

June 19, 2014

Tracey Mill
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources
Whitney Block, 6th floor, room 6643
99 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, ON M7A 1W3
Phone: 416 314-2150
E-mail: Tracey.Mill@ontario.ca

Dear Ms. Mill:

Re: Proposed Hydro-electric Generating Station at the Bala Falls

Summary

As illustrated by the chart in the Appendix to this letter, there is more than a 20% probability that the proposed construction for the above project would cause flooding of Lake Muskoka and danger to Ministry employees who would be required to operate the Bala north dam during such a high flow event.

Detail

I understand your Ministry is currently reviewing information submitted by the proponent for the above-referenced proposed project, as is required for Plans and Specifications approval under the Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act.

The construction of this proposed project would require obstructing most of the Bala north channel and the north falls with a cofferdam for several months – which is a concern as the flow handling capacity of the Bala north channel is needed to handle high flow events.

While we understand the plan would be that the cofferdam be removed before spring freshet, as shown by the chart in the Appendix to this letter, in the 45-year period from 1966 to 2010 the flow through Bala was more than the flow capacity of the Bala south channel (which is 252 m³/s) **ten times**. That is, history has shown that in more than one year in five the flow capacity of the Bala north channel is needed during the months of September through January – which is **months prior** to the traditional spring freshet.

While the proponent has stated their cofferdam could be quickly removed:

- It is unlikely this could be done quickly and safely enough, especially considering the partially-built generating station could then allow unrestricted flow bypassing the Bala north dam.
- There would be a danger to MNR employees who would be required to operate the Bala north dam during this difficult time.
- There would be a cofferdam both upstream and downstream of the Bala north dam, and such rushed work during a high-flow event could result in damage to the Bala north dam.

Please respond with how the MNR will ensure the proposed construction would not present such a flooding and safety risk.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mitchell Shnier".

Mitchell Shnier, on behalf of SaveTheBalaFalls.com

Cc: Her Worship Alice Murphy, Mayor, Township of Muskoka Lakes, AMurphy@muskokalakes.ca

Appendix

