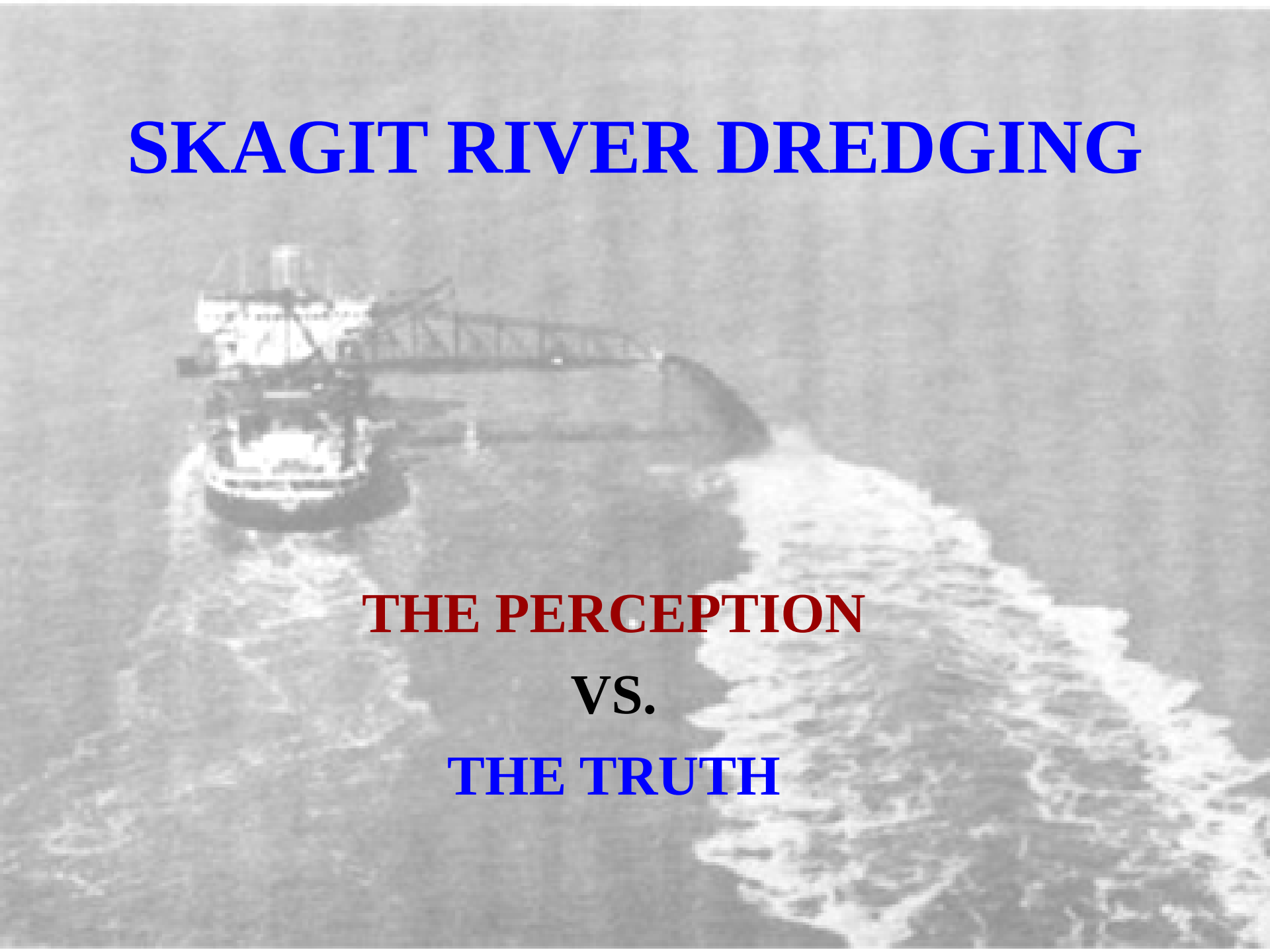
SKAGIT RIVER DREDGING



THE PERCEPTION

VS.

THE TRUTH

THE PERCEPTION

- Skagit must be dredged from its **mouth** to above Burlington. *(Source: 1/7/22 C.H.)*

- What we want more than anything else is the **mouth** of the river dredged, so our flood waters can run out. *(Public Testimony J.T. Mason, County Commissioner , 3/2/37)*

THE TRUTH

➢**Dredging (the mouth of the river) will have no effect on high tides**, he stated. And high tides are always higher during flood periods. **It is the high tide that will tend to hold your river up**, he added. ***(Source: Major H.J.M. Baker, COE, 11/5/36 MVDH)***

The Perception

- They used to dredge the Skagit all the time in the old days.

- During the years they dredged the Skagit we didn’t have any floods.

