

## SAFETY

The proposal to consider allowing the use of district land for construction of the generator resulted when it was widely agreed that the initial proposal could restrict public enjoyment of the falls. After reviewing "Option 2" we have concluded that the proposed intake and outflow systems, of the "new plan" are dangerously close to recreational areas. We submit that this new and much larger development is still too close for the safety of members of the public who use and enjoy these waters. Officials ought to be concerned about relocating fast flowing water to a recreational area.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING PROCESS

The proposal is subject to a screening process which is an exercise in mitigation. This process cannot result in a "refusal" of the proposal – only an approval whereby the company can claim that they have mitigated the public's "environmental" concerns. MOE refusal of this proposal is only possible if the process type is elevated to an Individual Environmental Assessment (EA).

The next stage of this process comes when SREL publicly releases a document called an Environmental Screening Report. At this stage members of the public may request an elevation to the EA process if they feel SREL has not done enough in mitigation to make up for any losses of cultural, tourism, heritage or other economic or public values.

## SAVETHEBALAFALLS.COM

**We are steadfast in our opposition to the construction of a hydro-electric generating plant at Bala Falls for many reasons and values linked to public safety, tourism, recreation, heritage and culture.**

**If the provincial government insists on tapping the energy at Bala Falls, we believe it is necessary that a detailed comparison of all possible options should be undertaken. The proposal involves using public property and there are justifiable public safety concerns. Therefore, evaluations must be done in an open and transparent manner, and in comparison with the applicant's proposal. The province must consider alternatives using actual and fair cost/benefit comparisons.**

## WANT TO HELP?

- **Attend the Town Hall meeting at the Bala Community Centre – October 10, 2009. Doors open at 9:30 am and the meeting starts at 10:00 am**
- **Voice your opinion by writing to or meeting with your MPP**
- **Sign-up for our e-newsletter at: <http://SaveBalaFalls.ca/lists>**
- **Wear your Save the Bala Falls T-shirt (available at Docktails in Bala)**
- **Sign-up as a volunteer at: <http://SaveBalaFalls.ca/volunteer>**
- **Donate funds online (see the DONATIONS page at <http://SaveTheBalaFalls.com>), or at Docktails (in Bala)**

What's this  
SaveTheBalaFalls  
all about?



Information about a  
proposal to construct a  
hydro-electric generating  
station on parkland at  
Bala Falls



## BALA FALLS IS A PARK

Our goal is to work with local government and other community groups to have the MNR designate the Bala Falls as a Conservation Reserve or Waterway Class Park in accordance with provincial processes.

Bala Falls is a cultural and natural tourism asset which has historically been used by the public as parkland. These values and uses are reflected in the Township of Muskoka Lakes Streetscape Improvements Plan.

New hydro-electric facilities that conflict with existing public uses or approved land use plans are considered problematic when they negatively impact the social, economic and recreational values of the public.

The Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserve Act, 2006 specifically precludes hydro-electric facilities from designated parkland.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has processes to protect an area if it meets the provincial "Park Planning" objectives of protecting diverse natural, cultural and recreational landscapes.



EXCERPT FROM THE TOWNSHIP OF MUSKOKA LAKES  
STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

## SUMMARY OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR

- A new provincial policy for the release of crown land sites for hydro-electric generation use issued for public comment: April 2, 2004
- Public comment stage ended: June 1, 2004
- Site release policy finalized: November 10, 2004
- Request for Proposal issued by MNR for applications to use Bala Falls and a few other sites: March 7, 2005
- Swift River Energy Limited (SREL) awarded exclusive right to complete the application and approvals process: August 9, 2005.
- SREL issues their "Notice of Commencement" to develop a hydro-electric generating station at Bala Falls: March 10, 2006
- SREL presents "much maligned" (Option 1) preliminary design: Summer 2007
- SREL presents a "new plan" (Option 2) and asks the District Municipality of Muskoka to "consider" allowing use of "district land" for the proposed generating station: Summer 2008
- The District Municipality of Muskoka resolves it will "consider" SREL's request after the ongoing environmental approval process: October 14, 2008
- SREL indicates they are nearly ready to release their Environmental Screening Report (ESR): in late 2008 or early 2009
- Ontario Power Authority issues Revised Draft Price Schedule which outlines the publicly subsidized purchase price for new small hydro supplies: July 8, 2009
- Ministry of Environment (MOE) decides there is cause to delay release of the ESR document as of summer 2009

## WHAT'S NEXT?

- The public may submit comments to the MOE only within the thirty day period after SREL has publicly issued the ESR (date to be determined by SREL)
- Ministry of Natural Resources could designate Bala Falls a Conservation Reserve or Waterway Class Park.
- Ministry of Environment could refuse approval of the proposal. First, they must allow an elevation of the project review status to Individual Environmental Assessment (EA).
- District Municipality of Muskoka could refuse to allow use of District land.
- SREL could withdraw if they cannot mitigate public concerns or get the required approvals.