

From: Johnson, Aaron M [mailto:Aaron.Johnson@nordstrom.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 11, 2008 3:23 PM
To: info@lowimpacthydro.org
Subject: The Skagit River Hydroelectric Project

Dear Sir or Madam:

I grew up near the dam system comprising the Skagit River Hydroelectric Project and have spent many days and nights enjoying the area. It is truly a magnificent region in every respect. Since then I've lived and traveled all over the world, and only now do I truly appreciate how perfectly the dams have been incorporated into the surrounding wild. The Ross reservoir, though truly massive, and with steep rising peaks that comprise its shoreline, doesn't look out of place: its impact on the area is not negligible, but I cannot imagine a more perfectly "natural" reservoir. The campsites on the lake and in the numerous surrounding campgrounds are without exception clean, mixed seamlessly with the surrounding forests, and wildlife of all types and sizes can be found throughout. I can only hope that the area remains little known to the general populace, for even in "busy" summer months it's easy to feel all alone.

The dams are placed high enough up the Skagit River to minimize effects on fish habitat, and Ross Lake itself is a little-known haven for fish in its own right. Logging is either off-limits or is practically impossible due to the aggressively-rising peaks that overlook the river. All around the dams it looks like an old growth paradise, and there's even a tree appreciation path near Gorge Dam that celebrates trees of all types and ages.

If there is a dam that has less impact on the area Ross, Diablo, and Gorge dams, I can't imagine it. Truly a jewel in this country's hydroelectric infrastructure, I highly recommend that you renew its certification with your institute.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,
Aaron M Johnson