

DAEN-CWP-W (23 Aug 77) 2nd Ind
SUBJECT: Reclassification of Authorized Skagit River, Washington,
Avon Bypass Project

DA, Office of the Chief of Engineers, Washington, D. C. 20314

NOV 22 1977

TO: Division Engineer, North Pacific

1. The Avon Bypass is a separable element in a 3-element flood control plan for the Skagit River below Sedro-Woolley. It is primarily a diversion facility and its construction would improve substantially the degree of flood protection to the lower valley below Interstate 5. Previous reclassification of this element to the "deferred" category was based on local interests unwillingness to provide the required local cooperation. Paragraph 4 of preceding 1st Indorsement states that "---it is unlikely that construction of the bypass will occur in the near future." Therefore, in the absence of any reasonable expectation of obtaining local cooperation in the near future, the rationale for reclassification of the bypass at this time is not apparent since conditions have not changed. (Paragraph 13b.(2)(c) of ER 11-2-240).
2. We recognize the need for urban levee protection upstream of Interstate 5, particularly for the Sedro-Woolley, Burlington, and Mount Vernon areas and we are informally advised that such improvements are not only highly desirable but also that investigation will demonstrate their economic feasibility. Such an investigation could be accomplished by expanding the present AE&D studies to include the reach of the Skagit River between Interstate 5 and Sedro-Woolley. An expansion of the study area leading to recommendations for protection of these new areas would require that a Special Post Authorization Change (SFAC) be processed to Congress. Construction of the authorized levees and channel improvements downstream of Interstate 5 would have to await Secretarial, OMB, and Congressional approval of the proposed improvement upstream thereof.
3. The Puget Sound and Adjacent waters study authority provides ample authority to make an interim study of the urban area needs upstream from Interstate 5. It has the advantage of not being subject to the new start process, it can be initiated immediately upon in-house transfer of funds, and it will in no way interfere with the orderly completion of AE&D and construction of the lower valley improvements. OCE strongly favors Seattle District's initiation of such an interim as soon as practicable to cover the urban flood damage needs between Sedro-Woolley and Interstate 5. In view of the 40-year authorization of the Avon Bypass and the continued

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failure to obtain local cooperation, consideration should be given to a recommendation for deauthorization of the bypass as part of the interim study recommendations.

FOR THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS:

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CF:
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