

# Scammon Bay could be first in hydropower

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Scammon Bay could be the first village in Alaska to see if small hydropower projects can lower the cost of generating electricity in villages.

The Scammon Bay project is a project of the Alaska District, Corps of Engineers which is studying 20 communities throughout the state for hydropower units.

Construction could start as early as 1983 in Scammon Bay. A small dam across a stream above town and a single generator could produce 100 kilowatts to meet the Yukon-Kuskokwim delta village's electrical needs for about seven months of the year.

The \$1.5 million project would close down during winter months when the stream freezes over and residents

would rely on other power sources such as oil, diesel, wood or electric.

Before any Corps small hydropower projects are built, they must first undergo an independent review by the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors and be authorized by the U.S. Congress.

The Board approved the proposed Scammon Bay project in September. The project is

under review by federal agencies and the state. The next step will be to submit the proposal to Congress for construction authorization and construction funds.

If Congress gives the okay, the Corps would construct the project in a joint effort with the state's Alaska Power Authority. The state would pay for design work and construction costs while the federal

government would complete the detailed designs and manage the construction contract.

The Scammon Bay project is one of several possible projects of five megawatts or less that the Corps has identified as part of the small hydropower program which was authorized by Congress in October 1976.

The 20 potential hydropower sites identified by the Corps are a result of six regional reconnaissance studies that evaluated a total of 256 villages for their hydropower potential. For study purposes, the State of Alaska was divided into the following six regions: Southeast; the Aleutian Islands, Alaska Peninsula and Kodiak Island; Southwest; Northwest; Northeast; and Southcentral.

The first region studied was Southeast. Of 20 communities evaluated for their hydropower potential, the Corps is conducting detailed studies at Gustavus and Tenakee Springs. The Tenakee Springs study is scheduled for completion in the summer of 1983 and the Gustavus study should be completed in the spring of 1984.

The next region studied by the Corps included the Aleutian Islands, Alaska Peninsula and Kodiak Island. Thirty-six communities were assessed for their hydropower potential, but only four are being studied further: Unalaska, Chignik, Chignik Lagoon and Perryville. The Corps plans to complete these studies by early 1984.