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NPSEN-HH-WM (15 Jan 79) 2d Ind  
SUBJECT: City of Seattle, Washington - Project Number 553

DA, Seattle District, Corps of Engineers, Post Office Box C-3755,  
Seattle, Washington 98124

6 MAR 1979

TO: Division Engineer, North Pacific, ATTN: NPDEN

1. We have examined City of Seattle's application for a new major license for Skagit River Project Number 553 with respect to Corps of Engineers flood control, navigation, and regulating function responsibilities. Our review findings, following guidelines in ER 1140-2-4, dated 6 February 1978, are discussed below.

2. Flood Control.

a. Requirements in Articles 36 and 62 of FERC License Number 553 pertaining to flood control regulation at the Skagit River Project should be retained. Article 36 requires the licensee to provide 120,000 acre-feet of flood control storage during the period 1 October to 15 March. Article 36 includes, by reference, "Details of Regulation for Use of Storage Allocated for Flood Control in Ross Reservoir, Skagit River, Washington," revised 25 May 1967. This reference states that "In the event that the high dam is constructed at Ross (1725-foot pool) or any appreciable change in the economic development of the valley takes place which would necessitate a lower control flow at Concrete, a maximum of 180,000 acre-feet of flood control storage may be required." Current investigations by Seattle District in support of studies outlined in Article 62 confirm the need for 180,000 acre-feet of storage in Ross Reservoir. The added storage capacity would offset the loss of surcharge storage above elevation 1,725 feet m.s.l. eliminated by Article 63 of the license which restricts the maximum pool elevation of Ross Lake to elevation 1,725 unless higher levels are approved by the International Joint Commission and FERC.

b. Flood control storage in the Skagit River Project is an element of flood control for the lower Skagit Basin and has an affect on the following authorized Federal projects in the lower basin:

- (1) Avon Bypass Channel authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1936. This project is presently in a deferred status.
- (2) Levee and Channel Improvements. The Flood Control Act of 1966 authorized strengthening existing levees and channel improvements along the lower 17 miles of the Skagit River.

These two projects are evaluated in the Survey Report, "Review of Reports on Flood Control and Other Improvements, Skagit River, Washington," dated March 1966, published as House Document Number 483, 89th Congress, 2d Session. Seattle District is currently conducting advanced engineering

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and design studies for the above project ~~with construction scheduled to begin in FY 1980.~~ The report, "Comprehensive Study of Water and Related Land Resources, Puget Sound and Adjacent Waters," by the Puget Sound Task Force-Pacific Northwest River Basins Commission, dated March 1970, also addresses these flood control features.

c. Flood control storage of 74,000 acre-feet in Puget Sound Power and Light Company's existing Upper Baker hydroelectric project was approved under authority of Section 201 of the 1965 Flood Control Act by resolutions of House and Senate Public Works Committees during May 1977. The 74,000 acre-feet of flood control storage available between 15 November and 1 March would be used in conjunction with flood control storage in the Skagit River Project for flood protection in the lower Skagit Basin.

3. Navigation. The Skagit River is designated a navigable water of the United States from the mouth upstream to the Ranger Station at Marblemont, Washington, near river-mile 79, about 18 miles downstream from the Skagit River Project. No significant detrimental impact upon navigation in the Skagit River is known to exist because of the operation of Project Number 553. However, the Skagit River is used extensively for recreational boating and boat fishing, so continued prudent streamflow regulation for downstream boat safety is recommended.

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4. Regulatory Functions. A Department of the Army permit is required LATTA/NPSOP for discharge of dredged or fill material in the Skagit River under Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972.

FOSTER/PL-HP

5. The suspense date has been extended to 6 March 1979 per telephone conversation between Messrs. Robert Brown, NPSEN-HH-WM, and Pete Hengesteg, NPSEN-WM.

DICE/PL-ER

FARRAR/PL-RP

COOK/DB

WARD/FM

wd all incl

JOHN A. POTEAT  
Colonel, Corps of Engineers  
District Engineer

HOGAN/PL

cc w/incl:

Brown/HH-W

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