



STATE OF
WASHINGTON

Dixy Lee Ray
Governor

WASHINGTON STATE ENERGY OFFICE

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Lawrence B. Bradley, Director

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February 22, 1979

Mr. Valentine B. Deale, Chairman
Atomic Safety and Licensing Board
10001 Connecticut Avenue
Washington, D. C. 20036

Dear Mr. Deale:

Mr. Ben Ellwanger of the Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council, whom you met at the time of the Skagit prehearing conference, advised me that you would welcome my comments on need for power. Your interest is very much appreciated.

I will speak in general and summary terms of the need for power from two reference points. The first is the Governor's specific assertion of need for the Skagit Plants at the time of state certification in January, 1977. What has happened since then? The second is the several month period in the middle of 1977 when the Northwest was experiencing a year of low precipitation and throughout this period was on the verge of rationing electricity. Again, what has happened since then?

I have chosen this approach to complement the more specific discussion provided in a brief prepared by the counsel for the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council. We view the electric energy situation regionally inasmuch as Washington, Oregon, and parts of Idaho and Montana are electrically interconnected and the utilities and the states have tended to share shortage equally. Accordingly, many of my comments relate to this region rather than just to Washington State.

About every fourth year (though not in predictable sequence, unfortunately), the region experiences a low water year. Electric energy supply planning must be directed toward adequacy in these years. There was no change in our firm energy supply (that is, available in low water years) between the two aforementioned reference points. A look at what has happened in the past two years will suffice for both.

In the two year period since January 1977, firm energy supply has risen by 1.5%. During the same period, new customer additions have amounted to between 5 and 10% of the total number of customers at the beginning of the period. Moreover, the majority of the new customers use electricity for space heating. Thus, our vulnerability to shortage in years of low water is considerably greater today than it was two years ago. To amplify the foregoing, the following population information is provided: Between 1965 and 1978, population in the country increased 13.2%. In the State of Washington, the increase was 23.1%. In June 1978 the state population statisticians forecast state population growth as follows, in thousands (1978 was 3774): 1980 - 3860, 1985 - 4254, 1990 - 4587, 1995 - 4849, and 2000 - 5051. By September, the statisticians saw need to revise the 1980 figure upward to 3974. Oregon's growth also was above the national average.

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Compounding the problem is the national need to substitute for petroleum uses where possible. This need combines with air quality considerations to encourage electrification in urban transportation. In this connection, Seattle expects to have between 100 and 200 trackless electric trolleys in operation by the end of this year.

Assuming all thermal power plants planned to come on line between now and November 1986, the date for the first of the Skagit Plants, do come on line as scheduled, the available firm energy then will be approximately 400 megawatts above a 3% growth projection from current use. If two coal plants, whose construction has been halted for air quality reasons and may never be restarted, are subtracted, the available energy will be about 400 megawatts below a 3% growth projection. I have used a 75% capacity factor in computing these figures, which is optimistic. Of course, the 1986 date for Skagit No. 1 presumes construction beginning this year. Thus, the need for the Skagit plants is greater today than two years ago when it was expressly stated by Washington's Governor.

Sincerely,

Frederick S. Adair

Frederick S. Adair
Acting Director

FSA/kf

cc: Governor Dixy Lee Ray
Senator R. Ted Bottiger
Representative Ted Haley
Representative Geraldine McCormick
Nicholas D. Lewis