The purpose is to preserve the past for the future for use in the present.

Our written past was being lost.

Skagit Valley Herald, Skagit Argus, Concrete Herald and the Courier Times all have lost the 1909 flood event articles.

“The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you are likely to see.” – Winston Churchill
ISSUES

- All flood events
- Flood Control Meetings
- Fish Related Articles
- Dam Building In Skagit County
- History of Agriculture
- History of Logging
- Erosion Control Projects
- Community History
- Diking and Drainage Issues
HISTORICAL NEWSPAPER PROJECT

- Books Available At All Local Libraries
- On line at:
  - www.skagitriverhistory.com
  - www.skagitcounty.net
- 452 Page Index On CD-Rom Linked to 986 newspaper articles on-line web page
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/22/21</td>
<td>The flood of 1921 is the biggest flood in the history of the Skagit, according to old timers, who recall the floods of 1879, 1888, 1897 and on up to the big flood of 1909 and the 1917 freshet. Mrs. Dreyer, who lives west of town, tells of the big flood of 1888, when in some places the river backed up higher than this year. She says that not so much damage was done then because there were practically no dikes and the water spread over the lowlands more gradually. <strong>Measurements at the Dalles, near Concrete, show that the flood water this year reached a point two feet higher than at any previous time in the memory of the oldest settler.</strong> Charley Moses says that it was the biggest flood, with the biggest volume of water ever carried in the Skagit. At Van Horn the water was 14½ inches higher than it had ever been. In 1909 the river in the upper valley was only about two-thirds as wide as it is now. Hundreds of acres of land are being washed away every year, by both Skagit and Sauk rivers. W. A. Ellison says he has been on the upper river for 21 years and this is the biggest flood he has seen or heard old timers tell about.</td>
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BIGGEST FLOOD IN SKAGIT HISTORY SAY OLD-TIMERS

The flood of 1921 is the biggest flood in the history of the Skagit, according to old timers, who recall the floods of 1879, 1888, 1897 and on up to the big flood of 1909 and the 1917 freshet.

Mrs. Dwyer, who lives west of town, tells of the big flood of 1888, when in some places the river backed up higher than this year. She says that not so much damage was done then because there were practically no dikes and the water spread over the lowlands more gradually.

Measurements at the Duley, near Concrete, show that the flood water this year reached a point two feet higher than at any previous time in the memory of the oldest settler. Charley Morey says that it was the biggest flood, with the biggest volume of water ever carried in the Skagit.

At Van Horn the water was 14½ inches higher than it had ever been. In 1909 the river in the upper valley was only about two-thirds as wide as it is now. Hundreds of acres of land are being washed away every year, by both Skagit and Sultan rivers. W. A. Ellison says he has been on the upper river for 21 years and this is the biggest flood he has seen or heard old timers tell about.

Top—This photograph shows the main street in Burlington. While the water was well up on the stores, very little damage was done to the stacks of goods.

Middle—This shows the Walker residence on the east end of Fairhaven avenue in Burlington. The current undermined the house, and cut it in two. The picture shows how the house lying on its side. Mr. Walker, an aged man, was sleeping in the upper story when the house collapsed.

Bottom—Looking up the Skagit river from the N. P. railroad bridge south of Sedro-Woolley. The bridge in the picture is the Thompson bridge and the immense amount of water pouring down the Skagit is clearly shown.
FLOOD HISTORY

NEWS FLASH!!!! THE SKAGIT RIVER FLOODS.

WHY??

BECAUSE THAT’S WHAT RIVERS DO!!

RIVERS ARE NOTHING MORE THAN MOTHER NATURES DRAIN FIELDS
During the 20th century, the Skagit River reached flood stage 66 times since 1900 for an average of once every 1.5 years.
THINGS TO BE DONE

After all, it might have been far worse. No irretrievable damage has been done. The thing to be done now is to clean up, begin the work of repair, and proceed as though nothing had happened. Skagit county has a glorious future and not even extraordinary misfortune can set it back for any length of time. The weak-kneed brothers will move out; those made of sterner stuff will stay and reap the rewards of grit and energy. It is no time for calamity howlers, and they should not be tolerated. Let them go their way; their places will be filled by better men.

