

New Ice Age Ahead

NAWAPA Dams in an Ice Age environment?



[The Giza Pyramids](#)

**Imagine the building of many giant dams
imagine the tallest of them 1,700 feet in height
three-and-a-half times taller than the Great Pyramid in Egypt
built strong enough to hold back a wall of water
a 50-year project in itself
and you begin to fathom the dimension of NAWAPA**

Compare the planned 1,700-foot dam for the Copper River in Alaska, with the mighty Three Gorges Dam in China that stands just a third as tall, but took 12 years to build in ideal climate conditions and in an ideal terrain, with one of the world's greatest industrial machine located close by, and an ideal transportation infrastructure leading up to it, then you begin to get an idea of the gigantic dimension of the NAWAPA plan.

Now consider further that this enormous dam, if it was built today, would be taller than the tallest building in the world, and that this immense construction would not only have to have the strength to hold back a wall of water of the height, and this in permafrost country in a region that has the highest rate of earthquakes in the world, of close to it, and you begin to get an idea of the vast scale of the construction challenge that is involved.

Then consider further that this dam would be just one many, and would itself be dwarfed on the scale of immensity by all the other projects, such as the drilling of 50 tunnels with a total distance of over 1000 miles, creating 240 reservoirs with a water storage capacity of 4.3 billion acre feet, requiring 32 billion cubic yards of earth to be moved, and the usage of 100 million tons of steel, tens of millions of tons of copper and aluminum, and you get a sense of the sheer magnitude of the work that is involved. Consider further that the building of 80 nuclear power plants of 400mw is required to power the pump lifts that raise the diverted water to over 5,000 feet to get it across the high-elevation desert of the Nevada Great Basin,

and you get a sense that the terms gigantic is simply too small to describe the proposed undertaking that is expected to employ millions of people for fifty years. It is expected that at the end of this period, from 2070 onward, the diverted water will enable the irrigation of 86,000 square miles of additional farmland, increasing the farmed acreage of the USA by 5.6%.

Many questions will likely be asked when it comes to the time for licenses to be granted. For example, it might be asked in Alaska why it is necessary at all to flood vast areas of Alaska, cut off a major salmon spawning ground, and build gigantic dams up to 1,700 feet high in one of the world's foremost earth-quake-prone zone. People might ask: are there no alternatives possible to accomplish the same end, and to do it more efficiently?

The question might be asked why Alaska's water is needed at all (4,000 cubic meters per second to be diverted), which isn't really as plentiful as people think, in comparison with the Columbia River in Washington State, that dumps an average outflow of 7,500 cubic meters per second into the Pacific ocean, unused, which is almost twice as much in volume than the planned NAWAPA diversion from the North would provide. Why wouldn't one use the outflow from the Columbia River, instead of building giant dams, flooding vast areas, drilling a thousand miles of tunnels, and so on? This would be a valid question.

The people of the many towns and cities that would have to be relocated out of the areas to be flooded, would no doubt ask the same question, and without a good answer the required licenses for the project would most likely not be granted.

However, the refusal to grant the licenses wouldn't kill the NAWAPA idea. It would open up the scene to the high-technology field of options for NAWAPA, and would enable those options, and thereby enable NAWAPA to become vastly more powerful.

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[8. NAWAPA efficient option](#)

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