

PUGET SOUND POWER & LIGHT COMPANY

PUGET POWER BUILDING (206) 454-6363
BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON 98009

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

August 31, 1979

The Honorable Joseph M. Hendrie
Chairman
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555



Dear Dr. Hendrie:

Puget Sound Power & Light Company
Skagit Nuclear Power Station, Units 1 and 2
Docket Nos. 50-522 and 50-523

We understand that the Commission will meet soon to consider whether NRC licensing proceedings for construction permits should proceed, pending receipt and evaluation of the Kemeny Commission recommendations. We are concerned that any general suspension of such proceedings may result in a prolonged and unnecessary delay in the completion of the long-pending hearings on Puget Sound Power & Light Company's application for a construction permit (including a limited work authorization) for the Skagit Project.

Puget filed its environmental report and construction permit application in September 1974, and the balance of the application, including the PSAR, in December 1974. Notwithstanding the exceptional delay in completion of NRC's processing of our construction permit application and request for an LWA, we have been optimistic that these proceedings would be completed and our application acted upon favorably before the end of 1979.

In accordance with schedules and plans for hearings adopted by the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, we had expected that the hearing on all issues other than geology and seismology would be completed during the week of August 27, 1979, and that hearings on all remaining matters (principally geology and seismology) would be completed in October 1979. We were, therefore, surprised when the NRC Staff advised the ASLB and the other parties that the Staff would not proceed with evidence concerning population density and the feasibility of emergency evacuation of the Skagit site as previously scheduled for the August 27 hearings.

EXHIBIT I

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PUGET SOUND POWER & LIGHT COMPANY

Hon. Joseph M. Hendrie

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The Skagit Project consists of two General Electric BWR VI boiling water power reactors. Puget is carefully following the TMI-2 related activities of the NRC and other government bodies. By letter dated August 13, 1979, and its attachments, we have filed with NRC our detailed commitments to implement the recommendations of the Lessons Learned Task Force and other TMI-2 related actions. As stated in that letter -

"It is Puget Power's intent to continue to review, study, and assess all relevant material and data as it becomes available through the construction phase and implement any additional changes necessary to protect the public health and safety."

We emphasize that these "additional changes" would, of course, include any future recommendations of the Kemeney Commission which are adopted as requirements by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, as well as requirements of other government agencies.

The only TMI-2 related issue outstanding for receipt of evidence in the Skagit hearing relates to the characteristics of the site as related to the feasibility of emergency evacuation within a ten-mile radius. Evidence concerning these matters was, as noted above, to have been presented to the ASLB during the week of August 27. The NRC Staff, however, advised the ASLB and the parties that it would not present its evidence on these issues pending the NRC's consideration of Mr. Denton's memorandum to the Commissioners dated August 20, 1979, and NRC consideration of Dr. Denton's commitments to the Kemeney Commission.

We urge that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission direct its Staff to complete the hearings on our Skagit application as rapidly as practicable and without unnecessary delay. We urge also that the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, which presides at the hearings, be directed to complete its consideration of the record, and the issues before it, and to make its findings and issue its decision as promptly as practicable on Puget's application for an LWA and construction permit.

We recognize that the President's Commission may have recommendations which will affect NRC's regulatory procedures and requirements, including NRC's requirements with respect to Skagit. The pendency of that Commission's deliberations should not automatically be regarded, however, as requiring suspension of all pending licensing proceedings on TMI-2 related issues.

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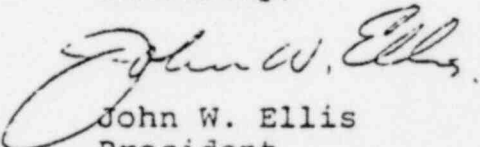
August 31, 1979

In light of the history of the Skagit application, and the present status of the Skagit proceeding, there will be ample time for NRC to consider the recommendations of the President's Commission without prejudice to NRC implementation of those recommendations for the Skagit Project. This is especially the case since there appears to be little or no possibility that the ASLB could complete the hearings and issue its decision before the end of October, when the President's Commission is scheduled to issue its report. In the meantime, we perceive no justification for suspending the processing of the Skagit application on TMI-2 or other issues, whether because of the pendency of the President's Commission deliberations or the deliberations of the other government bodies which are also studying the TMI-2 accident and its implications.

If it would be helpful to the NRC, we would be pleased to present additional information concerning the Skagit Project, or to appear before the NRC to present our views orally.

We appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,


John W. Ellis
President

cc: Commissioner Richard T. Kennedy
Commissioner Victor Gilinsky
Commissioner Peter A. Bradford
Commissioner John F. Ahearne
Dr. Harold Denton

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Date: September 11, 1979

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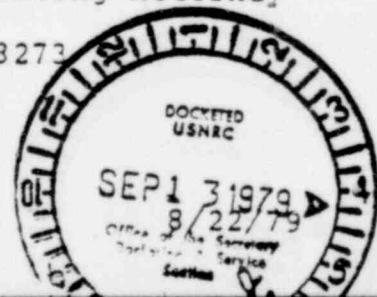
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EXHIBIT II

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NOTE: THIS DUPLICATES THE SERVICE MADE ON SEPTEMBER 4, 1979. IT IS BEING MADE BECAUSE SOME PARTIES HAVE REPORTED THAT, ALTHOUGH THEY RECEIVED THE CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE, THEY DID NOT RECEIVE THE ATTACHED LETTER.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

BEFORE THE COMMISSION

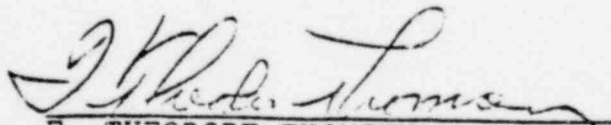


In the Matter of)
)
PUGET SOUND POWER & LIGHT)
COMPANY, et al.)
)
(Skagit Nuclear Power Project)
Units 1 and 2)
_____)

DOCKETS NO. 50-522
and 50-523

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that I mailed a copy of the attached letter dated August 31, 1979, from John W. Ellis to the Honorable Joseph M. Hendrie, and marked Exhibit I, to the persons listed on the distribution list dated September 11, 1979, marked Exhibit II, at their addresses as shown, postage prepaid, on September 11, 1979.


F. THEODORE THOMSEN

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