



Bala Falls

Proposed Hydro Generating Station

Town Hall Meeting
August 14, 2010

Bala Falls

- Invitations sent to:
 - Federal MP, Tony Clement and Provincial MPP, Norm Miller
 - Chief Blaine Commandant
 - All Municipal and District Councilors & all declared Township electoral candidates
 - Chamber of Commerce, Muskoka Lakes Association, Muskoka Rate Payers
 - Developer—Swift River Energy

- In attendance today:
 - Township of Muskoka Lakes
 - Karen Ellis, Mayor
 - Walt Schmid, Chief Administrative Officer
 - Mary Grady, District Councilor
 - Liz Denyar, Ward B Councilor
 - Dianne Davidson, Ward A Councilor
 - Electoral Candidates
 - Donald Kruckel, Jeff Mole, Philip Gearing, Phil Harding



Bala Falls

Community Support

- Thank you
 - Unprecedented number of excellent elevation requests
 - Typical file has 2 or 3--ours has well over 100 and counting
 - You can still write in!
 - We are making a difference
- “**Stop the Hydro Plant**” signs
 - Show broad support
 - Get yours today
 - Must be on private property



Bala Falls Agenda

- Project Update
 - Walt Schmid, CAO, Township of Muskoka Lakes
 - Mitchell Shnier, Save the Bala Falls
 - Sandy Currie, President, Moon River Property Owners Association
- Process – How do we get to a NO?
 - Alice Murphy



Township Update on North Bala Small Hydro Project



Key Issues of Township

- Legal Opinion
- Public Safety
- Protection of Property
- Impact on Bala's Economy



Extracts of Legal Opinion from Burgar Rowe re Green Energy Act

- Removes decision making into renewable energy projects from the municipal level of government
- Very unlikely that a municipality could prevent a green energy project from proceeding if it is likely to obtain EPA approval.
- Can appeal only on grounds that it will cause “serious harm to human health” or “serious and irreversible harm to plant life, animal life or the natural environment” with the burden of proof resting on the appellant
- Recommended approach is to participate actively in the consultative process at the earliest possible stage.
- Also recommended to focus on mitigative factors and alternatives that will attain the best solution for local municipal interests

