



communiqué

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OCTOBER 29, 1984

SKAGIT RIVER VALLEY TREATY:

CANADA-BRITISH COLUMBIA AGREEMENT

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, announced that he and the Honourable Suzanne Blais-Grenier, Minister of the Environment; and the Honourable Garde B. Gardom, O.C., British Columbia Minister of Intergovernmental Relations, and the Honourable Anthony J. Brummet, British Columbia Minister of the Environment, today signed on behalf of their respective governments, the Canada-British Columbia Agreement concerning implementation of the Treaty between Canada and the United States of America Relating to the Skagit River and Ross Lake, and the Seven Mile Reservoir on the Pend d'Oreille River - the Skagit River Valley Treaty. The Agreement was signed during visits by Mr. Clark and Mme Blais-Grenier to British Columbia.

The Agreement is the last of three major Skagit River Settlement documents. The first, the British Columbia-Seattle Agreement, signed on March 30, 1984, - the basic settlement document - sets out the terms of the Settlement agreed upon by the Province and the City of Seattle. The second document, the Canada-United States Skagit River Valley Treaty, signed on April 2, 1984, resolved those issues British Columbia and Seattle lacked jurisdiction to deal with themselves.

The third document, the Canada-British Columbia Agreement supplements the Treaty and defines and clarifies the roles of the federal and provincial governments in its implementation. It is an essential element in the overall Settlement.

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This Settlement marks the successful resolution of long-standing Canadian concerns over the proposal approved by the International Joint Commission in 1942 to raise the Ross Dam in the State of Washington, thus flooding the Skagit River Valley, to supply electricity to Seattle. The settlement was negotiated by senior officials of the Governments of Canada, the United States and British Columbia as well as the City of Seattle under the aegis of the International Joint Commission.

The Settlement, which will be in force for a period of eighty (80) years, ensures that the flooding of the Skagit Valley into British Columbia will not take place. Seattle will not raise the Ross Dam and, in return, British Columbia will supply the city with electricity equivalent to that which would have been generated had the dam been raised. British Columbia will receive as payment for the electricity the sums equivalent to the cost of construction, operation and maintenance of the dam.

Signature of the Canada-British Columbia Agreement, represents acceptance by both Governments of their Settlement roles and obligations. It also opens the way for the Proclamation of the Federal Skagit Valley Treaty Implementation Act, which received Royal Assent on June 7, 1984 - bringing into the force of Canadian law important provisions of the Skagit River Valley Treaty. Proclamation will allow Canada and the United States to ratify the Treaty and thus initiate the Settlement.