

NPSEN-PL-TE
MEMO FOR RECORD
SUBJECT: Skagit River, Washington

12 July 1966

1. Mr. Robert Gedney and I attended the 8 July morning session of the Public Hearing conducted by the Washington State Legislative Interim Committee on Water Resources at Mt. Vernon, Washington.

2. Purpose of the meeting was to acquaint the Committee with local flood control problems, plans and road blocks to flood control solution. This information will be used to draw up State Legislation to remove State laws that block flood control district mergers and provide legislation that would permit an expanded State policy on flood control.

3. The meeting was attended by approximately 40 people, including 7 committee members headed by State Senator Wilbur Hallauer. About 15 Drainage and Diking Commissioners were present. Also in attendance were the following:

- a. Mr. Claude B. Wilson, Chairman, Skagit County Commissioners
- b. Mr. Jack Wylie, Skagit County Commissioner
- c. Mr. Mel Hulgren, Skagit County Commissioner
- d. Mr. Lloyd Johnson, Skagit County Engineer
- e. Mr. George M. Dynes, Commissioner, Port of Skagit County
- f. Mr. Fred H. Weakley, Manager, Port of Skagit County
- g. Mr. Chris Knudsen, President, Board of Commissioners, Port of Skagit County

Representatives from the Washington State Department of Conservation did not attend the morning session, but were in attendance during the afternoon session.

4. Mr. Gedney presented the Corps of Engineers' flood control plans for the Skagit Basin. These plans were in three elements, as follows:

- a. Uniforming levees downstream from Mt. Vernon to provide 8-year flood protection.
- b. Avon Bypass to raise protection to 30-35 years.
- c. Upstream storage to attain 100-year protection.

5. Preliminary plans and costs for the Avon Bypass were revealed for the first time and discussed in some detail. Levee uniformity and upstream storage were discussed but not in as much detail, as the Avon Bypass plan is the next project to be constructed, if local participation is forthcoming.

6. The theme of the State's participation in these flood control projects was stressed. Flood control participation is also a good investment for the State and should be used for comprehensive flood control plans as well as emergency projects.

7. Questions from the committee members and from other people present included:

Q. Does Ross Dam help the flood control picture and will the planned raising of this dam reduce flood problem?

A. Yes. The Ross Dam controls the river upstream of the project and raising of the dam will not add to the amount of flood control, as the dam now controls the river above the dam. The upper Skagit contributes about 30 percent of the flow reaching the delta; therefore, this is not the total solution.

Q. Will all these plans include dredging at the mouth of the river to ease flooding at tidelands?

A. No. Dredging is not planned, but reduced flood flow from planned projects should help.

8. Mr. Gedney mentioned the comparison of the Skagit River Valley to the Green River Valley and the effect of flood control on that valley. Also, the dry period that the Skagit has enjoyed during the past 16 years could change to a wet cycle and cause great damage.

9. The local coordination and presentation at the meeting was loosely organized and not directed to any specific matter of State assistance. The presentation by the flood control districts' representatives was that State assistance was needed and that some broader State policy on flood control planning for local areas was necessary. However, the Interim Committee of the State Legislature, Flood Control Districts, and the representatives of the Department of Conservation all failed to indicate any specific developing theme for planning of State assistance.



VERNON E. COOK

cc: Exe Ofc
Gedney
Knutson/Cook