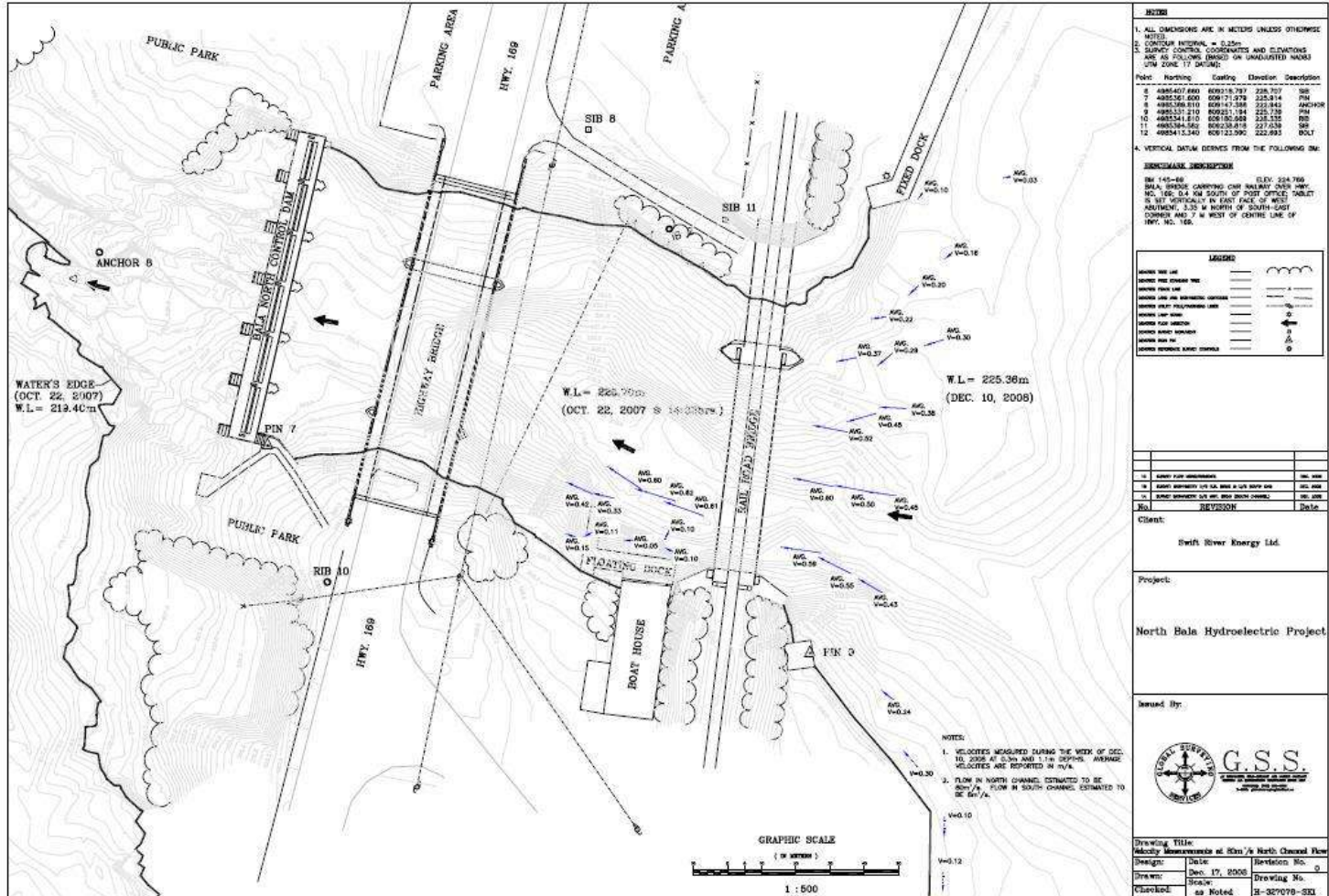
Public Safety and Protection of Property

- MNR will continue to operate dams during construction
 - In accordance with the Muskoka River Water Management Plan (MRWMP)
- Transport Canada okay's alternative canoe access sites.
 - Bala Wharf / Divers Point / Portage Street Dock
- Township proposes a short breakwall at south end of wharf
- Diving will not be allowed in the “secured” yellow area
- Township inquires about warning protocol when starting up the plant

Public Safety and Protection of Property

- Continued concerns re North Channel velocities at Wharf and Coffer Dam:
 - Swimmers/inexperienced boaters (tourists) / canoeists falling into water
 - Present configuration results in channel velocities greater than 0.6 m/s, being maximum approved by Transport Canada
 - Larger intake channel may decrease velocities but result in greater encroachment of the cofferdam into the channel and greater potential for upstream flooding and extended construction time, particularly if winter melt.
 - Establish a contingency plan for emergency removal of cofferdam
 - Confirm contractors insurance for any property damage

Velocities in the North Channel



REVISION

No.	REVISION	Date

Client:
Swift River Energy Ltd.

Project:
North Bale Hydroelectric Project

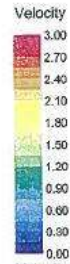
Issued By:
G.S.S.

Drawing Title:
Velocity Measurements at Site's North Channel Flow

Design:	Date:	Revision No.:
Drawn:	Dec. 17, 2008	0
Checked:	as Noted	H-327079-SXI

Upstream Post Development Conditions Power Flow – Bypass Flow

H327076_May_09_m



$Q_{in} = 82.00 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$
 $Q_{out} = 82.02 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$

