

Skagit Officials to Make Barge Route Inspection

Top Skagit county and Mount Vernon officials—fighting to win a year-around tug and barge route on the Skagit river from Mount Vernon to salt water—tomorrow will personally inspect low water navigation hazards on

the nine-mile route.

The group will be guests of the Dunlap Towing company, LaConner, operator of a 12-tug fleet, and active in the drive for federal aid in deepening the river channel for regularly scheduled barge and tug traffic.

Lowest tides of 1955 will be recorded on the Skagit river delta today and tomorrow, and officials will see firsthand how the delta blocks passage of all but shallow-draft traffic for 22 hours daily under worst tide conditions.

Jim Dunlap, tug company operator, estimated that tomorrow the exposed bar will be passable for only two hours when covered by six feet of water from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Under ideal conditions, Dunlap said, his tugs should have seven or eight feet for operation.

Mount Vernon's Chamber of Commerce last week kicked off a new drive to have the Army Engineers dredge the bar and channel. Strong representations were made to the area representatives in Washington, D. C., to press for the project, estimated to cost about \$500,000.