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited, a federal Crown corporation.

Port Hope Area Initiative projects are situated on the traditional land of Indigenous peoples dating back countless generations that remains the home of the Métis and Anishinaabe people, and is part of the Williams Treaties territory of the Mississauga of this region. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work on these lands, and near traditionally and culturally significant waterways, and offer respect to the First peoples of the area.

For more information, please contact:

Shernette Muccuth Henry
Acting Manager, Public Communications
Historic Waste Program Management Office
Canadian Nuclear Laboratories
905.885.0291 or info@phai.ca