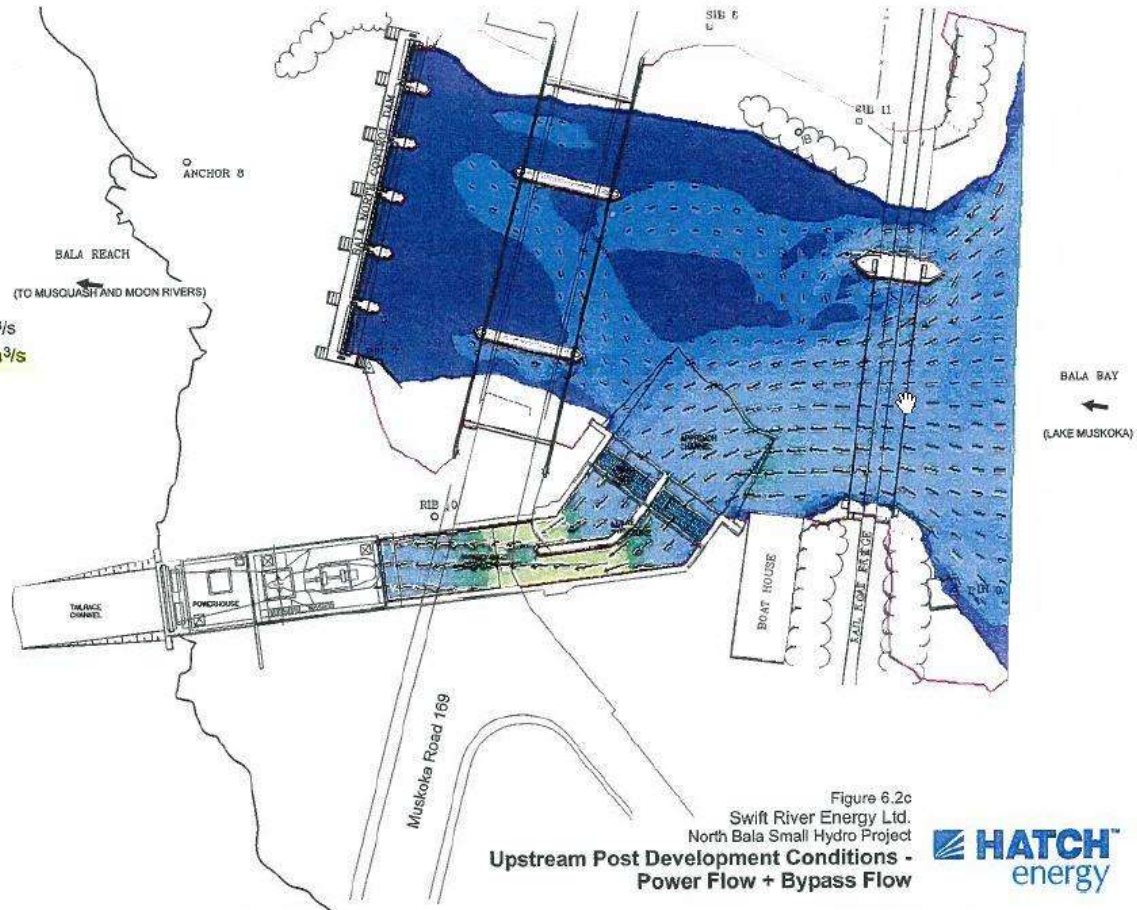
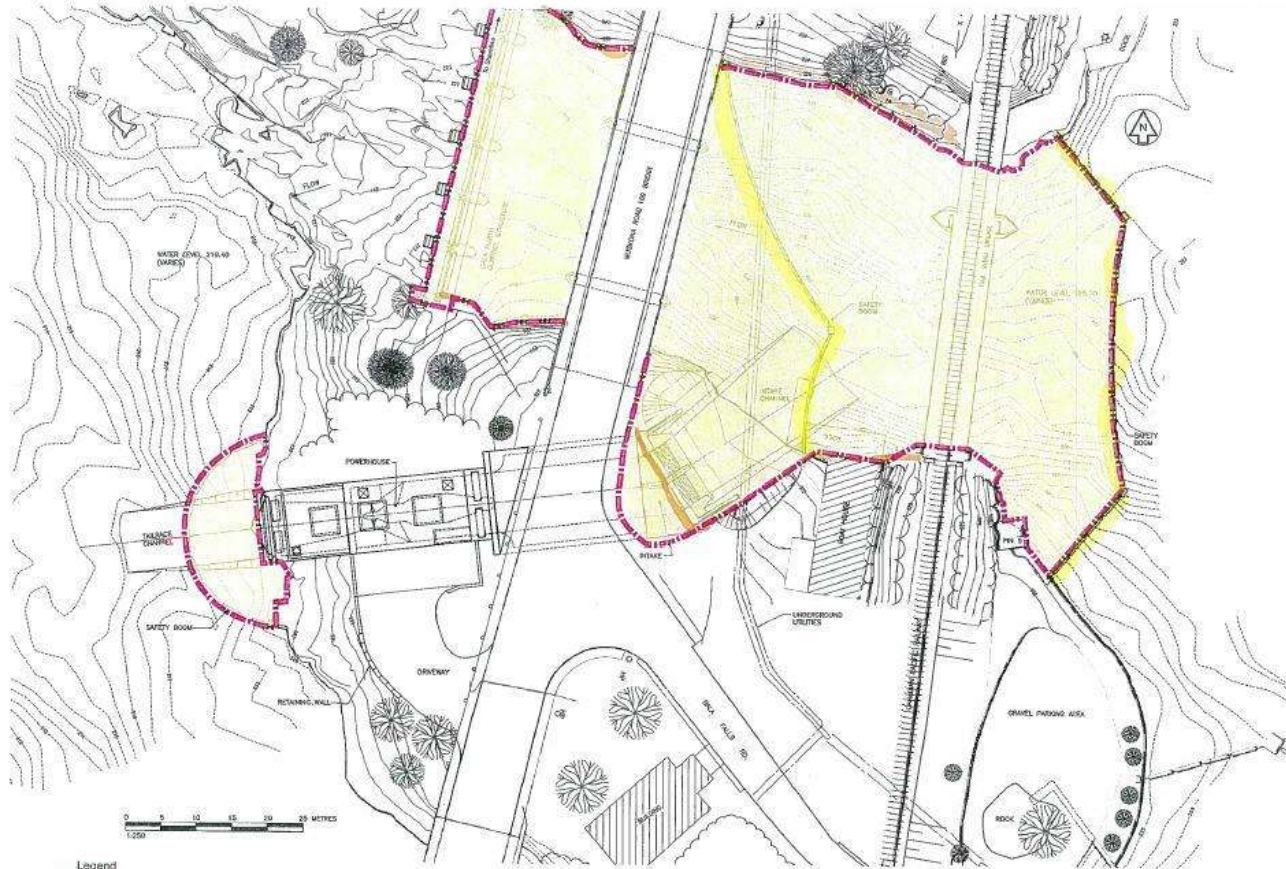