No expense should be spared to put the work ahead.

TOWN OF HAMILTON
2003 FLOOD EVENT

The Rewards of Grit & Energy

No Calamity Howlers Allowed!
SKAGIT RIVER MIGRATION

Original Section Map Prepared by GLO
1866-1885
Red diamonds depict points in the current DNR cadastre theme, which are themselves resultant of this original GLO survey. As a result, the location of the 1878 river channel is known with a great degree where it crosses section lines. Between section lines, accuracy may be more speculative.
Plate 29: Channel Positions, 1879, 1937, and 2001

Source: Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group, Plate 29
Prepared by: Middle Fork GIS
Why Rivers Change Course

- It’s what rivers do and they do it for a variety of reasons:
  - Volcanic eruptions
  - Landslides
  - Earthquakes
  - Major Flood Events
  - Flood Control Projects

- “I realize that for every change man makes to a rivers levee system, a change in the river may result.” (Source: Colonel Donald T. Wynn, Corps of Engineers, letter to Leonard Halverson, 10/15/96)
High Water Hits Lyman
TEN FAMILIES ARE MAROONED

As an aftermath of the high water of the last few days, the upper Lyman people are experiencing much anxiety from possible danger of landslides.

This is particularly true of a small group of ten families who are marooned on a small island across the river from Lyman caused by washing out of three bridges across the Ishapt near Lyman or their approaches.

Practically all communication with the outer world has been removed, except by cable. Through this means of transportation, provisions are carried across the swollen river each day when the families on the island send back milk and eggs by return cable.

With the Ishapt river in its present turbulent condition, it is considered little less than folly to attempt to cross it by any boat or water approach by the islanders. Their condition is rendered more perilous through the small landslides which are occurring along the banks of the river in the vicinity of Lyman.

For a time the bridge between Lyman and Hamilton was impassable but was repaired today so that light motor may pass over it.

Since last night, portions of land are being carried away on the Lyman side of the Ishapt and grave fears are entertained by the residents whose homes or stores are close to the river bank.

The six-room house of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Zilles is now occupying a position in the center of the main street of the city. Landscape doors to this building seemed to make it unsafe and it had just been moved away from near the brick today when a slide occurred which would have been disastrous had it remained on its proper site.

Several of the smaller houses within ten to twelve feet of the river have been moved. Men are heaving sponges trees and laying them along the river to prevent caving in of the land near the school building and steps to prevent loss are being taken by residents of Lyman.
Plan New $200,000 Skagit Flood Work
County Board Convenes With U.S. Engineer; Agrees To Sponsor Project; John Mason Heads New Flood Control Group

According to tentative plans for the new Skagit flood control project to be sponsored by the county, all parts of the river will be included, with a couple of projects for the Day Creek district, the big project at Conway, one at Sterling, at Hamilton, Utopia and other danger spots on the river, which the crew of men under the present appropriation, were unable to complete.
Day Creek Fish Project

More fish plantings for the upper Skagit district were in prospect as State Game Protector M. Splane began a plant of rainbow and cutthroat fry from the Lake Whatcom hatchery. The first are between three and four inches in length.

Plantings will be made as follows: Day Creek, 15,000; Upper Skagit between Gorge Creek and Diablo, 20,000; 25,000 in creeks along the Baker River; 10,000 in Swift Creek.
Baker Lake Fish Hatchery

Fish hatchery on Baker Lake.


Carried out the sockeye and steelhead fry by horseback to the hatchery at Birdsvie.

