

Wallpack Bend Project Reported Best Proposal as Best of Seven Water Reservoirs

Lehigh Offers New Supply From Poconos

Fourth of a Series

By Richard J. O'Keefe

Mountain water from the sparsely settled wooded gorges of the Pocono Plateau is the new supply offered Philadelphia in the proposal of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Co.

The water would be collected in four large reservoirs, on the Lehigh River, and three tributary creeks of the river. It would then be taken by tunnel, for nearly its entire length by gravity, to a reserve reservoir on Jericho Creek, seven miles east of Doylestown.

When first proposed by the company, the cost of the project was estimated by engineers at \$14,000,000. Water Commission engineers, protesting this figure was too low, at the same time asserting the source would not provide sufficient water for the future needs of the city.

PROGRAM REVISED

The company then revised its program to enlarge the original plan, raising the estimated cost of the project to \$19,000,000. The Water Commission engineers in opposing the original suggestion of the company declared the source would fall short by 169 million gallons daily of the city's future needs and that the cost should have been estimated at \$240,000,000.

The Lehigh engineers said their revised plan which added a fourth reservoir to the original three in the upper Lehigh basin would provide 445 million gallons daily, sufficient for the city's needs for 75 years.

MOST OF LAND

Lehigh project calls for the location of three reservoirs on land almost entirely by the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Co. The company proposes to the city 12,000 acres of sites for the reservoir sites and its to the sole use of the Lehigh. The land on which the fourth is on the upper Lehigh would be not owned by the company.

Four impounding dams would be sited on Bear Creek, at a location 10 miles northwest of White Haven; on the Lehigh, two miles southeast; on Mud Run Creek, seven and a half miles south of the Lehigh Reservoir; and on Pohopoco Creek, near Lehighton, about 10 miles south of the Mud Run Reservoir.

CALLS FOR GRADE TUNNELS

From Pohopoco, the water would be carried by grade tunnels, less than the Delaware River plan type of pressure tunnels, for a distance of 80 miles to the Jericho reservoir. Some sections of the tunnel to Jericho would, however, be of the pressure type to carry the water through unfavorable terrain.

Proponents of the Lehigh plan, which during the public hearings of the Philadelphia Water Commission and of City Council was subjected to strongly critical attacks by the Water Commission's consulting engineers, contended fewer individuals or property owners would be disturbed than would be the case by adoption of the Delaware River plan.

HEAVILY POPULATED

Sections which are to be included in the three northernmost reservoirs, Bear Creek, Lehigh and Mud Run, are not thickly inhabited. There are no villages of material size and sites are largely covered with woods. The population on the Pohopoco site is slightly greater and includes a larger portion of the land is under cultivation.

On the site of the Bear Creek reservoir, an attractive summer colony of cottages and a number of executive houses. It would be necessary to relocate one mile of the Easton-Hazle-Barre highway which runs through the village and about five miles of a State highway which runs through the area.

40 FT. ABOVE SEA LEVEL
Bear Creek reservoir and Mud Run reservoir would have an approximate elevation of 1000 feet above sea level.

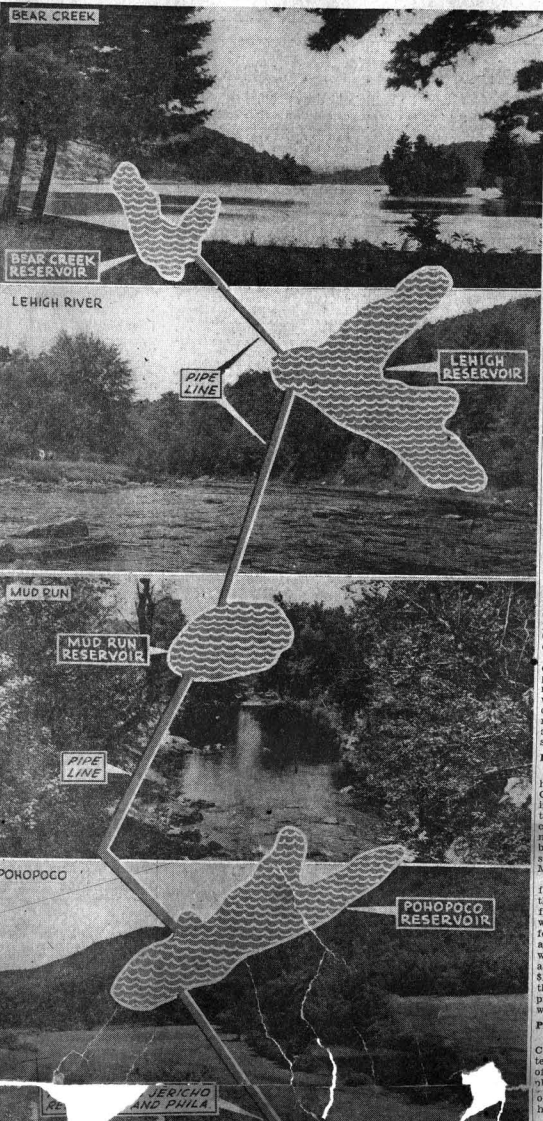
The Pohopoco reservoir elevation will be considerably less than its companion reservoirs, being projected at 655 feet above sea level. From this level, the water will be dropped an approximate 300 feet above sea level at the Jericho reservoir. The Lehigh reservoir will be the lowest of the four. The reservoir would make necessary relocation of the State highway between Bear Creek and Pocono Lake and between Lehigh and White Haven with a number of other less important roads. The area is mostly timber owned.