Figure 6.2c
Swift River Energy Ltd.
North Bala Small Hydro Project
Upstream Post Development Conditions -
Power Flow + Bypass Flow



Areas Restricted During Operation



Legend

-  Areas to which access will remain restricted (by signage and floating safety booms) following construction.

HAZTEFL_May_08.in

Figure 6.5
Swift River Energy Ltd.
North Bala Small Hydro Project
Areas Restricted During Operation



Impact on Bala's Economy

- Township had requested and SREL is undertaking an Economic Impact Study
 - Questionnaires to local businesses. (Over 100 questions)
 - Develop a list of business interruption mitigation measures ie. buy local policy
 - Township and Muskoka Lakes Chamber of Commerce participation
- Potential SREL participation in 4 Season Bridge Construction
- Coordinate night time closures for bailey bridge construction with emergency services, school boards etc
- No rock crushing on site
- Economic impact to pickerel spawning beds.
 - Department of Fisheries and Oceans jurisdiction and expertise.



Impact on Bala's Economy, Continued...

- SREL agrees to community and Township participation in proposed park design
- SREL will continue public access to south shore, west of existing dam
- SREL will restrict public access to south shore between the CPR Bridge and Muskoka Road #169 with fencing. SREL has committed to landscape / softening the look of the fencing
- Alternative canoe access points can be created
- SREL confirm that:
 - Trail on the north side of channel will not be effected, CPR bridge to Muskoka Road #169

Impact on Bala's Economy, Continued...

