

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

02-~~8~~-81-SHSC-0.0

Bingham
JAY S. HAMMOND, GOVERNOR

323 E. 4TH AVENUE
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501
276-2653

September 15, 1981

Commissioner Ronald O. Skoog
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Support Building
Juneau, AK 99801

RECEIVED
SEP 22 1981
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Sport Fish/Susitna Hydro

Dear Commissioner Skoog:

The Susitna Hydroelectric Steering Committee (SHSC) is composed of representatives from state and federal agencies who have authorities and/or responsibilities which are affected by the proposed Susitna dams. The purpose of the SHSC is detailed in the attached letter to E. Yould dated June 5, 1981. The purpose of this letter is to advise you of a concern raised by members of the SHSC. The concern is about the level and type of ADF&G representation on the SHSC and more broadly the role of ADF&G in the proposed Susitna Hydroelectric project decision making process.

It appears that ADF&G has two key roles to play in the proposed Susitna hydroelectric project.

First, ADF&G has the statutory responsibility to manage, maintain, protect and improve the fish and game resources of the state as described in Alaska Statute 16. Second, ADF&G has a contractual relationship with the Alaska Power Authority to conduct investigations designed to answer questions about the impact of the proposed Susitna hydroelectric project on fish and wildlife.

The concern of the SHSC has to do with the first responsibility. Given the magnitude of the potential impact of the project on fish, wildlife and their habitats (the proposed Susitna dams are the largest of their type on the North American continent), the SHSC members feel this project merits more policy level attention from ADF&G.

Currently, the ADF&G representative on the SHSC is Tom Trent who is responsible for the ADF&G fisheries investigation contract to APA. Mr. Trent is a capable and knowledgeable fisheries biologist. The difficulty is that Mr. Trent's highest priority is meeting the requirements of the APA contract. Mr. Trent is not in a position nor does he have the appropriate delegations of authority to provide a coordinated ADF&G policy position on all the key fish, wildlife and related land/water resource issues that come before the SHSC. It is the consensus of the SHSC members that ADF&G broaden their representation on the SHSC with a designee who can speak for ADF&G on a more comprehensive policy

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level. As we understand the allocation of responsibilities within ADF&G, this would appear to be someone from the Habitat Division. The SHSC members feel it is appropriate for ADF&G to have two members on the committee. These ADF&G representatives could divide the issues between themselves so only one ADF&G representative speaks for the department.

There are at least three critical issues which will be reviewed and commented upon by the SHSC in the next several months:

1. Determination of surface access route(s) to the proposed dam site(s). A meeting is scheduled for October 20 to do this.
2. Development of fish and wildlife mitigation policies and plans for the proposed Susitna dams.
3. Review of the APA report and recommendations to the legislature regarding whether the Susitna dams should be built.

Since the SHSC access road recommendations will be needed by November 1, 1981, I would appreciate your early consideration and response to this request. If I can be of further assistance, please contact me at 276-2653 in Anchorage.

Sincerely,



Al Carson, Chairman
Susitna Hydroelectric Steering Committee

cc: Steering Committee Members
Dave Wozniak, APA

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JAY S. HAMMOND, GOVERNOR

323 E. 4TH AVENUE
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501

June 5, 1981

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JUN-9 1981

ALASKA POWER AUTHORITY

Eric Yould
Executive Director
Alaska Power Authority
333 W. 4th Avenue, Suite 31
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Mr. Yould:

The purpose of this letter is to transmit to you a proposed revision in your June 3, 1980 letter stating the role and objectives of the Susitna Hydro Steering Committee. The Steering Committee members feel the following more accurately describes the role and function of the Committee.

"The Alaska Power Authority through its consultant, Acres American Incorporated, is carrying out a 30-month feasibility study of the proposed Susitna Hydroelectric Project. Because of the magnitude of this study, effective interagency coordination will be best accomplished through formation of a Susitna Hydroelectric Steering Committee. The function of this committee would be to provide coordinated exchanges of information between the Alaska Power Authority and interested resource management agencies. Through this exchange, the concerns of all agencies involved would be identified early and hopefully prevent unnecessary delays in the progress of these feasibility study, application for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license to construct, and Environmental Impact Statement review.

As proposed, the Steering Committee would be composed of representatives of resource agencies with responsibilities pertaining to the Susitna Hydroelectric Feasibility Studies and/or the project's environmental consequences. We therefore invite your agency's participation.

The committee would provide for interagency coordination through joint review of project related materials and development of more informed and uniform positions representing all resource interests. We believe this will provide a more efficient process of information exchange.

Proposed objectives for this committee are to:


1. Review and comment on study approaches throughout each phase of the planning process;

2. Provide a forum for continued project review of all aspects of the studies, for a timely exchange of information, and for recommendation of study redirection, should the accomplishment of specific objectives be in jeopardy;
3. Comment on compliance of the studies with state and federal laws, regulations, Executives Orders, and mandates as they apply to fish and wildlife resources; and
4. Provide unified steering committee comments to the Power Authority.

Should your agency elect to participate in the committee, we recommend that your representative have a technical background enabling him to comment on the adequacy and approach of ongoing and future feasibility studies, and be able to speak knowledgeably on the policies and procedures of your agency with respect to the review of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license application for the project and the subsequent Environmental Statement (ES)."

If you have comments or suggestions concerning these proposed revisions, please advise.

Sincerely,



Al Carson
Chairman
Susitna Hydro Steering Committee

cc: Steering Committee