

Balance for Bala

Bala Falls Power Station An Update

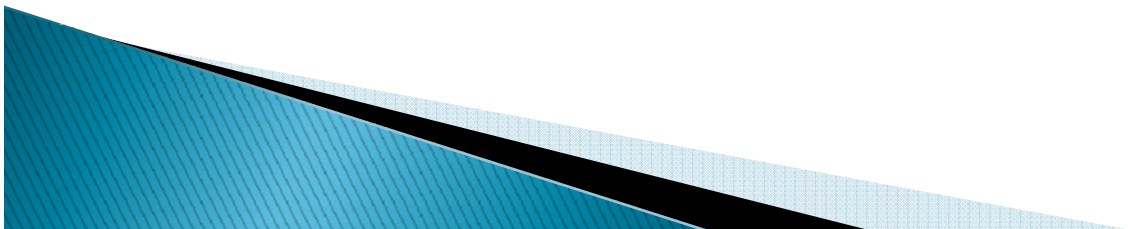
Update and Feedback

- ▶ What started this?
- ▶ Who is the proponent?
- ▶ Who are we?
- ▶ What is the plan?
- ▶ What have we been doing?
- ▶ What happens next?
- ▶ What can you do?
- ▶ Feedback



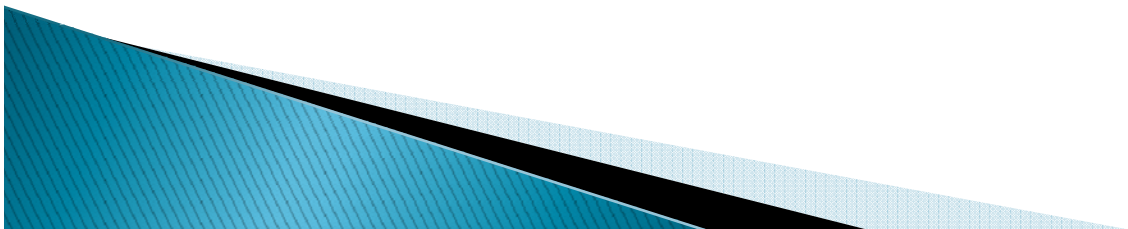
What Started This?

- ▶ Ministry of Natural Resources
 - Competitive Site Release
 - Owns land south of Bala's North Falls
 - Site was the previous location for a power station
 - Applicant of Record
 - Swift River Energy Limited (<http://BalaFalls.ca>)



Who is the Proponent?

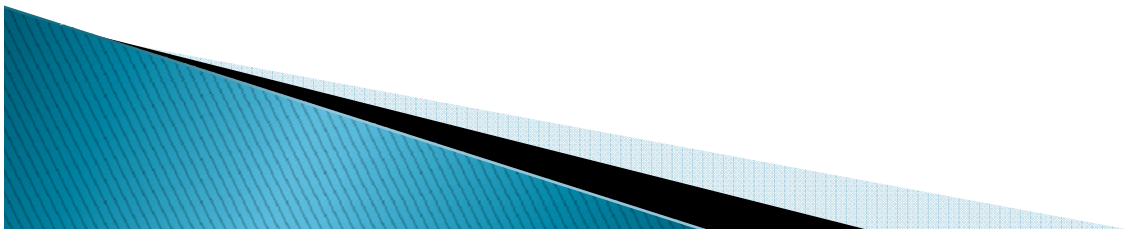
- ▶ Swift River Energy Limited
 - Board of Directors includes:
 - Anthony Zwig, Chief Executive Officer, Chairman
 - Paul Fisher, Secretary & Vice Chairman
 - John Wildman, Vice Chairman
 - Ian Baines, Chief Operating Officer
 - Project Manager
 - Karen McGhee
 - Consultants include
 - Hatch Limited



Who Are We?

