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No. 22

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 7, 1971

INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION
SKAGIT RIVER REFERENCE

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES EXTÉRIEURES

April 7, 1971.

The following is the text of the Joint Canada-U.S.A. reference to the International Joint Commission on the Skagit River:

"The Governments of Canada and the United States of America, pursuant to Article IX of the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909, have agreed to request the International Joint Commission to investigate the environmental consequences in Canada resulting from the elevation of the Ross Lake in the State of Washington from 1,602.5 feet above mean sea level to 1,725 feet above mean sea level, and to make such recommendations as it may deem appropriate for the protection and enhancement of the environment and the ecology in the area of Canada affected by the elevation of the lake.

The Commission is requested:

(A) To investigate the environmental and ecological consequences in Canada of the raising of the Ross Lake to an elevation of 1,725 feet above mean sea level, taking into account relevant information about environmental and ecological consequences elsewhere on the Skagit River, and measures being taken or planned to protect and enhance the environment in these areas;

(B) In the light of its findings, to report on the nature, scope and impact of these consequences;

(C) To make recommendations, for the protection and enhancement of the environment and the ecology of the Skagit River Valley not inconsistent with the Commission's Order of Approval dated January 27, 1942, the Agreement required thereby between the City of Seattle and the Province of British Columbia dated January 10, 1967, and the purposes for which such Order of Approval was granted.

The Commission is requested to submit its conclusions and recommendations to the Governments of Canada and the United States of America no later than six months from the date of this reference letter.

In the conduct of its investigation and otherwise in the performance of its duties under this reference, the Commission may utilize the services of specialists in the environmental field and other specially-qualified persons of the technical agencies of Canada and the U.S.A., and will, so far as possible, make use of the information and technical data heretofore acquired or which may become available in either country during the course of the investigation."