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Chugach Electric cancels Snow River study

Chugach Electric Association has canceled its effort exploring the possibility of a hydroelectric project along the Snow River on the Kenai Peninsula. After a series of meetings with government and non-government agencies, and two public meetings this week, the electric cooperative announced today the Board of Directors accepted a staff recommendation to stop all work on the potential project.

“As a member-owned cooperative that values the opinions of Alaskans and the communities we serve, we have decided to end the Snow River study,” said CEO Lee Thibert. “We are committed to sustainable energy, but we’ve heard from many Alaskans who do not want us to study this option, and we appreciate and respond to those voices and concerns.”

Thibert added the utility will not spend any more time, money, or resources on the project.

Chugach received a permit from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission last month allowing the utility to study the idea of the hydroelectric project in an area previously identified for its potential. The utility, which is guided by sustainability—a business philosophy of considering the economic, environmental, and social impacts of projects—said the early public process led to the conclusion that the project is not consistent with Chugach’s strategic goals.

“Our public engagement process worked,” said Chugach Board Chair Janet Reiser.

“Sustainability is very important to us, and we want to find long-term supplies of energy that will allow Chugach to provide electricity to Alaskans for decades to come. Thank you to our members and other Alaskans who took the time to express their concerns to us.”

In addition to meetings with numerous state and federal agencies, and other groups, Chugach held two public informational meetings this week; one in Anchorage and one in Moose Pass.

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