- Brad Burgess
- Mark Gidley
- Jeff Mole
- Alice Murphy
- Bill Purkis
- Mitchell Shnier

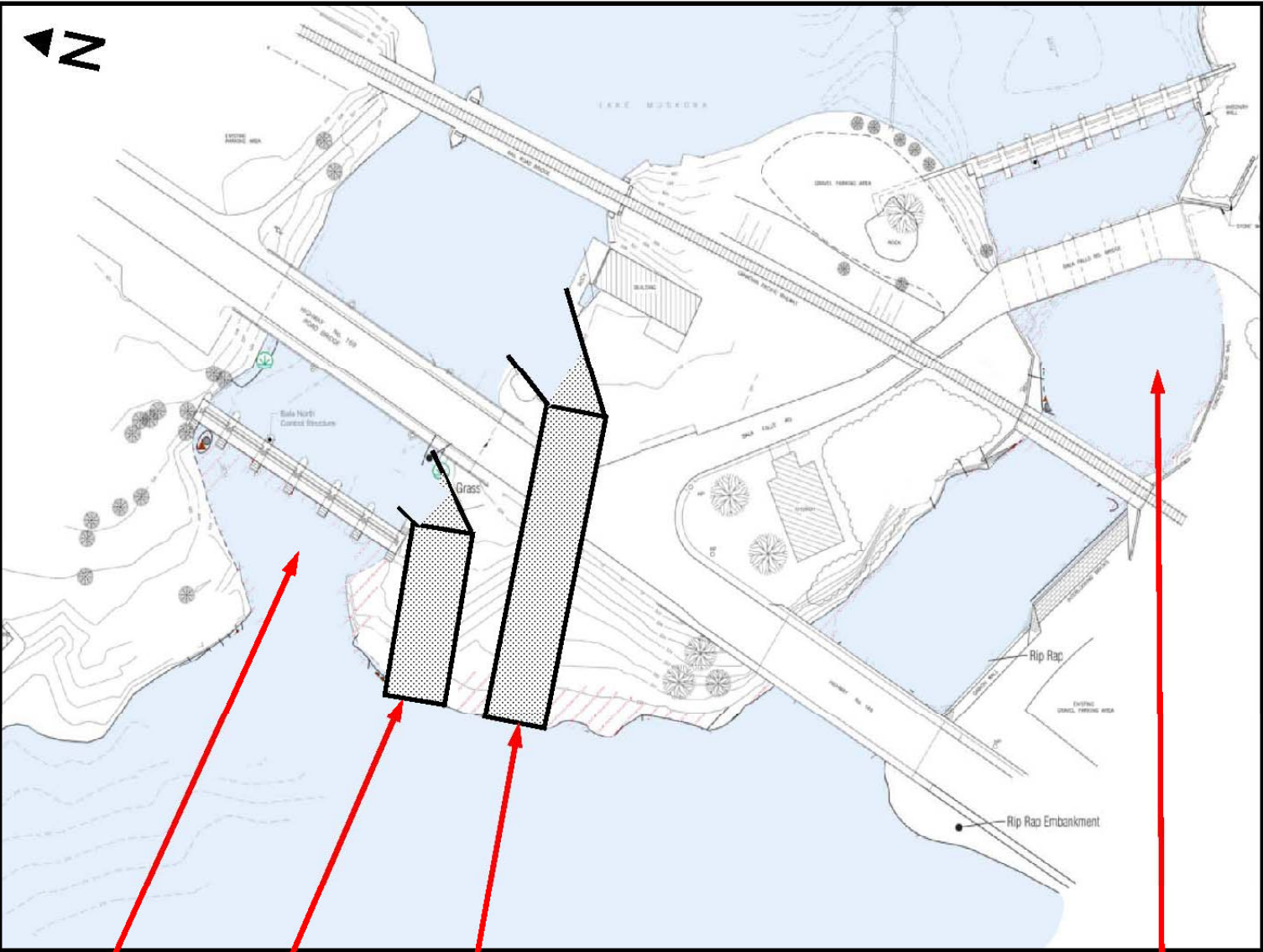
And many other volunteers



The Site



The Site



North Falls
and Channel

Option 1

Option 2

South Falls
and Channel

What is the Plan?

