

16 February 1978

MEMO FOR: RECORD

SUBJECT: Status of the Proposed Legislation for the Classification of Portions of the Skagit River and Selected Tributaries Under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, PL 90-542

1. Purpose. In order to determine the relationship of the Skagit River Levee and Channel Improvement Project and alternatives to be presented at the upcoming public meeting to the subject proposed legislation, I contacted the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) in Washington, D.C., on 14 February 1978.

2. Conversation With Mr. Bob Franks, U.S. Forest Service (Office of General Counsel). Mr. Franks informed me that:

a. The proposed legislation had been submitted to Congress last year but had not yet been introduced.

b. Congressman Mead is supporting Alternative B of the USFS's report which proposes classification from Hamilton upstream, rather than from the pipeline crossing at Sedro Woolley. Mr. Franks referred me to Bob Potter, USFS, for more detailed information.

3. Conversation With Mr. Bob Potter, USFS. Mr. Potter provided me with the following information:

a. The USFS's proposed legislation was sent to the President on 6 May 1977, who forwarded it to Congress on 23 May 1977 along with his environmental message.

b. The proposal as now written includes from the pipeline crossing at Sedro Woolley upstream to the mouth of Bacon Creek; the Cascade River from its mouth upstream to the junction of its North and South Forks, and up the South Fork to the Glacier Peak Wilderness; the Sauk River, from its mouth upstream to Elliott Creek, and up its North Fork from its mouth to the Glacier Peak Wilderness; and the Suiattle River, from its mouth upstream to the Glacier Peak Wilderness. The Skagit River is eligible for inclusion in the National System at a recreational classification. The Cascade, Sauk, and Suiattle Rivers are all eligible for inclusion in the National System at a Scenic classification.

16 February 1978

SUBJECT: Status of the Proposed Legislation for the Classification of Portions of the Skagit River and Selected Tributaries Under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, PL 90-542.

Mr. Potter referred me to Congressman Mead's office for additional information.

4. Conversation With Mr. Rick Cocker of Congressman Mead's office.
Mr. Cocker provided me with the following:

a. Congressman Burton (California), Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks, is currently in the process of preparing the Omnibus Conservation Bill, which will be introduced to Congress in approximately two weeks. He's included in this bill the USFS's proposed classification of the Skagit River under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. It is unknown at this time whether the classification will be written from the pipeline crossing at Sedro Woolley or from Hamilton. Burton intends to make the bill as uncontroversial as possible.

If it is found that the supporters of the Skagit River classification will use the designation to fight consideration of the Skagit River nuclear powerplant at Sedro Woolley, **Congressman Mead intends to support the Hamilton alternative;** although he prefers the USFS's proposal as is. He does not feel that the powerplant and classification are incompatible.

b. Further, Mr. Mead is proposing that a clause be written under the Values Section of Burton's bill that states that future riprapping be permitted to protect farmland along the upstream Skagit River reaches. **The proposed Récréational classification does allow existing riprap to remain but precludes future placement.**

c. The USFS's proposed legislation as written is incompatible with construction of an upstream storage dam on the Sauk, Cascade, or Suiattle. It is at this time likely that Mr. Mead will offer an amendment which would remove the Sauk River from classification if it is found that upstream storage is the most cost-effective alternative for flood damage protection. Mr. Cocker indicated there was little chance of this amendment passing.

NPSEN-PL-ER

16 February 1978

SUBJECT: Status of the Proposed Legislation for the Classification
of Portions of the Skagit River and Selected Tributaries
Under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, PL 90-542.

5. Summary. Of the five structural alternatives to be presented at the public meeting for the Skagit Levee and Channel Improvement project, the two which contain upstream storage are incompatible with the subject proposed legislation as currently written. I will contact Congressman Mead's office for another update of the status of the proposed legislation just prior to the public meeting in March.

KAREN METTLING

cc:
Dice
Bush
Mettling
Hogan
Munsell/Salo
Brooks (Reg Plng)
McKinley (Reg Plng)
Cook (Design Br)
FPMS
Econ & Soc Eval Sec
ERS RP File