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April 4, 1979

Skagit County Board of Commissioners
Administration Building
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Mon. Tue
23 - 24

Gentlemen:

As a result of increased concern in the rural areas pertaining to **Alternative 3E** of the Lower Levee Channel Improvement Project, the Conservation District Board of Supervisors felt compelled to address you as Commissioners about what we feel are serious questions.

The Conservation District Board of Supervisors has always supported better flood control for Skagit County and continue to be aware of the vulnerable position this County is in with the limited flood protection we now have.

Throughout the planning stages of the Lower Levee Channel Improvement Project, several alternatives were discussed. The choice of Alternative 3E with improvements in the Nookachamps area seems to be what the Board and Corps of Engineers has decided on.

We have been receiving continual opposition and comment especially in the **Butler Flats and Samish areas concerning Alternative 3E.** Specifically, the proposed weir structure and overflow of flood waters into the now troubled Samish River area, and also, the unknown affects the waters would have on the operations at United General Hospital and the Convalescent Center. From the comments reaching us, **rural residence are opposed to using this area specifically as a release valve for the entire project.** Other comments concerning the vast amount of **rural lands west of Burlington and Mount Vernon that will have 100-year flood protection has several people worried as to whether we can keep those areas out of houses, if the project is completed.**

The Conservation Board of Supervisors are very concerned that any opposition could threaten Skagit County's chances of obtaining better flood control, and for that reason, we would like to request the examination of **another alternative.** Since the introduction of specific alternatives by the Corps of Engineers, it has been apparent under each choice offered, some areas were to be sacrificed for others. We do not feel this is entirely necessary.

We respectfully submit an alternative, where by the cities would still receive 100-year flood protection, as well as, United General Hospital and the Convalescent Center, **but the Fir Island, Avon Bend and Sterling areas would receive 50-year protection with the elimination of the weir structure.** In other words, **let nature choose where, in excess of 50-year flood flows, the**

river will overtop the dikes. This alternative not only satisfies the opposition against the weir, and protects the hospital, but also lessens the impacts of possible urban encroachment on the agricultural lands.

Please do not feel we are against the Lower Levee Channel Improvement Project, because we are not. We do feel, however, as Conservation District Supervisors, representing the rural areas of Skagit County, this alternative needs to be examined and discussed with the people.

We will be happy to meet with you at your convenience to discuss this further.

Sincerely,



Robert Hulbert, Chairman
Skagit Conservation District
Board of Supervisors

Jess Knutzen
Lyle Wesen
Cliff Magin
David Youngquist

lmg