

MS - to Gibson Info

Z. Godway

15 January 1966

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NPSEN-BP & NPSEN-PP

MEMO FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting Regarding Recreation Potential - Avon Bypass Project, Skagit River, Washington.

1. On 5 January 1966, Messrs. Skrinde and Denny of NPS and Mr. Pike of Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, **discussed the recreation potential of the Avon Bypass** project with the Skagit County Park Board at Mount Vernon. The following attended:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Ann Wolford, Chairman	Skagit County Park and Recreation Board
Lauch Crow, Secretary	Skagit County Park and Recreation Board and Skagit County Supt. of Schools
Wayne Kite	Skagit Co. Planning Director
Gerald Mitchell	HUB Sportsman Council Burlington
Lloyd H. Johnson	County Engineer
Ray Skrinde	Corps of Engineers
Mark Pike /	Bureau of Outdoor Recreation
George M. Dynes	Port of Skagit County
James R. Hammack	Skagit County Park Board
Fred Weakley	Port of Skagit County
Otto Greenstreet	County Park Board
J. W. Pazvitz, MD	Skagit Park Board
Maurice H. Lundy	Bureau of Outdoor Recreation
Thomas G. Thompson	Skagit County Planning Commission
Floyd Kamb	Skagit County Planning Commission
Chris Werfhorst	Wildcat Steelhead Club, Sedro Woolley
Gerald E. Mitchell, President	HUB Sportsman Assoc., Burlington
Lloyd Dobe	Washington and Snohomish County Sportsman, Everett
Leurs A. Bree	Lands Committee, Washington State Sports Council, Everett
Tom Prater	Mount Vernon
Peter P. Denny	Corps of Engineers
E. B. Wolford	Retired Civil Engineer
Dale Thompson	Department of Natural Resources, Sedro Woolley

2. Mr. Skrinde reviewed the history and the present status of the Avon Bypass project. He briefly discussed the general PS&AW study, participating agencies and the work being accomplished in the Skagit River Basin under the PS&AW Comprehensive Study.

3. Mr. Denny discussed authorities for Corps participation in recreation development at non-reservoir projects. He compared the recreation potential of Avon Bypass with recreational use of State parks in the area. He discussed the proposed resident fishery and boat launching ramps to provide access to the Bypass channel. He further discussed the potential of future general recreation, including camping, swimming, and picnicking along the Bypass project. Mr. Denny also reported on the Federal Water Conservation Act (PL 89-72) and the possibility of Federal assistance up to 50% of the construction cost of general recreation.

4. Mr. Pike of BOR reviewed some of the current legislation on recreation including the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. He reported on the growing demand for recreation in the Pacific Northwest and the influence of wild rivers on the Skagit Valley. He also discussed the Puget Sound Study and the coordination of the recreation committee with state and county recreation plans. **Mr. Pike showed a 20-minute film entitled "Wild Rivers".** *Copy of film is attached.*

5. Considerable general discussion followed the presentation. Mr. Wolford, retired Civil Engineer, questioned whether the Bypass was needed **if the Skagit River could be dredged.** **He was informed of the undermining of existing levee system that would occur from extensive dredging of the river and of anticipated extensive dredging maintenance costs which would be a non-Federal cost.** In response to a question on annual maintenance of the Bypass project, figures were quoted from the reactivation report.

6. Mr. Bell questioned the extent that Ross Dam provides flood control for the basin. **The guarantee that the City of Seattle will operate Ross Dam for flood control.** Mr. Bell was informed that FPC license for **Ross Dam requires that 120,000 acre feet of flood storage be provided,** and that the Corps of Engineers coordinates closely with the City of Seattle for operation during floods. The effects of Ross Dam in reducing flood flows at Sedro Woolley was discussed for several flood magnitudes.

7. **Mr. Bell inferred that the Corps of Engineers does not have support for development of recreation in the Avon Bypass project.** He was advised that the State Departments of Fisheries and Game and the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation support recreational development of the project. Letters from these agencies have been included in the March 1965 survey report on "Flood Control and other Improvements for Skagit River". After the meeting, one of the local representatives pointed out to Mr. Pike that 50% Federal participation for development of general recreation can be obtained from several sources including the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act administered by BOR. Therefore, the local dollar for recreation should be spent at the location having the greatest recreational potential.