▶ Option 1

- Initially proposed by SREL
 - May not have been possible (intake too small, no room for construction equipment, blasting close to north dam, room for maintenance vehicles ...)
 - This is important – what are SREL's options if not Option 2

▶ Option 2

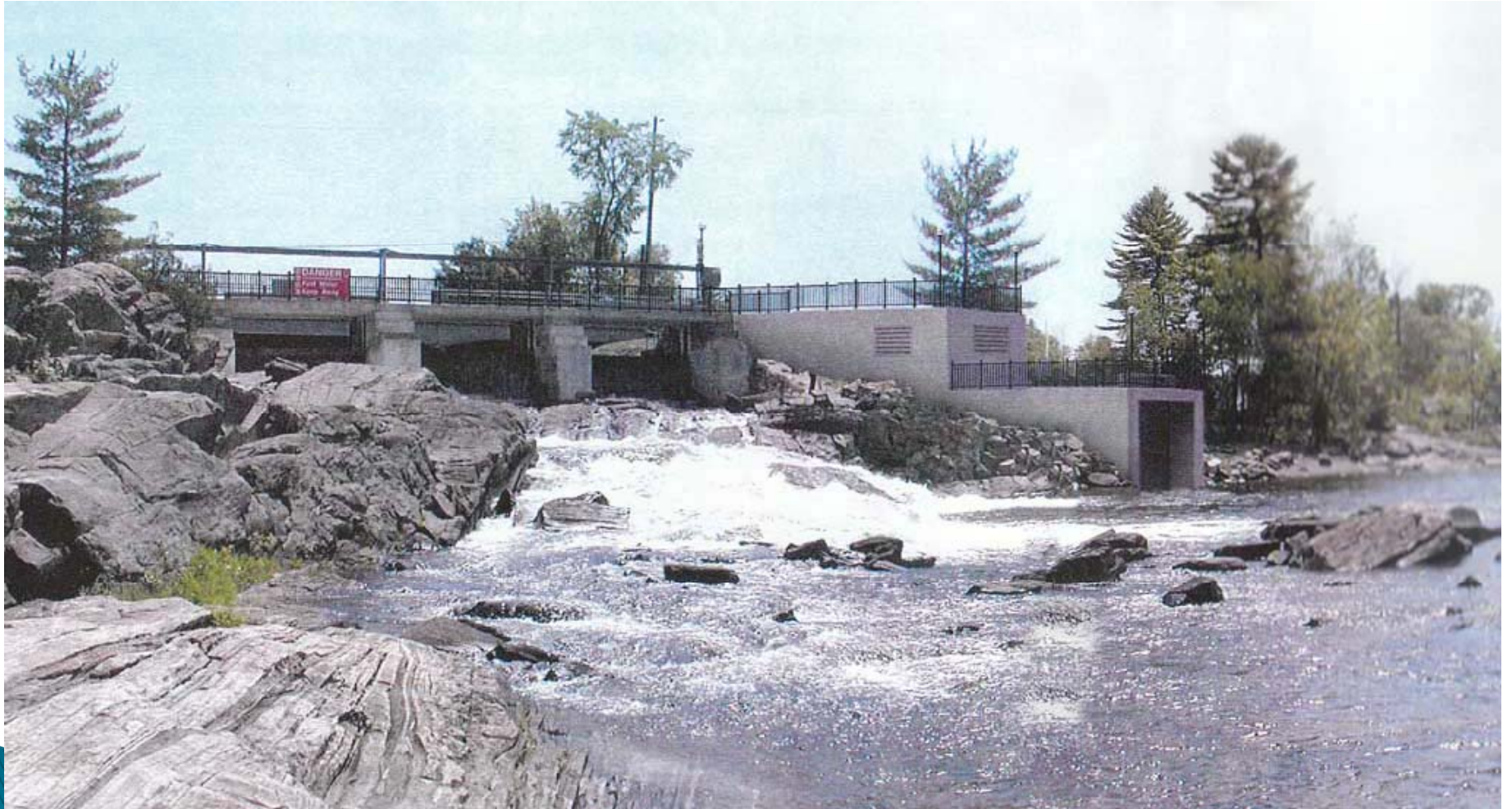
- Current SREL proposal
 - 33 times more power than the Burgess Creek power station and 14 times more power than the power station previously at Bala's North Falls