- Scenic Flows
 - Developer proposes to reduce flows at North and South falls to 1 m³/s.
 - Township
 - Existing summer flows at North Dam acceptable +/- 2 m³/s
 - Reducing South Dam flows to 1 m³/s unacceptable.
 - Major impact on Tourist Economy
 - Final Decision Ministry of Natural Resources and Ministry of the Environment
 - Other precedence has been set

North Dam at $2 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$



North Dam at $2 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$



South Dam at 2 m³/s



South Dam at 2 m³/s



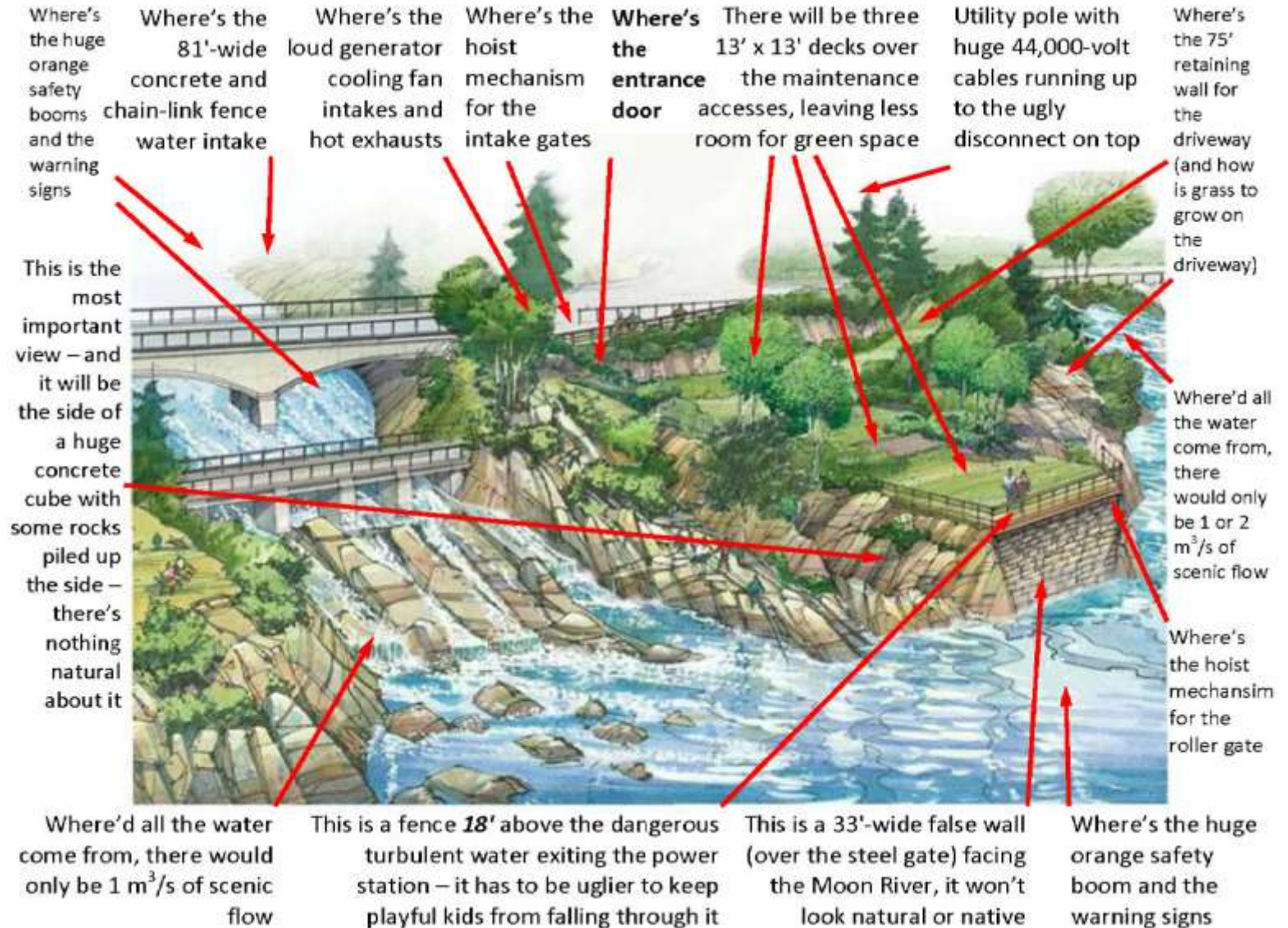
South Dam at 2 m³/s





TOWNSHIP OF
MUSKOKA
Lakes

Project



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

Where's the 81'-wide concrete and chain-link fence water intake

Where's the loud generator cooling fan intakes and hot exhausts

Where's the hoist mechanism for the intake gates

Where's the entrance door

There will be three 13' x 13' decks over the maintenance accesses, leaving less room for green space