In 1920 2.5 million eggs were transported to Birdsvie.
Baker Lake Fish Hatchery

- Only spawning grounds of Sockeye salmon in US Waters.
- Sockeye runs in Lake Union are direct descendants of Baker River salmon.
- Lower Baker Dam in 1925 began to devastate fish runs on Skagit River.
- 1924, 14,500 sockeye were harvested. Producing 22,000,000 eggs.
- In 1925 only 40 sockeye were harvested, 51,000 eggs.
Birdsview Fish Hatchery

THE CONCRETE HERALD
Formerly the Hamilton Herald Established Nov. 28, 1901. Oldest Paper in the Upper Skagit.

June 21, 1951

CONCRETE HERALD ANNIVERSARY EDITION

Birdsview Hatchery Started In 1900

About the year 1900 a small hatchery was established on Grandy Creek at Birdsview as an auxiliary to the Baker Lake hatchery. Salmon eggs for the hatchery were obtained from both Grandy Creek and Plunney Creek. In 1911 extensive improvements and construction of buildings were made, including a new hatchery building, barn, and several residences, and the old hatchery building was made into a workshop. The office of the Baker Lake hatchery superintendent was then moved to the Birdsview hatchery since the field operations became enlarged and Birdsview was more accessible for mail and transportation, as well as being more centrally located since the hatcheries on Hood’s Canal were also added to the field. After 1911 from time to time further improvements and construction of buildings were carried out as became necessary. However, by 1947 the run of salmon into Grandy Creek had declined greatly and the water of the creek during winter and early spring was muddy for such long periods that fish cultural work could not be carried out with maximum efficiency. Logging off of the creek watershed caused the changed condition in the creek. The long periods of muddy water in the creek during the winter months especially, appeared to be a factor in the decline in the numbers of salmon entering. The creek and at times fingerling fish in the ponds could not be properly fed for several weeks at a time. Therefore further operation of the hatchery was not considered justifiable. Accordingly on July 1, 1947 the hatchery was closed and eventually was transferred to the State Game Department. At the present time there remains only one federal fish hatchery still in operation in the Puget Sound area, that being at Quilcene on Hood’s Canal. At present the Fish & Wildlife Service is concerned chiefly with the Columbia River and tributaries and with the Sacramento River in California in so far as fish cultural work is concerned.

➢ First constructed 1900.
➢ By 1947 the water quality in Grandy Creek had so deteriorated due to logging activities that the water in the creek was no longer suitable for hatchery use and in 1947 the hatchery closed.
Construction began 1947.

Purpose was to bring fish runs back to normal.

3,000,000 Chinook, silver and steelhead were supposed to be put into Skagit each year.

Seattle City Light helped pay for hatchery due to damage done to fish upstream of Marblemount.
Skagit Best Farmland in Nation

The United States government has just admitted that Skagit county is the finest farming community in the nation, bar none!

Skagit county soil won nine out of 12 points. An assay of soil taken from the Gunderson estate, south of Clear Lake, was found to be 100 per cent perfect for general agricultural purposes. It was the only soil given a perfect rating.

The tests were conducted by the United States department of agriculture.

(Source: Mt. Vernon Argus, 9/2/25)
FUTURE OF FLOOD CONTROL

- **More storage** behind dams or change in operational procedures before, during & after flood events
  - No-brainer approach, everybody wins, currently 180 million for fish and recreation and **ZERO** for flood control unacceptable

- **Nookachamps storage**
  - Doable if includes buyout of property owners
  - Could create 1,000’s of acres of wetlands, fish mitigation projects, wetland banking areas, recreational opportunities for both fisherman bird watchers and hunters

- **100-250 year protection for urban areas**
  - No problem so long as cities stay within current UGA’s
  - No development of land currently zoned agricultural
FUTURE OF FLOOD CONTROL

ISSUES

FOR

➢ Safety
➢ Promote Economic Development
➢ Prevent damages to infrastructure
➢ Good for fish, farms & families

AGAINST

➢ Loss of farmland due to increased development pressure
➢ Cost, would increase local taxes
➢ F/C should not be a reward for bad land use planning
➢ Voters should decide this issue not government