

THE CONCRETE HERALD

Formerly the Hamilton Herald Established Nov. 23, 1901. Oldest Paper in the Upper Skagit.

January 17, 1924

START WORK SOON ON DIKING PROJECT IN SKAGIT COUNTY

PLANS ARE ALL MADE TO RECLAIM 9,000 ACRES OF RICH LAND ON PADILLA BAY-TO COST \$1,300,000

Plans have recently been announced for the Padilla bay diking project for the reclamation of about 9,000 rich land that is now covered by water at high tide. The project is said to be the biggest of the kind ever undertaken on the Pacific coast. It is estimated that it will cost approximately \$1,300,000 and will require two years' time to complete.

The plans and specifications for the project have been approved by government engineers and by the state department of conservation and reclamation. Under the plans drawn, it is proposed to build an enclosing dike eight miles long, from five to 29 feet high, and 335 feet wide at the base, forming a sloping wall of earth and brush from the south end of Hat Island, east of Anacortes, northerly to Samish Island. The plans also call for an inside dike about half the length of the outer dike, extending from the east end of Samish Island along the low-lying mainland to the Leary slough, to protect the enclosed area from the danger of flooding and streams. There will also be a drainage basin running parallel to the outer dike and just inside the wall.

Engineer Bailey of Seattle states that the project includes not only the construction of the dikes, but also the purchase of a dredge, the installation of a large pumper plant to keep the lands drained and the building of roads and bridges, making the land ready for the farmer to live on and cultivate.

Behind the project is the Swinomish Reclamation Co., comprised mostly of farmers. It is said that there are 290 farmers interested in the company, 60 per cent of whom are ready to occupy the land as soon as it is reclaimed. After the project had been worked out and found to be feasible, an improvement district was formed, known as Diking District No. 22, of Skagit county, and the district was bonded for the estimated cost of the improvement.

Padilla bay is declared by geologists to have been the mouth of the Skagit river generations ago. When the channel changed, the old outlet was filled with alluvial mud. The land to be reclaimed is covered with sea grass and is practically dry at low tide for a distance of about three miles from the mainland.