▶ Options 3 and 4

- Suggested by us, in the South Channel



Option 1



Option 2 – As Proposed

Where's the huge orange safety booms and the warning signs

Where's the 50'-wide concrete and chain-link fence water intake

There will be three 13' x 13' decks over the maintenance accesses

Where's the hydro pole with the huge 4.3 MW, 44 kV, 3-phase electrical disconnect on top

This side of the building won't be buried, it will be above grade just like anyone's garage

Where's the 75' retaining wall for the driveway (how is grass to grow on the driveway)

Where'd all the water come from, there would only be 1 m³/s of scenic flow

Where's the ventilation ducts and windows for the operators inside

Where's the treacherously turbulent water exiting the power station

This is the most important view – and it will be the side of a huge concrete cube with some rocks piled up the side – there's nothing natural about it

Where'd all the water come from, there would only be 1 m³/s of scenic flow

This is a fence 18' above the dangerous turbulent water exiting the power station – it has to be uglier to keep playful kids from falling through it

This is a 33'-wide false wall (over the steel gate) facing the Moon River, it won't look natural or native

Where's the huge orange safety boom and the warning signs



Safety and Appearance

The water-speed will apparently be "safe-enough"

Irresponsible teen-agers jumping off the railway bridge will be too close to the underwater intake

The view from the bridge will a 50'-wide concrete water intake and steel trashrack, with a safety fence running the full length

Overshooting the public dock won't be a laughing matter

The path will be beside the denagerous water intake, with a safety boom for protection



A construction crane with a 100' boom will be required

A 300' coffer dam needs to be constructed for construction

How to keep determined teenagers jumping (and curious toddlers falling) from the 18' high lookout into the dangerously turbulent water exiting the power station

Tragedies Happen

A dam's murky legacy

'Drowning machines' still taking lives, 10 years after Parkhill tragedy claimed 12-year-old boy, police diver

FRANCES BARRICK
RECORD STAFF

CAMBRIDGE

Ten years ago Tuesday, 12-year-old Mark Gage did what many youths had done for decades on a hot afternoon by the Parkhill dam in Cambridge.

He dived into the water.

But he didn't surface.

Later that day, Aug. 12, 1998, Const. Dave Nicholson, 32, died trying to recover Mark's trapped body from an underwater opening in the dam.

Their deaths changed forever the way people viewed this picturesque dam across the Grand River. "If there is one good thing that has come out of that tragedy is that people are more aware of the dangers," said Ralph Beaumont of the Grand River Conservation Authority, which owns Parkhill dam.

Today, signs warn swimmers and boaters of the hazards of the structure. Fire Chief Terry Allen says he no longer sees children swimming in the area or walking on top of the dam.

Yet people continue to drown at dams in Ontario.

Just two weeks ago, 16-year-old Josue Perez of Toronto and 20-year-old Matthew Janssen of St. Anns in the Niagara Region drowned within an hour of each other at two separate hydro-generating dams on the Muskoka River near Bracebridge.

In April 2006, Ken Jamieson died near Paris, Ont., when his canoe went over a dam and capsized. And in August 2005, the force of rushing water pinned 15-year-old Harriet Ash against a dam near Peterborough where she drowned.

From 1998 to 2004, the latest year for which there are statistics, eight people died at Ontario dams; a total of 20 died across Canada, the Lifesaving Society of Canada says.

Two years before the Parkhill tragedy, there had been two near-drownings at the dam.