8. The Corps' representatives received many favorable comments after the meeting from Mr. Kite, the Skagit County Planning Director, and others on information presented to them on recreation potential of Avon Bypass project. (SKRINDE AND DENNY)

cc: Skrinde
Knutson

RAS
Denny
Gullidge

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Released by Mark Pike
meeting on Feb 10
Jan 5 1966

Talk by Mark Pike
B.O.R.

5 Jan 1966
Mt Vernon.

Mr. Chairman:

I appreciate the opportunity to explain briefly what we are doing in our recreation planning efforts for the Puget Sound and Adjacent Waters Comprehensive Study. Basically, this study is to determine what we have in recreational resources, what the region's needs will be, what areas will be available and suitable for these needs, when we will want them, and how much they will cost. In particular, our study is directed to water-oriented recreation and how a comprehensive water-resource development program will fit into a needed recreation program.

Admittedly, we do not have all of the answers to the many questions and the problems relating to this program. However, we are working on them and will have, at least in part, some answers which will enable the region to go forward in a comprehensive water-related development program.

In the first place, we want to emphasize that our studies are based entirely on a cooperative approach. In fact, we feel that cooperation is the only way in which we can hope to achieve some degree of success in an overall recreation plan for the Puget Sound Basin and the sub-basins which are a part of it. Without the full cooperation and participation of all interested parties and agreement among the many Federal, State, local, and private interests, our efforts would be largely meaningless and would be of doubtful value.

The Recreation Committee is made up of representatives of the National Park Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Corps of Engineers, Soil Conservation Service, and State Parks and Recreation Commission. The latter member represents other State interests in recreation on the committee. Although this is the present membership of the committee, it is open to representation from other governmental agencies having responsibilities in the field of recreation. This would, of course, include cities and counties and other agencies concerned with the recreational development of the region.

The main objective of the study, as previously mentioned, is to determine what we have, what we need, where we need it and when, and how much it will cost. When this has been determined, the committee will be in a position to make recommendations for appropriate action programs to fulfill these needs.

In addition to the foregoing, there are other jobs to be done by the Recreation Committee. Among them will be to determine the economic value of outdoor recreation to the Puget Sound region and to determine the relationship between the tourist industry and the recreation industry. These two are so closely related that monetary separation is exceedingly difficult. It is generally recognized, however, that the recreation industry - which includes tourism - ranks third in economic importance in the Puget Sound region. The fact that the State of Washington ranks first in the nation in the number of tourists is a reflection of the fact that it is a highly attractive area for recreation.

Another job we will have to do is determine planning standards for development. This is necessary in order to determine the requirements of water and related land programs and to determine costs and benefit/cost ratios. Another job is to identify research problems. There is a great deal that we do not know about recreation in relation to people's needs and demands. Then, of course, there is the problem of conflict between various resource uses, and the need for legislation and policies for guidance in a recreation development program.

Another major segment of the job will involve the question of coordination between Federal, State, county and private development. Ordinarily, Federal development is based on the development of a recreation resource, and quite often such is the case in State planning. However, very often cities and counties must orient their programs to people and develop what resources there are to the greatest extent possible to serve the public. One of the jobs of this committee and for inclusion in the report will be to define these relative needs.

As has been previously pointed out, the development of a Puget Sound Comprehensive Plan will be based on comprehensive individual river basin plans and how these plans for these individual basins will best fit into an overall program for the entire Puget Sound area. The Skagit basin is one of the most important sub-basins, both from a recreation standpoint and the standpoint of other resources in the Puget Sound area. We believe its future potential in the field of recreation is of great significance to the State, and how it is developed and used will be of primary concern to the economy of the region.

