

## AND NOW YOU KNOW THE REAL STORY ABOUT THE BALA FALLS HYDRO PROJECT!

Demand for power in Ontario is greatest during periods of hot dry summer days. These are the conditions when the proposed Bala hydro plant would not be able to contribute power to the grid. This is because there is not enough water flowing through Bala during periods of hot dry summer days to make power.

The proposed hydro plant would produce power at a time *when Ontario does not need power*, ie; during periods of high run-off such as in the spring and fall. Power produced by hydro facilities is a function of water-flow resulting from melting snow and rain and because of this Ontario has an abundance of hydro power during the spring and fall at our existing hydro plants. No new hydro power is needed at that time of year from the proposed plant. In fact, the more power that the proposed plant produces – the more all Ontarians will have to pay.

Due to the way the 'Green Energy Plan' works, the existing OPG plants (paid for long ago by Ontario taxpayers) will have to sit idle during the spring and fall because Ontario is obligated to replace this existing and reasonably priced power, with expensive power from the privately owned plants instead. As an example, the OPG hydro plant which is location just 4kms downstream from Bala will have to spill water unused, because Ontario's grid *must* take the power from the proposed privately owned plant at the Bala Falls at a far more expensive rate. **Expensive hydro is driving jobs out of Ontario.**

The OPG hydro plants provide power at a reasonable rate (about 2 cents/kwh). The proponent for the Bala Falls project will be paid about 15 cents/kwh by the province. Effectively, the existing cheaper power will be replaced by the far more expensive privately-produced power which drives up the cost of Ontario's hydro for everyone.

Committing Ontario to a 40 year contract with a private company, to provide energy at the time we don't need it and then pay grossly inflated prices for it, is not fiscally responsible.

**Ontario taxpayers will be paying 100 million dollars to subsidize this project.** The fact that we don't need this excess power at a time when we are giving power to the USA at reduced rates – further exacerbates the issue. **The truth is that this project is not viable without the taxpayer subsidies, and Bala is not viable without its Falls.**

Bala is a bona fide tourist destination. A dangerous industrial power plant in its midst would be devastating to its economy. The Bala Falls are the centre of numerous recreational activities such as fishing, canoeing, swimming, boating, portaging, scuba diving, sightseeing and photography. A dangerous power station at the Falls would prohibit these activities in Bala, thereby threatening the economy of the town and surrounding area.

The miniscule amount of power (only 4 megawatts) that would be generated by the proposed project is not enough to justify the destruction of the Bala Falls, the focal point of a small Ontario town whose livelihood relies on the tourism that the Falls attract. The proposed hydro plant would take all of the water from the Falls – leaving virtually dry rocks. Drying up a picturesque attraction and Heritage Site, is neither socially nor environmentally responsible.

It has already been proven that the economy of Bala cannot sustain the proposed construction. Tourists avoided Bala during the installation of water and sewer mains in 1992. All businesses suffered and stores went bankrupt during that construction.

Even the Economic Impact Study (paid for by the proponent) concludes on Page 33 that **Bala will suffer: "Our assessment also points out that the costs of the project – the loss of business and the inconvenience costs – will all be borne by the Bala community."**

Advertising campaigns are being run by the OPP and OPG warning the public to stay away from hydro plants and surrounding shorelines and waterways or risk fines of up to \$2000. These warning and fines will scare away tourists from the Falls are which is in the centre of Bala.

The proposed plant would be 14 times the size of the previous power plant and infinitely more dangerous and intrusive to Bala. The proponent has admitted, in their own Environmental Assessment Report, that the site would cause safety issues and would not be an appropriate location. The proponent also stated that due to these difficulties they were not going to consider this location any further. However when no other location was available, they have now reverted back to the – Alternative 1A location, a location that previously they considered inappropriate. See section 1.5.1.1 of the **Environmental Screening/Review Report prepared by Hatch Energy: "The location of the powerhouse would remove any access to the falls from the south bank of the dam. The tailrace of the powerhouse would be located in close proximity to the falls which would cause safety issues and public concern....Approach area excavations near and below the road bridge to improve hydraulics would be difficult and could threaten the bridge or dam....Public concerns expressed during stakeholder consultation included access to the Bala Falls area, and aesthetic preservation of the Bala Falls and surrounding parkland....Due to the difficulties noted above, this layout alternative was not considered further."**

- **A Very Concerned Citizen**