THE TRUTH

DREDGING AND SNAGGING ON SKAGIT RIVER

YEAR	CUBIC YARDS	YEAR	CUBIC YARDS
1920	14,461	1921	2,500
1922	3,788	1923	7,074
1924	13,992	1925	13,911
1926	4,571	1927	18,956
1928	39,338	1929	14,409
1930	5,977	1931	27,195
1932	18,276	1933	12,777
1934	27,108	1935	24,012
1936	36,087	1937	21,364
1938	55,710	1939	110,339
1940	10,689	1941	45,132
1944	27,145	1945	75,580
1946	51,417	1947	74,717
1948	61,027 N. FORK 7,480 S. FORK	1949	68,482 UPSTREAM FORKS 77,900 UPSTREAM M.V.
1950	49,904 N. FORK 127,514 UPSTREAM M.V.	1951	38,788 N. FORK 79,603 S. FORK 38,325 UPSTREAM M.V.
1952	36,220 N. FORK	1953	44,112 N. FORK
1954	27,718 N. FORK	1955	33,270 N. FORK
1956	35,965 N. FORK	1957	3,313 N. FORK
1958	17,760 N. FORK	1959	13,298 N. FORK
1960	900 N. FORK	1961	0

Source: Corps of Engineers MFR dated May 31, 1991, based on Seattle District annual reports from 1920-1966.

THE TRUTH

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Source: Corps of Engineers MFR dated May 31, 1991, based on Seattle District annual reports from 1920-1966.

W. T. Preston

Picture courtesy of http://www.anacorteshistorymuseum.org/preston.htm

➢ Between 1942 and 1960 the *W. T. Preston* dredged (sidecast) 796,324 cu yds of material and **pulled 11,798 snags**. **Most** of the *W. T. Preston's* **work was done in the North Fork of the Skagit River up to Mt. Vernon** with occasional trips above Mt. Vernon. Only one trip was documented as far upriver as Hamilton. In addition the U.S. Dredge *Swinhomish* sidecast an additional 243,739 cu yds of river bottom material during the years 1949 through 1951, all upstream of Mt. Vernon. ***(Source: Corps of Engineers Annual Reports, 1942—1960, See Appendix A)***

WHY DREDGING WON'T WORK

- Deepening the Skagit River to carry flood flows is not feasible. Substantial deepening of the river to carry flood flows would tend to **undermine existing levees** along the river banks and thereby require costly erosion protection measures.

- The Skagit River carries large quantities of bed sediment estimated at more than 500,000 cubic yards annually.

- Because the Skagit River is the most important river in the entire Puget Sound area for salmon and steelhead spawning and for sport fishery, any **major dredging of the river would be totally unacceptable to fishery interests.** For these reasons channel deepening was considered impracticable and cost estimates were not made for this plan. ***(Source: ¶9a. Page 5, Supplement To Review Report on Flood Control and Other Improvements On Skagit River, Washington, Corps of Engineers, March 1966)***

Why dredging won't work.

- Dredging the river to convey the 100 year flood would require over a 10-20 foot dredge depth from the mouth to Sedro Woolley, 20 miles. (**60,000,000 cu. yds**.)

- Cost: $5 per cy at more than $300,000,000.

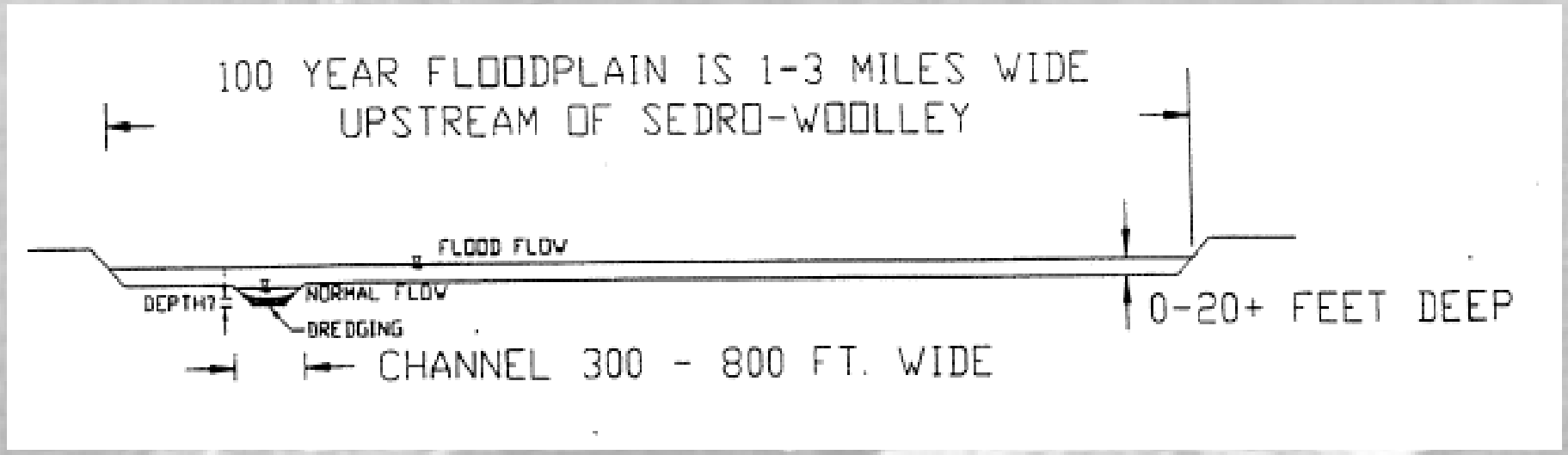
- Short term fix to the problem and would have a high O&M cost.

- Severe impact to fish habitat

- Regular disruption of habitat due to ongoing maintenance. Migration of fish would be impacted.

(Source: Corps of Engineers Stephen Pierce e-mail dated 2/20/2001)

Why dredging won't work.



R.I.P. Dredging

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