Several developments are planned or under way which will greatly influence the future of the Skagit basin. Among these are the Avon Bypass and the North Cascades Highway. You are already familiar to a large extent with the plans for the Avon Bypass, and probably also with plans for the North Cascades Highway. However, we would just briefly mention that the highway is scheduled for completion in about 1973. This will have a tremendous impact on the Skagit Basin and will make accessible by vehicle some of the most inspiring alpine scenery in the United States. It will also stimulate many recreation activities, including, camping, hiking, fishing, skiing, and other related activities in areas which are now only accessible *only* by trails or primitive roads. This highway will make accessible a mountain wonderland to more than 4,000,000 people in the Puget Sound area. To most of these people, these areas will be available within a time zone of less than three hours.

The extent of this economic impact cannot now be envisioned, but there is no question but that it will be of great importance to the local economy. With proper planning and foresight, these recreation opportunities will result in providing a great economic return to the Skagit Valley and its cities, and to the region at large.

Another point that we would like to mention briefly, and which is in your front yard, concerns the San Juan Islands and their present status. The use of these islands for recreation is just beginning, and we predict that before long their importance in an economic and a region-wide recreation program will greatly increase. They will become one of the most important playgrounds of America, and to insure their full potential intelligent and comprehensive planning is essential.

One of our best recreation customers in the Skagit Valley is Greater Vancouver, B.C., with a population of about 1,000,000 people. This area lies only about one hour and a half from the Skagit basin, and upon completion of the four-lane freeway the travel time will probably be reduced to less than one hour. Preliminary information indicates there are more Canadians skiing at Mt. Baker and camping at Birch Bay than ~~there~~ are United States citizens. The importance of this Canadian contribution to the economy of the Valley is of ^{great} ~~great~~ significance and will continue to increase, if our recreation resources and facilities are adequately developed. While British Columbia has great recreation resources, many of the rivers and mountains are inaccessible, and we can look forward to increased participation by the Canadians in this country for many years.

The North Cascades highway will have a profound effect on travel of Canadians as well as Americans. Highway access to Ross Lake in the United States will be facilitated and will open up to unrestricted public access an excellent fishing and boating opportunity in a semi-wilderness environment.

Wilderness areas in the upper Skagit valley add an extensive dimension to the recreational pattern. The combination of precipitous peaks, alpine meadows, glacial lakes, forest camps, and rivers permitting excellent fishing and white-water boating, represents part of the outstanding resources of this area. The wild river possibility

if approved by Congress, could be an important part of the overall recreation pattern for this area. This possibility, of course, depends on the action of Congress, and whether or not legislation is enacted which would establish a wild rivers system in the United States.

I am sure that all of you are familiar with the North Cascades and the several resources management decisions which are pending regarding that area. Tomorrow we could talk about some of these decisions, as they will be released at a press conference by the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior in Seattle tomorrow. So far, however, we have no knowledge of what these decisions will be and can only surmise with the rest of you what they might be. We feel that, whatever the decisions are, they will be oriented toward the best interests of the region and the local economy. These decisions we believe will be significant milestones in this area's resource management future.

In conclusion I would like to emphasize a few of the points discussed this evening. The relationship of the Skagit River basin with the principal population centers of the region is changing rapidly. Consequently, outdoor recreation planning has achieved an equal stature with other planning activities, including industrial growth, other resource utilization, transportation, and other activities. We need clear perception to visualize the effects of some of these changes discussed tonight, and which are being considered in our Puget Sound

report. Recreation planning requires us to forecast and project the location and type of the people's outdoor pleasures. Although this is a simplification, it is essentially the main task on which we are engaged.

In considering the factors of the report which will influence recreation interests in the Skagit basin, such as mobility, resources, urbanization, access, and so forth, it is evident that our search for outdoor opportunities will to a large extent be directed toward the Skagit River area.

We must also look beyond immediate ^{recreation} interests and view the trends in agriculture, forestry, and industrialization, and what impact they will have on the future well-being of the residents of this valley. The locational ^{in the} representation of the people in recreation areas is the guidance system in our planning vehicle. We trust that through working together we can keep it on the track, ^{and guide it in} ~~the right direction~~.