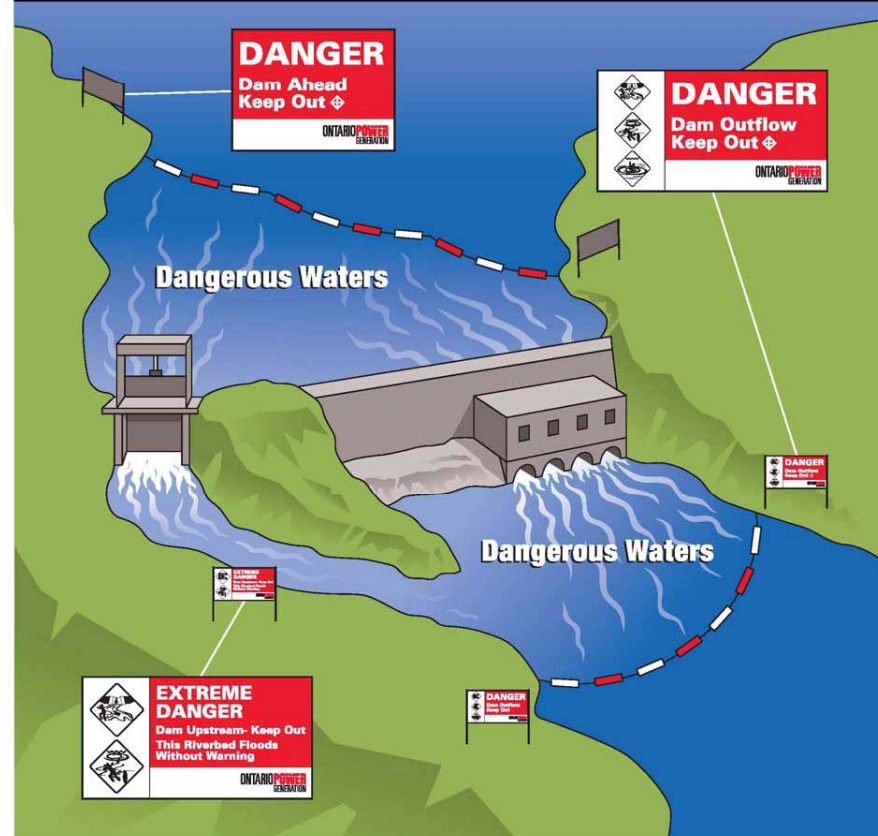
FILE PHOTO BY ROBERT WILSON, RECORD STAFF



FILE PHOTO BY ROBERT WILSON, RECORD STAFF

STAY CLEAR, STAY SAFE

- Obey all danger and warning signs
- Stay outside safety booms and buoys, and away from all dam structures
- Be alert for warnings and changes in water levels



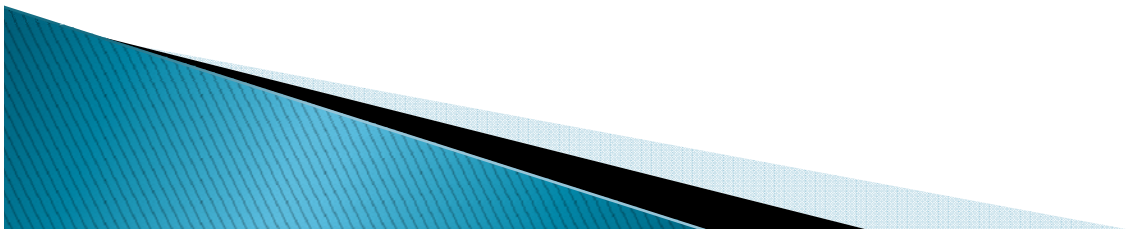
Hydroelectric dams and stations are not places for recreation.

To learn more about Safety around hydroelectric dams and stations, order a free video or CD ROM for children, visit www.opg.com

ONTARIOPOWER
GENERATION

There Is Too Much We Don't Know

- Appearance
- Safety concerns
- Revenue sharing / royalty
- Scenic flow
- An independent evaluation of the South Channel options



What Have We Been Doing?

- ▶ Discussions with municipal Councillors
- ▶ Presentations to Township and District Councils
- ▶ Discussions with other groups, such as the Moon River Property Owners Association and the Muskoka Lakes Association
- ▶ Conversations with SREL, the Ministry of Natural Resources, Transport Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada ...
- ▶ Communication with media, e-Newsletters, the web site

