



\$1 Billion of Excess Electricity Given Away By Ontario Taxpayers in 2013

To whom it may concern,

With both the long established and large membership **Muskoka Lakes Association** and the **Friends of Muskoka** strongly objecting to the planned destruction of the Bala Falls perhaps we can now start the countdown to the cancelling of this ill-conceived project (that's putting it mildly).

The **Muskoka Lakes Association** has long mandated the preservation of the unique provenance and character of this beautiful part of Ontario and have now visibly joined the outcry of the 93% random surveyed along with the other thousands who have objected for years with their personal time and money to the proposal put forward by **Swift River Energy Limited**.

This irreplaceable natural **Muskoka** beauty spot on crown land must never be destroyed by a private profit-making corporation whose only reason for existence and primary purpose is to make money for their shareholders. This fact overrides all the physical and economic damage they will inflict on the area.

Any rational thinking person or government body would not even think of giving a sole private enterprise the right to control all the water levels of all **Muskoka** and beyond; from the headwaters in **Algonquin Park** down through the hundreds of connecting lakes, big and small to the all controlling lower outlet at **Bala Falls!**

★ **All the lake-front cottagers on the big 3 lakes of JOSEPH, ROSSEAU and MUSKOKA would be at the mercy of Swift River Energy Ltd! Government controls would come into play BUT DO WE WANT TO GIVE A PRIVATE COMPANY THIS ENORMOUS POWER LEVERAGE OVER ALL THE COTTAGERS, BOTH PHYSICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY?**

★ The **Bala Falls Hydro Project** also brings to light a key concern that could **cost Muskoka and Ontario taxpayers multi-millions of dollars**. This project comes with potential lawsuits arising from the actual physical construction of the hydro-electric plant. Again, common sense would tell you fracturing and disturbing of foundations could result from drilling and dynamite blasting percussions for the hydro plant structure so close to present built foundations of;

1. *Multiple highway bridges*
2. *Multiple CPR railway bridges*
3. *Historic stone church*
4. *Multiple water dams*

★ **The Environmental Screening/Review Report prepared by Hatch Energy for Swift River Energy Ltd. has stated this very evident concern years ago!**

Repairs to structural damage could total millions more than the hydro plant itself. Weakening these structures could cause the closing of either the provincial highway or main CPR line or both to become a real possible scenario.

★ **Swift River Energy Ltd. reps were asked a similar probing question in regards to the matter at the District council chamber in June 2014 in relation to this possible outcome and they replied they weren't qualified engineers to be able to address this concern.**

The real answer to this question might be an old cliché – not written in stone, but rather in crumbling stone – from the nearby numerous foundations!

Could a disaster physically and financially be in the making at **Bala Falls** if rational thinking is not put into play?

★ ★ ★ ★ REPEAT – Ontario Taxpayers paid 1 billion dollars to give away excess electricity in 2013 and again probably close to that in 2014. Why would we then go to all the new expense and environmental destruction to build an additional mini hydro-electric plant only to give away this additional excess power?

★ Ontario is already close to 300 billion dollars in debt and rising everyday!

But something seems completely wrong in this whole debacle when a business enterprise in one part of **Muskoka** can endorse the destruction of a key economic drawing card (for their monetary benefit) in another part of **Muskoka**!

I remember very well a highly respected resident of **Gravenhurst** making the astute comment “We haven’t got a ‘Honda’ plant here in **Muskoka**, then why would we destroy a part of our biggest tourist drawing card, our natural beauty? That’s the base of our economy!”

The importance of waterfalls of any size as a natural world wonder is evident when they presently appear on the front of the highly respected **National Geographic Magazine** and also a well known **Ontario road map** and a **Canadian stamp**. An imposing concrete bunker/hydro electric plant brings no appeal to the location or the heritage surrounding **Bala Falls**. Painting said plant green would not change this fact. A frog is a frog no matter how hard you try to turn it into a charming prince!

It’s been said a thousand times before the end result doesn’t justify the means!

★ I urge every person in favour of destroying the Bala Falls to sit near the base for just 15 minutes to observe and listen to the gift nature has given humanity. Think again!!

The beautiful **Bala Falls** show put on by all-controlling nature for hundreds of years and enjoyed by so many (especially the spectacular display in the spring) must continue and not be destroyed by the hand of man.

Sincerely,



P.S. I attended an old post-card show only recently and was amazed at the number of historic **Bala Falls** postcards that have been issued over the years. Perhaps a display of these could be sent to **Swift River Energy Ltd.** to show them what they plan on destroying forever. Or do they even care?

P.P.S **Swift River Energy Ltd.** – the name appears to be a misnomer as there likely wouldn’t be any water running down the river/falls face when the proposed hydro-electric plant would be operating!

Brian Munro