

Folder 556, Box 56, Sturgis Papers
Office of History, Corps of Engineers, Virginia

ACTIVITIES AND PROBLEMS OF NPD

Presented to Major General Sturgis,

Chief of Engineers, 29 June 1953

BG Emerson Itchner
was North Pacific
Division Engineer

1. METHOD OF PRESENTATION: - It is my plan to give you only a general orientation on the activities and problems of NPD. This briefing will serve as a background for the more detailed presentations of the Districts.

2. TERRITORY: - NPD covers the Pacific Northwest west of the Rockies, and Alaska. The Pacific Northwest may be divided geographically into the Columbia River Basin and the coastal regions, which includes the Puget Sound area.

3. NPD ORGANIZATION: - For Civil Works, NPD is organized into four districts, with boundaries as shown. All Civil Works in Alaska are handled by the Alaska District.

For Military Construction the Seattle District has the entire area of the Pacific Northwest except for the portion which is also the Civil Works area of the Walla Walla District.

4. COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN: - The Columbia River is far more important to this region than other large rivers in the United States are to the area which they drain. It is the Pacific Northwest's major source of energy, the means of irrigating millions of acres, the medium by which the important salmon runs reach their breeding beds, which often are in the river itself, and the route for large ocean and river navigation. On the opposite side of the ledger are the floods which occur somewhere in the basin almost every year.

The Columbia River with a drainage basin of 260 thousand square miles and a length of 1200 miles is one of the great rivers of the country. Its annual flow is second only to the lower Mississippi of the rivers of the

The States of the Pacific Northwest have secured the passage of Federal legislation authorizing the negotiation of a compact to allocate the waters of the Columbia River system and for other purposes. They feel that the national policy will permit their direct participation in development of the water resources of the region and a greater direct participation in the benefits therefrom. They hope, through the compact procedure, to set up some organization through which they can accomplish their objectives. The outcome remains to be seen.

13. MILITARY CONSTRUCTION: - While the Civil Works program of this Division is receiving one-third of all Corps appropriations for Civil Works construction, the military program is even larger. The total program in the Division, eliminating projects completed prior to this fiscal year, is \$723,000,000, of which 60% is Air Force and 40% Army. 75% of the total is in Alaska. Contracts have been awarded for 70% of the total program. Construction has been placed equal to 50% of the program, and projects have been completed equal to 20% of the program.

Every conceivable obstacle has been placed in the way of accomplishing military construction, and I wonder how we ever get any work done.

In the next three months we expect to award contracts amounting to \$70,000,000, which will mean that 80% of our program will then be under contract. We are waiting for various types of clearances on the other projects.

The recently imposed Army expenditure limitation will allow starts on most of the Pacific Northwest projects, but will prevent any new starts in Alaska. We anticipate an increase in the limitation, but in the meantime we are delayed.

Our principal military construction activities in the Z.I. for the Air Force are at Paine, McChord, Fairchild, Geiger, Larson, Great Falls, and Mt. Home AFB's. Most of the Army construction is at Ft. Lewis, which is contiguous to Mt. Rainier Ordnance Depot, Madigan Army Hospital and McChord Field. AAA

*Keith Berry thinks reasonable. I say to Hugh
11-10-46*

... sites requiring construction are in the vicinity of Seattle and Hanford Atomic Energy plant.

In Alaska we have Elmendorf AFB and Ft. Richardson, adjacent to each other but completely independent, a large Army Communication station at Kenai, and the Port of Whittier, which recently experienced a \$20,000,000 fire which destroyed all dry cargo docks and warehouses. North of the Alaska Range are Ladd AFB and Eielson AFB, 26 miles apart, and an Arctic Test station at Big Delta. In addition, there are a number of AC&W stations that are largely completed and a number that are just being designed.

→ A major project already designed which is being held up by the Senate Appropriations Committee determination of its essentiality is a 600 mile long eight inch pipeline from Haines on the coast to the Fairbanks area. This project will cost \$40,000,000.

14. PROBLEMS: - We are not without our problems. There is nothing to be gained by reciting difficulties for which there appears to be no solution available to the Corps of Engineers. Consequently the following list outlines only those problems which probably could be solved in time with proper action:

(a) We are severely restricted by the agreement of April 1949 between the Secretaries of the Interior and Army on principles and responsibilities for Columbia River Basin development, which for multiple-purpose projects restricts us to the main stem of the Columbia River below Grand Coulee and the Snake below Grand Ronde River, and gives the Bureau of Reclamation all other projects. Efforts should be made to rescind this agreement with the consent of the Department of the Interior as soon as possible, and revert to the established principle of having the Corps responsible for flood control and navigation projects and the Bureau charged with irrigation projects. Ralph Tudor stated he favored reversion to the basic concept.

(b) We need blanket authority by Congressional resolution to review