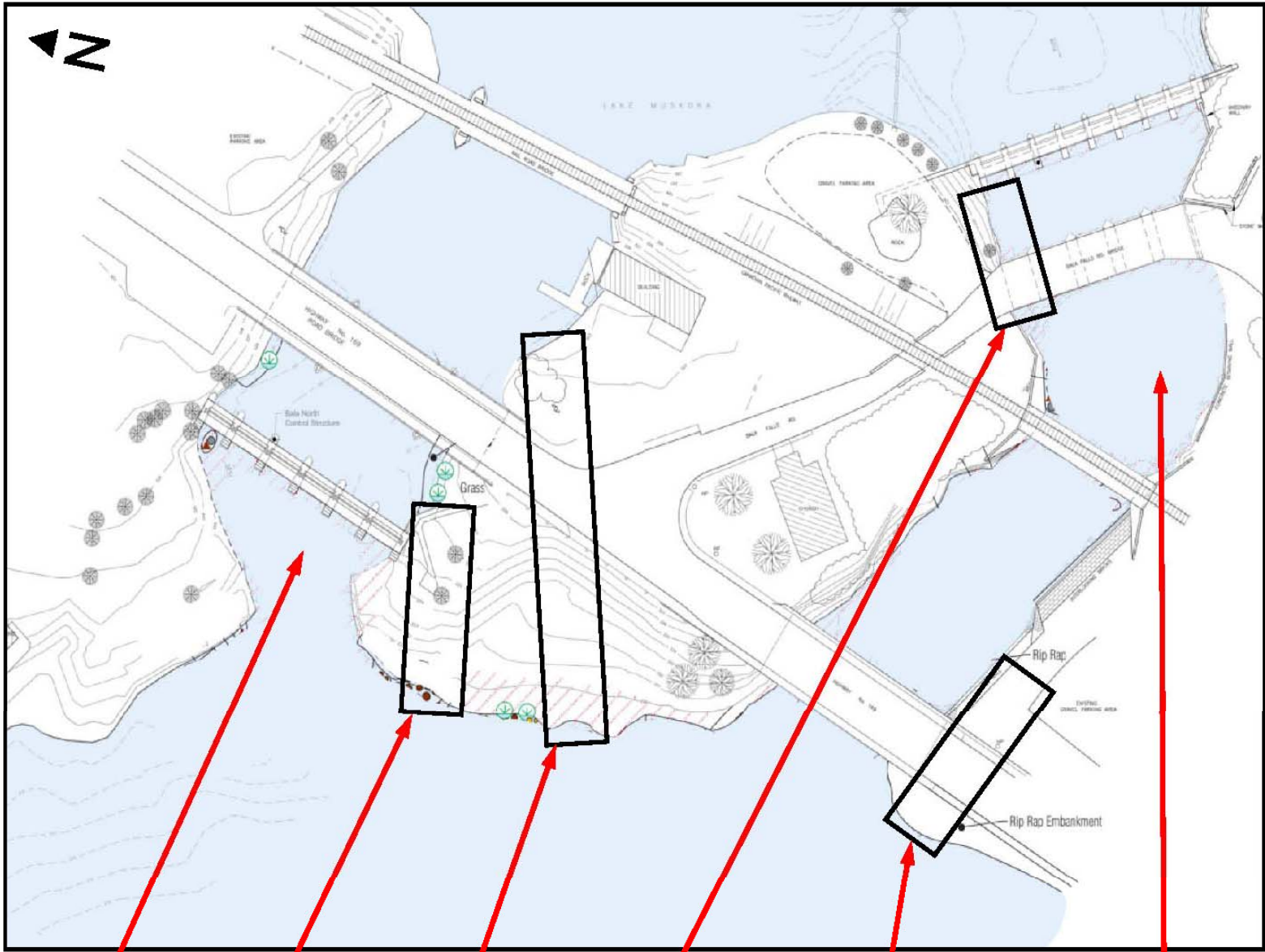
First Reaction – Just Say No

- ▶ Initially hoped project could be stopped
 - But Ontario needs more electrical power (and renewable sources are best) and infrastructure jobs
 - Could try to stop the power station
 - But most likely outcome would be approval without local input
- ▶ More constructive to ensure **Balance for Bala**
 - Work with the established process to ensure what is important to Bala (safety, economy ...) is included in evaluating the options
 - Balance private developer's profits with Bala's economy and public safety

South Channel – Is It An Option?

