

NPDPB (23 Aug 77) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Reclassification of Authorized Skagit River, Washington, Avon Bypass Project

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DA, North Pacific Division, Corps of Engineers, P.O. Box 2870, Portland, Oregon 97208 30 August 1977

TO: HQDA (DAEN-CWP-W) WASH DC 20314

1. Reference is made to ER 11-2-240.
2. Paragraph 13b. (2)(b) of above reference 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. 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. We concur with the Seattle District Engineer and request approval of the reclassification. We also request approval to express a \$20,000 FY 1978 capability to initiate Advance Engineering and Design studies.
3. In December 1975, the Skagit River, WA, Levee and Channel Improvement project was reclassified to active and Congress appropriated \$100,000 to initiate AE&D in FY 1977. FY 1978 funds of \$800,000 and \$300,000 in FY 1979 will complete AE&D. Studies to date, and coordination with local interests, indicates that the Avon Bypass Project should be reactivated.
4. One of the major factors affecting the Skagit River Levees project, as originally formulated, was that the Avon Bypass Project authorized by the 1936 Flood Control Act would be constructed as a part of an overall Skagit Valley flood control plan. The authorized project includes construction of the by-pass in the vicinity of Avon as well as construction of upstream levees in the vicinity of Sedro Woolley and Burlington. Because of marginal economic justification and little public support for the construction of the bypass portion of the project, it is unlikely that construction of the by-pass will occur in the near future. Consequently, the scope and design for the Levees and Channel Improvement Project must be reformulated.
5. Under current criteria and guidance, a primary concern of the Levees and Channel Improvement Project should be urban flood damage reduction for Mount Vernon, Burlington and Sedro Woolley areas. At the time the Levee and Channel Improvement Project was formulated, increased flood protection for these areas did not appear justified. During the last decade, conditions in the area have changed considerably and the scope and level of flood damage reduction should be reevaluated. Local interests have expressed a strong desire for higher level flood protection for the urban areas of Mount Vernon and Burlington. Our current guidance also suggests 100-year or more flood control protection be considered for urban and suburban areas. In order to accommodate this need for considering a higher level of flood

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SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

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protection for the urban areas, more extensive surveys, foundation investigations, hydrology, hydraulic and economic studies will be required than were previously anticipated.

6. With the reactivation of the Avon By-pass project and funding in the near future, we can better evaluate, under present criteria and conditions, the full potential for levee protection of the Skagit River flood plain downstream of Sedro Woolley, WA.

FOR THE DIVISION ENGINEER:

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VINCENT E. BROWNELL  
Acting Executive Assistant

CF: DAEN-CWB-W (Mr. Kenyon)  
NPDPL-PF  
NPSPB  
NPSEN-PL-RP