

NPDPL-PF (16 Sep 75) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Reclassification of Authorized Skagit River, WA,
Levee & Channel Improvement Project

DA, North Pacific Division, Corps of Engineers, 210 Custom House,
Portland, Oregon 97209 16 October 1975

TO: HQDA (DAEN-CWP)
WASH DC 20314

1. Reference ER 11-2-240 dated 1 November 1974, subject: "Civil Works Activities, Construction & Design." Paragraph 13.b.(2)(b) provides for the reclassification of projects where a survey investigating associated improvements develops sufficient information on which to base the reclassification of the authorized project. In this case, a recommendation on such reclassification is to be made on that basis, without further separate study.
2. This letter is submitted as a basis for reclassification of the subject project from the current "deferred" to "active" status and follows the method described by the referenced regulation.
3. The subject project (authorized in 1966) would provide flood protection to some 68,000 acres of delta flood plain at the mouth of the river. The improvements would increase the level of protection from once in 3 to 10 years, to a minimum of once in 8 years. The authorization report noted that if the levee improvements were constructed with the Avon Bypass, protection would be accomplished for floods with an expected recurrence of once in 35 years. To avoid a false sense of flood security, the report concluded that the levee and channel improvements should be constructed as an integral part of a basin plan for flood control, which as a minimum should include provision for construction of Avon Bypass project or upstream storage.
4. In March 1972, the Avon Bypass project was reclassified from the "active" to "deferred" status as there was no local sponsor. Since the Levee and Channel Improvement project was interrelated with the Avon Bypass project or upstream storage, it was also reclassified from "active" to "deferred" in March 1972.
5. The lack of upstream storage as a basis for classification in the "deferred" category is no longer applicable. I have submitted a report to BERH recommending additional upstream flood control storage as provided for in the FPC license on the Upper Baker project. BERH has recently taken favorable action on the "Authorization Report for Additional Flood Control at Upper Baker Project" and it is anticipated that the project will be authorized in the next Omnibus Bill.

NPDPL-PF: (16 Sep 75) 1st Ind 16 October 1975
SUBJECT: Reclassification of Authorized Skagit River, WA,
Levee & Channel Improvement Project

6. The additional flood control storage at the Upper Baker project together with the Levee and Channel Improvements would increase the minimum level of flood protection in the lower Skagit Valley from the current 3 years average recurrence interval to about 11 years for agricultural areas. This is the degree of protection which would be considered. The report authorizing the subject project found, at that time, that 8 year protection was unsatisfactory due to the false sense of security that the subject project would have encouraged. If this project were constructed under todays conditions, two programs would prevent the encouragement of a false sense of security. As part of the local cooperation agreement, local interests would be required to, at least annually, inform affected interests regarding the limitations of added protection afforded by the subject project. In addition, Skagit County has qualified for the National Flood Insurance Program and is pursuing the measures provided for by the program. The acts associated with implementing the program make all those people who own or would purchase structures in the flood plain intimately aware of the flood hazard. Therefore, it would be difficult if not impossible for an owner or prospective owner of property in the flood plain to be unaware of exactly the flood hazard which exists at any one time. Considering todays conditions at this location, I feel that the level of protection offered by the subject project would not encourage a false sense of security.

7. The project meets all other criteria for classification as "active". The project is necessary, engineeringly feasible, and economically justified with a benefit-to-cost ratio of 1.1 at 6-1/8 percent interest for existing conditions. The BCR is 1.2 assuming future growth as allowed by current regulations. Skagit County supports the project and has reaffirmed its ability and willingness to assure the responsibilities of local cooperation. There are no anticipated major problems of compliance with the requirements of local cooperation.

8. On the basis of the foregoing, and the information provided by the District Engineer, I request the subject project be reclassified from "deferred" to "active". Your early approval will permit me to express

