

received
28 June

June 26, 1978

Mr. Forrest Brooks
Regional Planning Section
Seattle Dist.. Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box c-3755
Seattle, WA 98124

Dear Mr. Brooks;

RE: Skagit River Levee and Channel Improvements
Dike District #3

As Chairman of the board of directors of Dike District #3, comprising the diked areas south of Mt. Vernon, Washington, and laying east of the Skagit River channel, I want to bring to your attention a matter which we consider of major importance to our district. This matter was mentioned briefly to members of your staff at the public meeting held in Mt. Vernon on March 22, 1978.

Specifically, this concerns wooden flood gates presently located on the outlet of Fishers Slough (1) south of Conway, Washington on State Highway #530 midway between mile post #1 and #2, and very close to test bore #78-PA-225. During the high water of December, 1975, water of the Skagit River was high enough in this area that it was running over the top of a wooden bulkhead attached to the west side of this state highway bridge (530-4), and flowing east in Fishers Slough to add more stress on the dikes protecting the surrounding lands. Our concern is that with the anticipated raising of the river dikes in this area, some planning needs to be taken into account on this structure, otherwise we do feel these flood-gates and surrounding bulkhead will present a major problem in this district in the event of any high water period.

We feel that the most practical solution would be the elimination of these flood gates (8-5'X8' wooden doors) and bulkhead which are attached to the state highway bridge (530-4), move approximately 80' west of the present structure and install corrugated culverts with flood gates on the river side, with a new earth dike built over the top of these tubes to tie into the present dikes which come up to this outlet of Fishers Slough. We realize that this is no small matter, since this outlet must remain large enough to also drain any upriver flooding on the east side of the Skagit River, as well as the normal drainage of Fishers Slough.

In further response to your questionnaire of April, 1978, our dike district includes that area east of the Skagit River, beginning on the North end of Mt. Vernon, at approximately mile

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13 on your map and continuing south to include Conway and south to 1/2 mile south of Milltown, near mile 4 on your map.

Major structures on our dikes include flood gates at Fishers Slough mentioned earlier in this letter, (1), drainage district pumps north of Conway bridge, (2), and outlet gates for Britt Slough, (3). Of these structures, only #1 is the primary responsibility of Dike District #3.

Most of our dikes are sod covered, with small portions covered by road. Average top width would be 12' - 18'.

Major levee repair work done since December of 1975 has been to raise and widen the dikes located on Fishers Slough, which were in serious threat of overtopping in December, 1975, and which had also had a break several years prior to that time, which the Corp helped repair. In addition, there was a break or overtopping of the dikes at the outlet of Fishers Slough in December 1975 which nearly washed out SR530 at that location and did disrupt Burlington Northern R.R. traffic for several days. In addition, the dike was realigned, widened, and raised midway between test bore #78-PA-261 and 78-PA-262 (#4 on map). This was another area of major concern in December, 1975 due to accessibility, seepage and overtopping. There is an old slough in this area with some pervious gravel which is of concern to our district and at the time of this construction we did install a section of impervious trench, for an estimated 800'.

Another area of concern is 1000' south of the Hickox Road (5 on the map). In this area the river cuts dangerously close to the base of the dike and we are continually rip-rapping this area to maintain sufficient shoulder along the river side of the dike.

Seepage is also of major concern in our district during times of high water due to the porous nature of much of the soil along the river, as well as to the material used to construct the dikes. Of particular concern in December 1975 was a location on the south edge of Mt. Vernon close to test bore hole #78-ED-120 and relatively close to the olde "Darigold" plant where numerous sandbags were used to contain seepage (#6). In the area of test bore hole #78-PA-260 there was excessive seepage under the dike which became of major concern to the home owners in the area. Although the dike would appear to be amply wide and high in this area, it is very porous. Seepage in the areas between test bore holes #78-PA-266 and #78-PA-265, 1500-2000' south of the Hickox Road is always a problem in times of high water, the dike having a very porous footing (?). The road and fields immediately north of the Fir Island bridge in the area of test hole #78-PA-273 and in the area of mile 6 on your map are subject to soft spots and boils during our high water periods. We feel that a major portion of our dikes from the Fir Island bridge and north should be more impervious to seepage; most of them having been made from the sandy soil available on the site.

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Preferably the dikes should be covered by impervious blankets, together with impervious trenches and especially those areas mentioned above should be given careful study and planning.

We are sure you are aware of the fact that the December 1975 high water nearly inundated downtown Mt. Vernon by overtopping the revetment and/or Main Street, from the West side bridge and south. This again constitutes a part of our dike district and requires some serious thinking. Other dikes are raised, what happens to this area?

Access to our dikes is readily available in most areas and not a major concern, as most join the Dike Road. Those dikes lying south of Conway are more isolated and represent a more serious problem to get at in construction or emergencies because of their isolation. Those dikes paralleling Fisher Slough are also more difficult to work on due to the limited access.

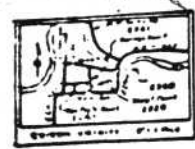
At your convenience we would like an opportunity to discuss these problem areas with representatives of your office, preferably by means of visiting the areas in person.

Sincerely,



Owen (Tony) Tronsdal
Conway, Washington
(206)445-5806

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