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CORPS

NPSEN-DB

7 FEB 1979

SUBJECT: Skagit River, Washington, Levee and Channel Improvements

Division Engineer, North Pacific
ATTN: NPDEN-TE

1. Forwarded separately for your review and comment is the preliminary draft General Design Memorandum/Environmental Impact Statement (GDM/EIS) on Skagit River, Washington, Levee and Channel Improvements.
2. We are continuing our review concurrent with your review. We will appreciate obtaining as many advance comments as possible by the end of February. An early start on resolving comments is necessary to assure meeting our scheduled 26 March 1979 agency review submittal and final GDM/EIS submittal to you in June 1979.
3. Basic assumptions used in preparation of this report, and items which were developed too late to be shown in the draft, are described in inclosure 2. Late items will be forwarded to you shortly and will be included in the agency review draft.
4. We recognize there are significant policy issues related to this project. These issues have been discussed with members of your staff during the past year, and we will be discussing these matters in greater detail at the fiscal year (FY) 1980 budget briefing starting 8 February and during your review.
5. This project will provide critically needed flood reduction measures to rapidly developing urban areas and productive rural areas. The local sponsor, Skagit County (along with other local governments and groups), is a strong supporter of the proposed project and has obtained solid support from both Senators Magnuson and Jackson, along with Congressman Al Swift. A Skagit County Commissioner will be in Washington, D.C. during the week of 5 February talking to the Washington Congressional Delegation to gain support for construction funding in FY 1980.
6. There has been no organized opposition to the project. Environmental agencies have expressed satisfaction with the project design and mitigation measures included to reduce project related impacts on the environment.

Cook/mb/ 3456
6 February 1979

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7. If you have questions regarding details in the draft GDM/EIS, please contact Messrs. Vernon Cook or Forest Brooks (telephone FTS 399-3450 or 3621, respectively).

DERRICK

SELLEWOLD

2 Incl

1. Draft GDM/EIS (10 cys)
(fwd sep)
2. Assumptions/Late Items

JOHN A. POTEAT
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Engineer

~~EXEC OFCS/~~

~~MAILROOM K.E. Co~~
3958

ED DB FILE

cc w/incl 2:

Exec Ofc

Ch, Plng Br

Reg Plng Sec

ERS Sec

REG. Plng (Brooks)

Des Br (Cook)

WP, Engr (1203E)

Coord w/:

Hogan

Farrar

Brooks

Mettling

PEDERSEN

LTC CARPENTER

COL POTEAT

SKAGIT RIVER, WASHINGTON
LEVEE AND CHANNEL IMPROVEMENTS
GENERAL DESIGN MEMORANDUM/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

ASSUMPTIONS

1. Existing legislation is adequate and no additional congressional action required except appropriation of construction funds. Draft legislation (copy previously provided to you) has been provided to local interests and elected officials which provides for: (a) extension of study area to Sedro Woolley, (b) raising levels of protection to 50 and 100 years, (c) adding recreation as a project purpose, and (d) payment of local cooperation costs by the Federal Government with repayment by local sponsor over 50 years. If locally proposed legislation fails to be approved by Congress and signed into law, a Post-Authorization Change or Significant Post-Authorization Change may be required.
2. Capability criteria for fiscal year (FY) 1980 construction funding will be revised to show a FY 1980 construction start.
3. FY 1980 funding for a new construction start will be added via a Presidential supplemental appropriations bill or in congressional add-on in the appropriations bill.

LATE ITEMS

4. Nookachamps-Clear Lake Areas. Effects of project on the Nookachamps-Clear Lake area were identified in early December 1978 and discussed in the 20 December 1978 public workshop. A need for more survey, hydrology, and hydraulic base data was required before full evaluation of potential alternatives could be completed. Structural and nonstructural measures are under study and should be completed before the end of February 1979. We are not optimistic that anything but limited structural measures at the town of Clear Lake will be economically justified.
5. In NPDPL 1st Ind, 12 Dec 1978. to NPS-DB basic letter, 12 Nov 1978, subject: Skagit Levee and Channel Improvement Project, you suggested the general design memorandum/environmental impact statement (GDM/EIS) include consideration of such measures as tie-back levees that would be required if additional legislation does not provide for upstream reaches of the proposed project. Development of these features was delayed until all hydraulics were completed and is being considered now. This information will be forwarded to you within 2 weeks and will probably provide for a tie from the Avon-Bend to Bay View Ridge. There would be some induced impacts to the town of Burlington and Samish River Basin during flood events having greater than a 10 percent chance of occurring annually.

Trcl 2

6. Habitat Restoration and Mitigation Measures (HR&MM). The final meeting with environmental agencies on 25 January 1979 to review the HR&MM did not leave time to include all of the agreed upon HR&MM and costs in the draft report. Cost of the HR&MM would add about \$670,000 to project costs. These HR&MM are as follows:

a. General habitat restoration measures for the riprap slopes in reaches identified as providing critical streamside cover to fish and wildlife. Design for this feature includes topsoil, seeding, added riprap, and planting selected shrub species (\$350,000).

b. Habitat restoration along Fisher Slough right bank which provides for planting trees and shrubs following slough realignment (\$5,000).

c. Grass seeding of levee tops and landward berms (\$50,000).

d. Mitigation measures - the following items are all on state-owned land adjacent to project levees:

(1) Improvements of existing Washington Department of Game dike along right bank of Freshwater Slough to permit tree planting along inside of dike (\$50,000).

(2) Tree plantings along Freshwater Slough dike and on Milltown Island (\$190,000).

(3) No Name Island culverts to reopen a slough and provide shallow rearing area for juvenile anadromous fish (\$25,000).

7. The controlled failure points are described and provided for, but the minor (\$5,000) reduction in costs is not identified in the total project costs.

8. The induced damages for the Sedro Woolley area will be reduced due to added protection for houses behind floodproofing measures provided for the sewage treatment facility. Previous economic analysis considered that these houses would incur flood damages.

OTHER

9. The design of levees for rural area protection downstream of Mount Vernon has been to the phase II or feature design memorandum level. The additional levee cross sections, soundings, field note inventory, detailed quantities, and foundation exploration has resulted in a reduction of contingencies to 20 percent. A substantial amount of computations, cross section layouts on 1"=100', is available in our office to support what is shown in the GDM.

10. The EIS is part of the project document. The EIS will not be an appendix but an EIS. The project document will consist of the GDM, the EIS, and technical appendixes. This was agreed upon with members of NPD-NPS staff in August 1978. This arrangement is different than the present guidelines suggest; i.e.. placing EIS just prior to the recommendations paragraph in the report.

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