- ▶ Was not part of the MNR site release because MNR doesn't own suitable land in the South Channel
 - But South Channel is considered part of the “site”
 - And the District/Township does own suitable land in the South Channel
 - The Bala Falls Road bridge and the Canadian Shield parking lot
- ▶ Initially thought only North Channel avoided concerns about adjacent land owners and riparian rights
 - Not likely an issue

The South Channel



North Falls
and Channel

Option 1

Option 2

Option 3

Option 4

South Falls
and Channel

South Channel Advantages

▶ Safety

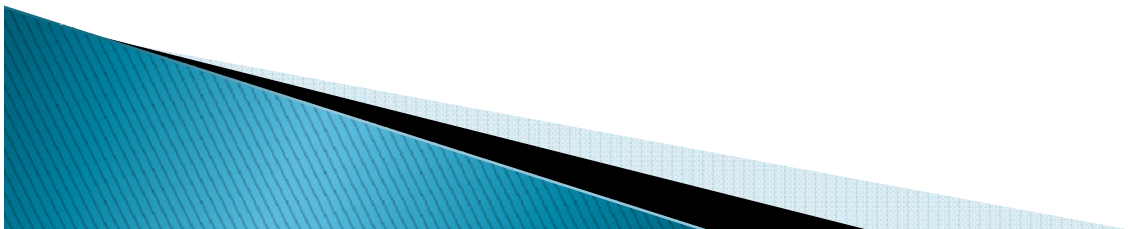
- Dangerous water intake is not near town dock or path to it
- No 18' platform above the Moon River
- No new dangers at the North Falls or the channel to it

▶ Visibility

- Not visible from the North Falls or Bala Bay
- No new safety booms adjacent to the town docks
- No safety fence around the North Channel or lookout

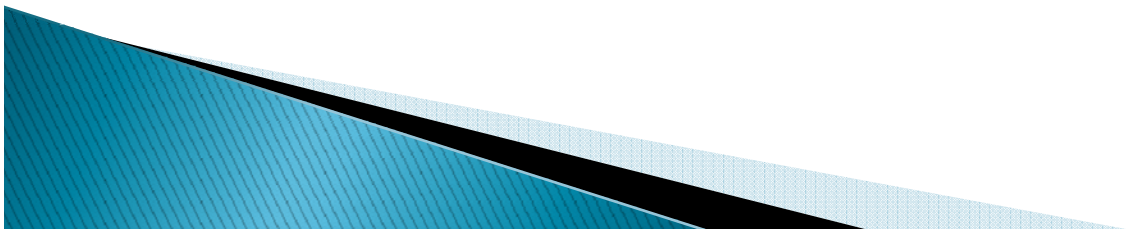
▶ Economic

- Less impact on traffic



South Channel Challenges

- ▶ SREL has stated they will not build in the South Channel
 - SREL has not provided any data as to why not or any evidence that this alternative has been seriously considered
 - Have been trying for months to meet with SREL to find out why
 - We may have a meeting next week (thank you Mary Grady)
- ▶ May not maximize profitability to SREL
 - Looking for Balance in the community, green power plus green lands
- ▶ Construction logistics to be fully vetted
 - Right now is a crucial time to provide our input and concerns
 - Our children and grandchildren will be living with the results



Option 3





Option 4

What Happens Next?

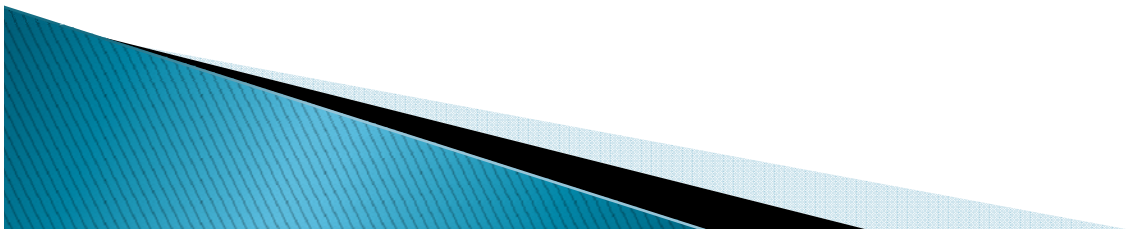
- ▶ Environmental Screening Report
 - Was expected to be released months ago
 - Apparently release has been delayed due to heightened interest from various Ministries as well as Fisheries and Oceans Canada in response to the ongoing communication of public concern
 - Once the report is released we will have only 30 days for public input
 - SREL has been asked to extend this, but have not
 - SREL has declined to release even selected information in advance
 - Even though guidelines suggest this

