

March 25, 2013

The Honourable David Oraziatti
Minister of Natural Resources
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99 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, ON M7A 1W3
Phone: 416 314-2301
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Dear Minister Oraziatti:

**Re: Public Consultation for Proposed Hydro-electric Generating Station at the
Bala Falls**

Summary

There has been no public consultation for the LRIA location approval assessment for the subject proposed project even though this is required:

- As effective public consultation is necessary according to the Ministry of Natural Resource's Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act Administrative Guide.
- Because the construction and operation of the proposed project would have major risks to life, to public infrastructure, and to private property, and these have not yet been made known to the public, nor has the proponent explained the mitigation they would provide.
- As the environmental assessment process did not provide public consultation for the proponent's current Alternative 1A proposal, for example to present the new risks and dangers.

Please respond with how the public consultation requirements will be fulfilled.

Detail

We await your response to our March 4, 2013 letter to you in which we noted location concerns for the proposed hydro-electric generating station at the Bala falls, such as:

- 1) Life-and-death risks to the public, both:
 - a) During operation, as it would bring the fast water which typically exits through the south channel 250' closer, right to the recreational area at the base of the north falls, where for over 100 years, families have played in the water.
 - b) During construction, as the blasting and excavation would be directly adjacent to the north dam, which could cause it to fail.

2) The risk of damaging both:

a) Public property;

- As the blasting and excavation for construction would be directly adjacent to the supports for the highway bridge, which could lose their foundation.
- As we have shown, during the construction period the flow from heavy rains could not be passed through Bala due to the temporary cofferdam, and this could wash-out the highway bridge.

b) Private property, as the above risk of flooding affects all of Lake Muskoka.

The proponent held a public information centre for their Option 1 proposal in 2007, and for their Option 2 proposal in 2008. However, the proponent now has a completely different proposal they refer to as Alternative 1A and the construction of the intake and the location and orientation of the tailrace would present **new dangers and risks – and the public has not been informed of these** nor whether these would be adequately mitigated.

We note that for the location approval assessment, Section 3.2 of the Ministry of Natural Resource's Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act Administrative Guide **requires effective public consultation**.

Please respond with how the public will be informed of the risks and mitigation.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Mitchell Shnier, on behalf of SaveTheBalaFalls.com

Cc: Anne Collins, Planning & Information Management Supervisor, Parry Sound District, Ministry of Natural Resources, Anne.Collins@ontario.ca

The Honourable Jeff Leal, Minister of Rural Affairs, JLeal.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

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