Utility pole with huge 44,000-volt cables running up to the ugly disconnect on top

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

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 or 2 m³/s of scenic flow

Where's the hoist mechanism for the roller gate

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



We still don't know ...

- Will fencing be required?
 - Along the north channel ...
 - Current fencing at Bracebridge is barbed-wire
- Will the province require sirens and strobe lights?
 - Used every time the flow is changed
- Where's the door?
- How will adjacent water access be safe?



Some unresolved problems ...

- The “falls” would become a year-round drought-condition trickle of water
- The dangerous design of the safety booms
- How can a 33’-wide reinforced concrete building rising 18’ above the Moon River be considered “buried”?
- Losing hundreds of feet of the only publicly-accessible waterfront in the area
- Who has rescue responsibility?



Pre-Existing Recreational Use

- Ministry of the Environment's process did not require finding the best site
- Does not consider pre-existing recreational use
- Comparison would be Niagara Falls
 - Tourist town of a much larger scale
 - On average about one third flows over the Falls for scenic purposes and about two thirds is available for power generation
 - Bala has been offered one bathtub full/second

What about Green Energy?

- Safety should be our primary concern
- Community already has 3 power stations that do not interfere with safe recreational enjoyment on both the Lake and River
- Bala Falls represents the community's primary economic anchor
 - Reason that people come to Bala
 - The Falls will become essentially dry rock.
- Small amount of energy produced from this project will principally be in spring & fall when not needed, and will in no way compensate for the economic destruction of the community



Township is NOT Powerless!

- The most important line of defense that we have is at the Township level.
- District takes its direction from the individual Townships, and Township needs to take its direction from its constituency.
- Wards A, B and C
- Our provincial and federal representatives are on record as taking their guidance from the community as represented by the Township and District

Process

- The only question currently being considered

Can the currently-proposed project proceed?

- Our responses November 27, 2009 said further study is required
 - Still waiting for decision by Ministry of the Environment



Class vs Individual EA Project

- Class EA Projects—90% of all projects:
 - Routine and predictable
 - Environmental effects can be mitigated
 - Self-assessment, proponent-driven process
- Individual EA projects are:
 - Large and complex projects with the potential for significant environmental impacts
 - Bump-up recommended by the Environmental Assessment and Approvals Branch (EAAB)
 - Decided by the Minister of the Environment



Evaluation Criteria for Bump-Up

- What makes this project different?
- What type of concerns have been raised?
- How significant are these factors and differences?
- What is the benefit of elevating the assessment?
- Is there any other legislation that is relevant?



Not a “Done Deal”!

- The Ministry of the Environment welcomes further input from the community
- Leaving today we will provide you with a handout that includes the key contact information at the local, provincial, and federal levels
- These are all important folks in the decision making process and they need to hear your concerns

We Have The Power

- In our opinion ...

**Our municipal politicians
CAN STOP this project**

- Both proposals require land from the District
- Green Energy and Green Economy Act do not require municipality to provide land to a private developer

Can you make a difference?

- Sign up for updates at savethebalafalls.com
- Write letters
 - Your time to provide input is not at all over, and your concerns will be considered
 - Township, District, MPP, MOE and MP
- Ask questions of your municipal candidates
- Vote
 - About 8 weeks from now
 - Candidates need to LOUDLY hear this is an important election issue
 - Most are continuing to avoid leadership



Municipal Elections

- Candidates declared
 - September 10, 2010.
- Township Meeting
 - September 18, 2010
- Voter kits (enables you to vote by mail)
 - Mailed out the week of September 27, 2010.
- Voting day
 - Monday, October 25, 2010