

Muskrat Falls will get special debate in legislature

Premier's announcement comes after critical PUB report on proposed hydro project

[CBC News](#)

Posted: Apr 2, 2012 3:32 PM NT

Last Updated: Apr 2, 2012 5:29 PM NT

Premier Kathy Dunderdale now says the house of assembly will hold a special debate on the Muskrat Falls hydro project, just days after her natural resources minister flatly rejected the possibility.

“My responsibility is to the people of the province,” Dunderdale said in the legislature. “Members opposite have been demanding a debate. Your request is now being accommodated.”

The announcement came in the wake of a critical report by the province’s Public Utilities Board.

The board concluded it does not have enough information to determine whether Muskrat Falls is the best long-term power option for Newfoundland.

The government has commissioned another series of reports on energy needs and possibilities.

The special debate will take place after that information becomes available.

Just over a week ago, Natural Resources Minister Jerome Kennedy rejected the need for a special debate in the house on Muskrat Falls.

“The problem right now is that I’m not sure these opposition parties are going to provide quality debate on anything,” Kennedy said during an interview on the March 24 episode of On Point with David Cochrane.

The legislature has reconvened for such special sessions in the past – often at the insistence of the Progressive Conservatives.

In 2002, the house had a special debate on the Voisey’s Bay deal. The same thing happened in 2005, when Fishery Products International wanted to spin off some of its assets into an income trust.