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STATE OF ALASKA

JAY S. HAMMOND, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
SUBPORT BUILDING
JUNEAU 99801

January 23, 1978

Mr. Donald R. Beard
Kramer, Chin & Mayo, Inc.
510 Goldstein Building
130 Seward Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Mr. Beard:

Subject: Auke Lake Water Supply Study, University of Alaska

The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed the draft document entitled "Water Supply Study, Auke Lake Campus" which your organization recently completed for the University of Alaska. The report was well written, comprehensively evaluated the water supply question, and adequately discussed alternative solutions. It should be realized, however, that any stream or lake alteration within the Auke Lake watershed will impact the fishery resource. Certain alternatives, therefore, have undesirable features which make them unacceptable to this Department.

I. Alternative Analysis

A. Alternatives 1A, 1C, and 1D

In earlier discussions with University personnel it was our understanding that there would be no draw-down of Auke Lake below normal limits. Utilization of lake water without concurrent regulation of lake levels is unacceptable to the Department. Unregulated draw-down will seriously impact shoreline coho and sockeye salmon rearing areas.

B. Alternative 1B

This alternative, if proper structures are built, will least impact fishery resources. It will be mandatory to construct a structure that can control the lake level and also provide free passage for upstream and downstream salmon migrants. Any structure of this type will require continued monitoring and maintenance by university personnel.

C. Alternatives 1E and 2

We do not consider using supplemental water from Montana Creek acceptable. Winter low flows in Montana Creek appear to be the limiting factor in coho rearing. Any additional flow (water) reduction during the winter could decrease the coho population.

D. Alternative 3 (Pumping from Nugget Creek) and Alternative 5 (Pumping from Mendenhall River)

Both alternatives would have little, if any, impact upon fishery resources. We agree however, with your analysis that these alternatives do not appear feasible.

E. Alternative 4 (Pumping from Wadleigh and Auke Nu Creek)

We are opposed to this alternative. Neither of these systems have adequate year-round flows to provide the needed water without adversely impacting fish populations of both systems.

II. Additional Specific Comments:

Page 1, paragraph 7: We disagree with the statement that water withdrawal from Auke lake "would not have an adverse effect." It is our opinion that unless the lake level is closely regulated, the high and low cycles would probably occur more frequently. These fluctuations can be very detrimental to rearing fish who depend on the shallow areas adjacent to the shore for most of their food.

Page 7, paragraph 6 and top of page 10: We feel more consideration should be made of the water reuse system in the Fisheries Facility. Such a system could substantially reduce the water needs and lessen impacts on the lake.

Page 15, paragraph 5, item 5: Lack of major net movement of groundwater into or out of the Auke Lake watershed is a very important point which appears to be neglected.

Page 20, paragraph 2, item 5: Dolly Varden are char.

Page 29, paragraph 2: The importance of edge vegetation to rearing fish should be expanded upon describing the extent and importance of said vegetation to rearing salmon. You may want to refer in detail to Bob Dewey's, NMFS, work on sockeye in Auke Lake.

Page 41, table 14: This table summarizes only construction costs. What about other values such as visual impacts on nearby residents? How are these factored into your analysis? The visual impact was one of the primary points raised at the public hearing.

I hope these comments are helpful and we appreciate the opportunity to review your report.

Sincerely,

Ronald O. Skoog

Ronald O. Skoog
Commissioner