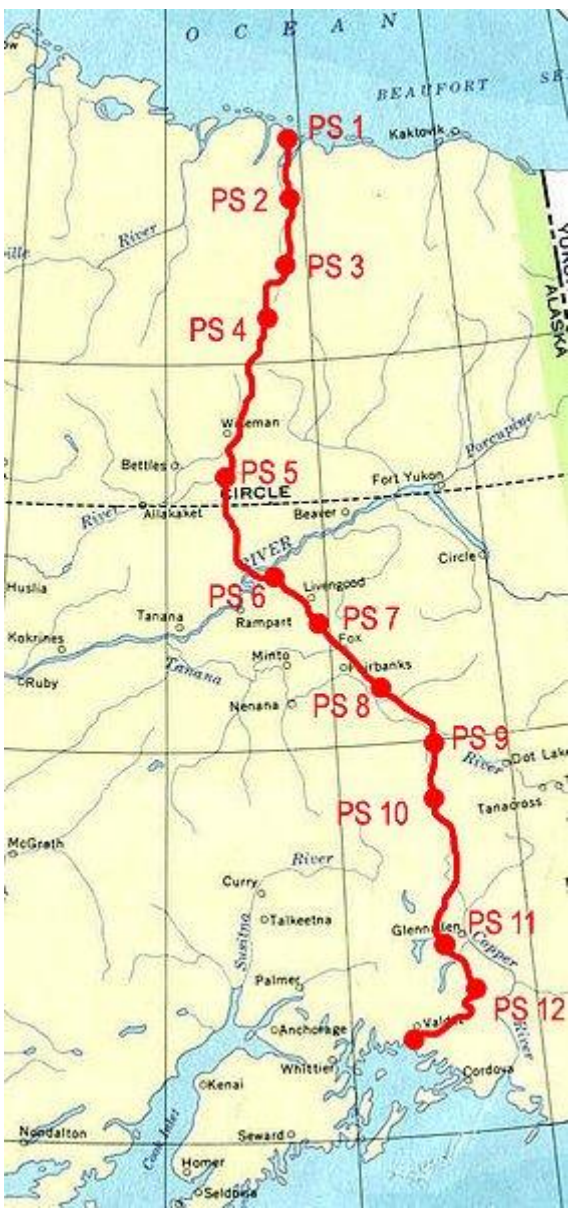
New Ice Age Ahead

Saving the Trans-Alaska Pipeline or NAWAPA
with the New Ice Age in the background



[Trans Alaska Oil pipeline]

Saving the pipeline, or saving NAWAPA

The 800 miles long Trans-Alaska Pipeline stands in the way of NAWAPA. It crosses areas that are planned to become reservoirs, one 1,700 feet deep. For the building of NAWAPA a new line would need to be laid for a part of the way, around the reservoirs, with possibly also requiring a new oil loading port. Since the most ideal terrain was chosen for the current route, the replacement line would likely have to follow a much more difficult route.

In addition, the planned flooding of the vast areas that is required under the NAWAPA plan would require the relocation of all the towns and cities from the areas to be flooded, and the industries they support. It may not be easy to get the people to leave, especially when more efficient alternatives area available to meet the NAWAPA objective. Nor could force be justified, including the force of legal evictions, and even then the legal processes and appeals could drag on for a decade, holding back the launching of the project.

No doubt, the question will be asked in countless different ways if the benefits of NAWAPA, diverting the small rivers from the North, will be worth the effort, the political upset, and the expense for as little as increasing the agricultural area of the USA by 5.6% when far-less-disruptive options are possible that offer

several-times greater results.

For example: The great southern deserts, the Mojave Desert, the Sonoran Desert, and the Chihuahuan Desert - (California, Nevada, Mexico, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona) cover an area of 282,000 square miles. The NAWAPA project aims to provide irrigation for 86,000 square miles, a large portion of which is located in non-desert areas. This means, the northern NAWAPA is far from enabling the existing potential. The limiting factor is determined by the limits of the available water resources in the north that are accessible by means of the NAWAPA project.

And for how long would the northen water resources be good anyway, with the return of the Ice Age on the near horizon?

While the return of the Ice Age is not a critical issue for the oil operations in Alaska, since the big field that feeds the pipeline is expected to be exhausted in the 2030s, whereby the expected termination date may still lay within the interglacial timeframe, a different timeframe applies for NAWAPA. The NAWAPA project wouldn't come on line until the 2070s, and then would have to remain active for at least a century. In this timeframe the return of the Ice Age is a big factor to be considered. It is a factor, because once the snow fails to melt, there won't be any water available for diversion into the South. When it comes to questions concerning the relocation of parts of the oil pipeline and its shipping terminal, the wisdom behind the NAWAPA plan will most certainly be questioned by the pipeline engineering staff. Their questioning will most likely include the Ice Age consideration in spite of the global warming that has nothing to do with reality anyway, but is intended for public brainwashing. With this in mind, what would their answer be?

When the NAWAPA plan was created in the 1960s these factors didn't exist. The pipeline didn't exist then. The Ice Age wasn't even considered. The new technologies that exist now, didn't exist then either. But they all exist as big factors today. Thus, when the pipeline engineers will be asked the relocate the great pipeline, their logical answer would likely be, for the NAWAPA planners to look for a different and more plentiful source, and one that would be located far enough in the South that it would be unaffected by the worst Ice Age conditions. Their answer would likely be that far more powerful options exists for long distance water diversion into the dry regions, for purposes of increased food production, then reaching into the Arctic that may 'soon' become a frozen block of ice.

The pipeline men would likely point to the tropical rivers for a source, like the Orinoco River in Venezuela (33,000 cm/s) that offers a 8-times greater flow volume than the northern NAWAPA does. They might, for example, suggest laying a floating or submerged pipeline from Venezuela, across Panama, and up the coast of California, from where a pumping plant could take it with little effort into the low-elevation deserts. With such a system, for which the industries would then be created by NAWAPA, the deserts could have their first water flowing long before the licensing for the northern projects would be secured, without which the actual construction of the northern NAWAPA could not start.

The engineers might also suggest that the Mississippi outflow into Gulf of Mexico (12,700 cm/s) could be diverted towards the dry areas east of the continental divide. The outflow of the Mississippi River might be channeled into a floating reservoir made of thinly woven basalt. Fresh water floats. In this case not a square inch of land would need to be flooded for a large reservoir to be created. Fresh water is 2.7% lighter than sea water. When contained by barriers, it floats perfectly. The Mississippi outflow could thereby be collects for re-use, and be distributed by nuclear powered pumping and a distribution pipeline network. The Mississippi outflow is all by itself three times larger than the entire NAWAPA volume would be. And the construction for such a project could begin almost immediately.

In this sense, the oil engineer's intervention may not only save the oil pipeline, and the people's living in the NAWAPA affected area, but would save NAWAPA itself that is simply not practical in its northern orientation under the changed, and changing conditions in the world.

1. NAWAPA under the principle of basic economics?

Also see:

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