Senator Jackson Drafting Bill To Allow River Mouth Work

Lawmakers To Seek Plan for Engineers To Speed Projects

The drafting of federal legislation which would release U.S. funds for the deepening of the mouth of the Skagit River for flood control and navigation purposes has been disclosed in Washington, D. C.

Lowell Hughes, Skagit County commissioner and chairman of the local flood control committee which is working for means of cutting a deeper channel at the mouth of the Skagit River, has been notified by Senator Henry M. Jackson of the developments.

Draws Up Bill

Senator Jackson said he is drafting legislation which would authorize the Army Engineers to undertake flood control projects costing $500,000 or less which they determine to be justifiable.

The U. S. senator said that this authorization would mean that projects such as the Skagit River channelization could be undertaken without the necessity of going through the long-drawn-out process of Congressional hearings, reports, etc., for each and every project.

Jackson stated he had conferred with Major General E. D. Itschner, Assistant Chief of Engineers for Civil Works, and had turned over to him material provided by the local committee. He said Itschner will have the Seattle District Engineer compile a complete report on the best means for solving the Skagit's flooding and navigation situation.

Need Legislation

The Senator pointed out that he and Itschner agreed that no work could be accomplished without new legislation. Existing authority does not allow the Army Engineers to undertake the work required without such legislation.

Jackson writes:

"My purpose in sponsoring the new legislation will be to eliminate the proceedural bottleneck which now prevents work on small but vitally needed flood control measures. Passage of this legislation by the Congress will provide the means by which federal assistance for flood control on the Skagit — now apparently hopeless—can be gained."

Jackson said he would introduce the measure as soon as the details are worked out.