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A Bridge for the Upper Skagit

The voters of Skagit county will have an important issue to decide for themselves at the November 2 election—whether or not to authorize a \$700,000 bond issue for the construction of a bridge across the upper Skagit river in the vicinity of Concrete and of the necessary connecting roads on the south bank.

This is an issue that needs to be studied on its merits. The claims of the bridge's backers are so strong that the rest of the county will do well to consider the project's effects on the county's welfare as a whole. It can't be tossed overboard as an upriver scheme to profit at the expense of the rest of the county.

Three principal claims are made for this bridge. From the standpoint of the taxpayers' pocketbook, it would eliminate the present costly operation of two or three county-owned ferries. These ferries are not only an expense but also a worry to county officials because of the danger of an accident, especially during the high water periods.

A second claim for benefits from this bridge is that it would open to logging timber areas, that, one spokesman contends, now have more trees growing each year than are being cut in the rest of the county. If the bridge is not built, says the county road committee, this area will be logged, but the logs will go over the ridge to Snohomish county.

A third claim is that the lands south of the river may be suitable for further settling, which will come if roads and a bridge are provided to give settlers easy access to county trading and marketing centers.

"The building of this bridge with connecting roads would be to the interest of all people and the welfare of the county, in general," the Board of County Commissioners said in this week calling for the bridge bond election.

The bridge issue should be considered by the voters in the light of the interests of the county as a whole and of its progress.