SMALL RESORT SECTIONS

While there are no settlements of any size that would be flooded, there are several small resort sections near the reservoir site. One such is Slip Rock Lodge on Lake Harmony, owned and operated by the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Co. This, however, would not be affected by the reservoir.

The site of the Mud Run reservoir is partly owned by the Federal Government and operated as a game preserve. There is practically no habitation or cultivation in the area to be submerged. Although construction would not involve any important highways or communities, relocation of several miles of a secondary road would be necessary.

(Concluded Tomorrow)



FOUR RESERVOIRS OF LEHIGH RIVER PLAN

Mountain water of the Pocono Plateau, north of Mauch Chunk, would be collected in four reservoirs on the Upper Lehigh River under a proposal of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Co. for a new Philadelphia water supply. The above illustration presents views in the vicinity of the sites of the four reservoirs. Superimposed is the plan for the collecting lakes, the water in each of which would be transferred by pipe line from the Bear Creek reservoir through the Lehigh and Mud Run reservoirs to the Pohopoco reservoir, from which it would be dropped by tunnel to a fifth storage lake on Jericho Creek, east of Doylestown.

Proposal Will Go To Council

A recommendation by the Board of Consulting Engineers, favoring the Delaware River Wallpack Bend project as a new source of drinking water for the city, has been passed on unofficially to Mayor Samuel by the Mayor's Water Commission as the most promising of the seven projects under consideration, it was indicated yesterday.

The Water Commission met for more than two hours yesterday afternoon, with 15 of its 18 members present, and approved the final draft of its report on a future source of water for Philadelphia. At the conclusion of the meeting, however, no details of its recommendations were forthcoming.

SEVERAL WEEKS DELAY

Samuel H. Rosenberg, secretary to the Mayor and to the Commission, said it would probably be several weeks before the Commission's report was ready for submission to the Mayor. The latter, it was said, will send its recommendations to City Council for action.

Other City Hall sources yesterday, however, predicted that in view of the prohibitive cost of the upland water project, Council will content itself for the present with rehabilitation of the city's present water system.

500 MILLION GALLONS DAILY

The Board of Consulting Engineers, which made a study of seven projects involving various areas in the Poconos and the Delaware River watershed, recently recommended the Delaware River Wallpack Bend project, which would cost \$284,538,000 to put into operation and would provide Philadelphia with 500,000,000 gallons of fresh drinking water daily.

The Board also estimated it would cost \$62,556,000 to improve the city's present water system Wallpack, which must be completed regardless of whether an upland source is chosen. The \$18,000,000 already authorized by the voters for the same purpose is inadequate.

PUBLIC HEARINGS HELD

Council's Public Works Committee, headed by Councilman Phinney T. Green, held a series of public hearings recently at which all phases of the water supply problem were discussed. Yesterday, Green indicated no meeting of the committee would be held before the Water Commission's report is submitted to the Mayor, nor immediately thereafter.

From this, observers draw the inference that the Council, upon getting from the Mayor, might so ahead few months ago ordered an all-out effort ahead in revamping the present water system, and at that time authorized the expenditure of about \$10,500,000 in funds remaining from the original \$18,000,000 loan approved by the voters, to finance the work.

PERKINSON STUDIED

A subcommittee of the Water Commission, it also was learned yesterday, is studying the practicability of using Perkerson as a supply source in the Poconos, or the localities of the upper Lehigh River.

Four members of the Commission, who attended yesterday's meeting, were reported in favor of this proposal. The subcommittee, which must meet immediately, the commission members absent yesterday vote with it, will meet in two weeks.

The Commission's report as drawn up yesterday, it was understood, will say that if an upland source is decided upon, the most promising one is that at Wallpack Bend. But it was understood that the report recommended strongly that the city proceed to rehabilitate the present water system, and use ozone and activated carbon to correct the taste and smell of the present supply.

TWO CONTRACTS SIGNED

In line with the latter program, the city yesterday signed two contracts for cleaning and relining part of the present storage and distribution system so as to lessen the taste and odor of its drinking water.

One, calling for an expenditure of \$215,000, calls for cleaning and relining with cement approximately 35,000 linear feet of 48-inch steel cast iron pipe lines in Hunting Park ave., Roosevelt boulevard, and adjoining streets; the other, for \$385,000, involves removing 80 years of accumulated silt from the Rouseshorough Reservoir, which hasn't been cleaned since it was built.

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