

L7619(PNR-RP)
Heislers Creek, WA-FERC
FERC No. 10824

Chuck Ahlrichs
STS Hydropower, Limited
22525 Southeast 64th Place
Issaquah, Washington 98027

Dear Mr. Ahlrichs:

Thank you for the opportunity for a site inspection of the proposed Heislers Creek Hydropower Facility. This letter is a follow up to comments and proposals made at that time.

The generating facility is proposed as an addition/modification to an existing City of Bellingham (Washington) water supply dam. This dam site sits at the entrance to a steep gorge that appears to be suitable for whitewater kayaking. However, the suitability and potential use of this stretch of the river remains in question. As we discussed during the site visit, the best avenue to determine the potential use would be through the American Whitewater Affiliation (AWA). I have spoken with Rich Bowers of the AWA, and he has promised to try to find someone who boats or has boated the river in the past. This would serve as an appropriate baseline from which to conduct a one day instream assessment of kayaking potential. If the AWA cannot locate someone currently using the river, then I will work with Rich Bowers to try to locate kayakers who would be willing to take part in a short, low-cost study, or who would be willing to conduct an assessment from shore to determine if further study is warranted. If a study is warranted, then we can identify a consultant who is experienced in undertaking studies of this type and nature.

Regarding the questions of access and liability, it appears that access could be provided easily and inexpensively at the dam through the installation of a short stairway or similar structure if the river proves to be a worthwhile boating experience. Egress from the river is already available via Mosquito Lake Road. In addition, access to whitewater runs, many very similar in nature to Heislers Creek, have been provided around the country with no liability problems.

Finally, given the difficulty in shoreline access, the remote location, and the character of the stream itself, we do not see any need to conduct an aesthetic study at this time. However, the study may become necessary in future years. (The same consideration holds if a flow study is not justified at this time.)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and assist you in determining recreation potential for this site. If you have any questions or comments on this letter, my telephone number is (206) 553-4400.

Sincerely,

Daniel Haas
Division of Recreation Programs

cc:

Lois Cashell, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Jeff Frost, Washington Interagency Committee For Outdoor Recreation
Jeff Marti, Washington Department of Ecology
Steve Starlund, Washington State Parks and Recreation
Sam Stokes, National Park Service, WASO