What You Can Do – Elevation

- ▶ The Environmental Screening Report currently awaited is part of the Ministry of the Environment’s “Fast Track” process
- ▶ The first step to stop the project or have alternative sites considered is to request an “elevation”
 - By requesting that the project be made subject to “Part II of the Environmental Assessment Act”
 - Called an “Individual Environmental Assessment”
 - Request must be made within the 30-day public consultation period after the ESR is released

What You Can Do – Donate

- ▶ We will need to hire legal and engineering experts:
 - To provide input for responding to the Environmental Screening Report
 - To help prove our claims during the Individual Environmental Assessment process

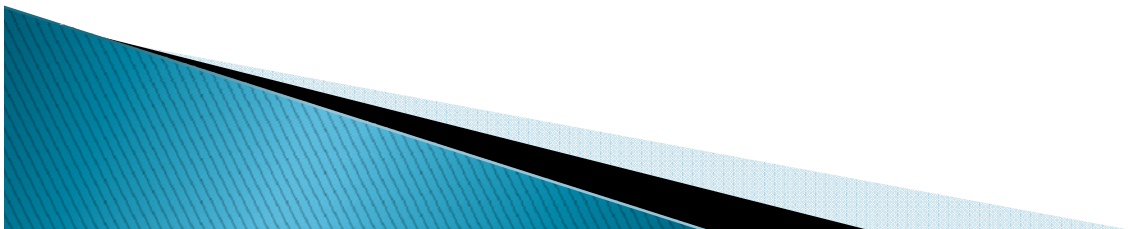


What You Can Do – Fish

- ▶ If you have knowledge of local fish habitat and how it could be permanently adversely affected by the proposed power station, please contact us, or Jennifer McCarthy, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 705 746-2196, extension 253
- ▶ Jeff Esplen and others worked with the MNR on improving the spawning beds in the area
- ▶ Constant flow and water levels are critical and key times in the spawning cycles

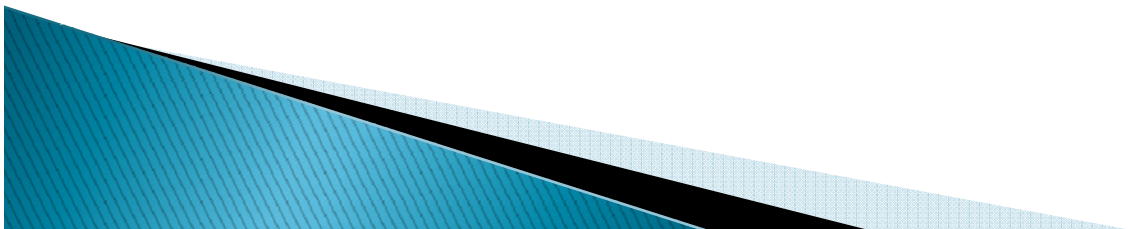
What You Can Do – Associations

- ▶ Discuss your concerns about the Bala Falls power station project with your local associations and groups
 - Determine if a motion can be brought forward at your group's next meeting to request an elevation to an Individual Environmental Assessment



What you can do – Feedback

- ▶ Time to hear what the community wants
- ▶ Provide us with your feedback now
 - A: Leave SREL to proceed with Option 2
 - B: Attempt to stop all development at the site
 - C: Work for a balanced solution in the South Channel
- Please e-mail us:
 - If you'd rather provide feedback privately
 - With your comments
- We'll post everything on the web site



Show of Hands – A

**Leave SREL to
proceed with
Option 2**

Show of Hands – B

**Attempt
to stop all
development**

Show of Hands – C

**Work for a
Solution in the
South Channel**

Keep Communicating

- ▶ E-mail:
 - Please e-mail your comments and concerns to

info@SaveTheBalaFalls.com

- ▶ Documents and updates, e-mail sign-up:
 - <http://SaveTheBalaFalls.com>
- ▶ Bala Falls Community Association
 - <http://balafalls.spaces.live.com>