

A B I L L

To amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act by designating the Skagit River in Washington as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (82 Stat. 906 as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1274 et seq.), as amended, is further amended as follows:

In section 3(a) after paragraph (15) insert the following new paragraph:

"(16) Skagit, Washington--The segment from the pipeline crossing at Sedro Woolley upstream to and including the mouth of Bacon Creek; the Cascade River from its mouth to the junction of its North and South Forks; the South Fork to the boundary of the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area; the Sufattle River from its mouth to the boundary of the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area at Milk Creek; the Sauk River from its mouth to its junction with Elliott Creek; the North Fork of the Sauk River from its junction with the South Fork of the Sauk to the boundary of the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area; as generally depicted on the boundary map entitled "Skagit River - River Area Boundary;" the Skagit River segment to be administered by the State of Washington and all other segments to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture: Provided, That after consultation with State and local governments and the interested public, the Secretary shall take such action as is provided for under subsection 3(b) of this section within one year from the date of enactment of

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this paragraph (16): Provided further, That the purposes of
this river there are authorized to be appropriated not more than
\$11,734,000 for the acquisition of lands or interest in lands.

INSERT A

to P 3 of 14 JAN 77 NPDRE-MD letter

This is not a valid assessment of true flood control options available in the Skagit River basin. NPSN-PL-ER 2 October 1975 letter identifies two projects, the Avon Bypass and storage on the Sauk River, which are not mutually exclusive, but additive in terms of flood control accomplishment potential. It is true that by constructing a larger bypass, a level of flood protection is possible for the lower 15 miles of the Skagit River, comparable to protection that could be afforded from a combination of a smaller bypass and storage on the Sauk River. However, no viable alternative exists to the Sauk River storage project for protecting the 40 miles of Skagit River flood plain lying between the bypass site and the mouth of the Sauk River. Also, as previously brought out in the NPSN-PL-ER letter, substantial local cost-sharing requirements of the Avon Bypass for all practical purposes, preclude the bypass from being a feasible alternative. Little or no local cost-sharing would be necessary for Sauk River flood control storage. In order to make the bypass even a partial alternative to the Sauk River storage project local cost-sharing requirements established by Congress would have to be revised.

P 002409



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

Mon D/D 11am 1495

TO: Frank Urabeck - Ext. 3611
PAGES: 4
FM: NPD- Nordhill 3821

The President
The White House

Dear Mr. President:

I am pleased to send you a report recommending the designation of the Skagit River, Washington, and its immediate environs as an addition to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The study and the recommendations included in the report were made in response to the provisions of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (82 Stat. 906; 16 U.S.C. 1275-76).

The Skagit River from the town of Mount Vernon to and including the mouth of Bacon Creek; the Cascade River between its mouth and the junction of its North and South Forks; the South Fork to the boundary of the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area; the Sufattle River from its mouth to the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area boundary at Milk Creek; the Sauk River from its mouth to its junction with Elliott Creek; the North Fork of the Sauk River from its junction with the South Fork of the Sauk to the Glacier Peak Wilderness Area boundary were designated for study in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The study segments total about 166 miles in length. We, in conjunction with the State of Washington, conducted a detailed study of the river segments. The study found that the segments were clean and free-flowing with outstanding fish and wildlife, scenic, and recreational values. The study segments and their immediate environs fully meet the criteria for a scenic and recreational river classification as defined in section 2(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (82 Stat. 906, 16 U.S.C. 1273) and in the supplementary criteria developed by the Secretaries of Agriculture and of the Interior.

