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City Light Dam Credited With Holding Flood

Seattle City Light's Ross Dam has again helped control the flow of the Skagit river during flood conditions. Supt. Paul Raver has revealed that Ross plant had been partially shut down from Thursday morning, November 19, to Monday noon, November 22, to reduce the amount of flood waters in the lower Skagit river. Flow at Ross dam was cut down to the point where even with the additional amount of water from other streams feeding into the Skagit river below Ross, not water was spilled over the Gorge Diversion dam. The only flow at Newhalem was the normal amount necessary to operate the Gorge Powerhouse.

Water flow at Ross plant was reduced Thursday morning and not increased until some hours after the flood crest had passed. In the interval the level of Ross lake went up 2.33 feet (from elevation 1584.36 to 1586.69 feet). This amounted to 26,000 acre feet of water. Actual storage of flood waters was much greater as under normal conditions City Light would have drawn down about 6,000 acre feet to produce the power to carry the Seattle load.

City Light had to purchase about three million kwh of power to offset the reduced generation.