However, because of proposals for flood alleviation measures involving the lower reach of the Skagit study segment, we recommend that approximately 158 miles of the total 166 miles studied be designated for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The Skagit Wild and Scenic River Study Report has been reviewed by other Federal and State agencies as provided by section 4(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Copies of the review comments received are appended to the report. In addition to the study report, a Draft Environmental Statement was prepared and coordinated in accordance with section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of

FROM: (Name) OFFICE SYMBOL TELEPHONE NO. RELEASER'S SIGNATURE

F. B. BATT *DAENREM-I* *202-643-6779* _____

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F. B. BATT *NPD-RE m* *202-6221-3140* 5 P

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1969. Generally, the reviewers support our recommendation that the Skagit River and tributaries should be added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The Federal Power Commission and the Department of the Interior pointed out in their responses to the study report that some of the river segments proposed for designation contain reservoir sites with substantial hydroelectric power potential. Although there are no known plans to construct projects at any of the sites and development plans are only a theoretical evaluation of the water-power potential, the potential does exist and would be foregone by designation of the river segments. However, the free-flowing river values appear to outweigh the hydroelectric power development opportunity which will be foregone. In addition, the Department of the Army, in their response to the study report, pointed out that designation of the Sauk River would preclude construction of a flood control storage project on the river. However, alternatives to the Sauk River site exist which would provide the same degree of flood protection for downstream areas.

Public response to the proposal for the river is mixed. Generally, those living in or adjacent to the area recommended are opposed to designation primarily because they are concerned that their property rights could be adversely affected. Although, there would be some impact on private lands generally, uses of the private lands which are compatible with wild and scenic river objectives would be unaffected.

The segments of river proposed for designation flow through both public and private lands. The area encompassed within the proposed river management zone is about 34,650 acres. Some 16,603 acres are National Forest land, 1,430 acres are owned by the State and/or other public agencies, and the remaining 16,615 acres are in private ownership. Administrative and management responsibility for the Skagit River and adjacent lands should rest with the State of Washington, and the Secretary of Agriculture would administer the Cascade, Sauk, and Suiattle Rivers segments.

The estimated additional Federal costs for administration of the segments of river as a wild and scenic river for the 5-year period following enactment are \$11.7 million for land acquisition, \$332,000 for development, and \$534,000 for operation and maintenance. Land acquisition would be funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. A small increase in Federal employment is anticipated which would consist primarily of seasonal workers employed for maintenance and protection of the river area.

I believe the combination of unique natural values associated with the Skagit River is an irreplaceable resource. Accordingly, I recommend the proposal to Congress of legislation to incorporate the Skagit, Sauk,

The President

Cascade, and Suittie Rivers into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System and enclose a draft bill for this purpose.

A Final Environmental Statement for classification of the Skagit River as a part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 853) and also is enclosed.

Sincerely,

Enclosures

NPDRE-40

14 January 1977

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendment to Wild and Scenic Rivers Act by Designating Skagit River in Washington as a Component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

HQDA (DAEN-REH-1)
WASH DC 20314

1. Reference is made to Office of the Secretary, Department of Agriculture letter to the President and the attached proposed Bill, telecopied this office on 13 January 1977.
2. We consider the comments in NPSEH-PL-ER 2 October 1975 letter to Regional Forester, Portland, Oregon, and DAEN-CWF-P 9 September 1975 letter to the Assistant Secretary of Agriculture are still applicable to the subject proposed action. Copies inclosed for ready reference.

3. The above referenced letter, starting in line 12 on page 2 addresses the response of the Department of the Army to the study report. The Department of Agriculture added to the Department of the Army response by noting "however, alternatives to the Sauk River site exists which would provide the same degree of flood protection for downstream areas.". ~~We have never provided such information to them. From a practical standpoint, approximately 40% of the unregulated flow in the lower Skagit River basin comes from the Sauk River. Lower systems heights in the lower Skagit basin are limited by foundation conditions. Accordingly, it is considered that there is no alternative to flood control storage on the Sauk River. We would suggest that the above quoted sentence be deleted.~~

FOR THE DIVISION ENGINEER:

Insert A

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cc.

ERNEST E. SWANSON
Chief, Real Estate Division

CF: ✓ NPSEH-PL-ER w/cy of ref ltr & bill
NPDPL-ER w/cy of ref ltr & bill