

12 July 1974

MEMO FOR: RECORD

SUBJECT: LaConner Flood Problems

1. Reference NPS-PL-NC letter dated 8 July 1974 regarding 29 May 1974 request from Board of Skagit County Commissioners for assistance on matters pertaining to Swinomish Channel maintenance problems and LaConner's need for protection against major Skagit River floods.
2. On 9 July 1974 the writer met with Fred Martin, Mayor, LaConner; Ed O'Leary, Port of Skagit County; Lloyd Johnson, Skagit County Engineer; John Ensley, Skagit County Engineering Department; Howard Miller, Skagit County Commissioner; and Bill Sullivan, Skagit County Commissioner, for the purpose of discussing LaConner's request for assistance.
3. Mayor Martin expressed concern over the damage that will be done in the future to LaConner when the Skagit River overtops its banks in the vicinity of Mount Vernon, flowing west toward the Swinomish Channel through Diking District Nos. 1, 9, and 12. Diking District No. 12 has removed low level protection dikes which had formed the southwest boundary of the district. Consequently, any major floodflows through this area would be funneled directly into LaConner. Mayor Martin was concerned over the situation and sought guidance on how this area could be protected.
4. The writer concluded, after reviewing the problem area in the County Engineer's office (see attached quad sheet excerpt) and various possible solutions, that construction of a ring dike may be engineeringly feasible. An auto reconnaissance of the problem area was made with Messrs. Martin and O'Leary. A dike approximately 3/4-mile long could be constructed beginning at the east side of the existing Port of Skagit County landfill, located on the south side of Diking District No. 12's drainage canal, extending east then southeast, tying into high ground at the intersection of LaConner and Samamish, and Chilberg Roads.
5. The old dikes had been removed by farmers, as they desired to utilize the 30- to 50-foot wide strip of land that had been covered by the dikes for crop production. Opposition to construction of a new dike would be expected, of course, from these farmers and the city or county would probably have to use their rights of eminent domain to obtain the necessary rights-of-way. Another problem which exists is that only a relatively small section of the possible new dike falls within the city of LaConner and the balance within unincorporated Skagit County. The county would have to act as the local sponsor of the project, which could be done under Section 205 authority.

NPSEN-PL-BP

SUBJECT: LaConner Flood Problems

6. As a flood of major magnitude has not occurred in recent years, many of the farmers do not feel a flood threat still exists any longer. However, a 10-year flood would inundate major portions of LaConner, including the high school and other facilities. Substantial recent economic development has occurred in LaConner, and new construction is currently underway. The town has been listed on the National Register of Historical Towns.

7. The writer agreed to review existing data developed from the flood insurance studies performed by Flood Plain Management Services to get some idea as to how high the levees would have to be constructed to provide 100-year protection for LaConner. Subsequent to this review and further discussion with Chief, Basin Planning Section and Chief, Planning Branch, will contact Mayor Martin, providing him with guidance as to how he may initiate a Section 205 study, if this is found to be appropriate.

8. Construction of outlet control structures on the sloughs that drain Diking District No. 12 into Swinomish Channel was also briefly discussed. However, concrete structures would be costly and not justified by the benefits which would be gained by facilitating drainage following a major flood. Use of a soft plug for alleviating flood pressures was also mentioned by Lloyd Johnson.

9. The writer feels that there is a possibility that the authority for the authorized Skagit River levee and channel improvement project could be construed to allow consideration of a levee project in the vicinity of LaConner. At such time (FY 77 ?) that we begin phase I GDM studies on the authorized project, we might include LaConner as part of our phase I studies. This will be discussed further with District planning personnel.

1 Incl
as

URABECK

cc:
N&CP Sec
FPMS Sec
Urabeck
Basin Plng Sec file
Plng desk file

NPSEN-PL-BP

SUBJECT: LaConner Flood Problems

6. As a flood of major magnitude has not occurred in recent years, many of the farmers do not feel a flood threat still exists any longer. However, a 10-year flood would inundate major portions of LaConner, including the high school and other facilities. Substantial recent economic development has occurred in LaConner, and new construction is currently underway. The town has been listed on the National Register of Historical Towns.

7. The writer agreed to review existing data developed from the flood insurance studies performed by Flood Plain Management Services to get some idea as to how high the levees would have to be constructed to provide 100-year protection for LaConner. Subsequent to this review and further discussion with Chief, Basin Planning Section and Chief, Planning Branch, will contact Mayor Martin, providing him with guidance as to how he may initiate a Section 205 study, if this is found to be appropriate.

8. Construction of outlet control structures on the sloughs that drain Diking District No. 12 into Swinomish Channel was also briefly discussed. However, concrete structures would be costly and not justified by the benefits which would be gained by facilitating drainage following a major flood. Use of a soft plug for alleviating flood pressures was also mentioned by Lloyd Johnson.

9. The writer feels that there is a possibility that the authority for the authorized Skagit River levee and channel improvement project could be construed to allow consideration of a levee project in the vicinity of LaConner. At such time (FY 77 ?) that we begin phase I GDM studies on the authorized project, we might include LaConner as part of our phase I studies. This will be discussed further with District planning personnel.

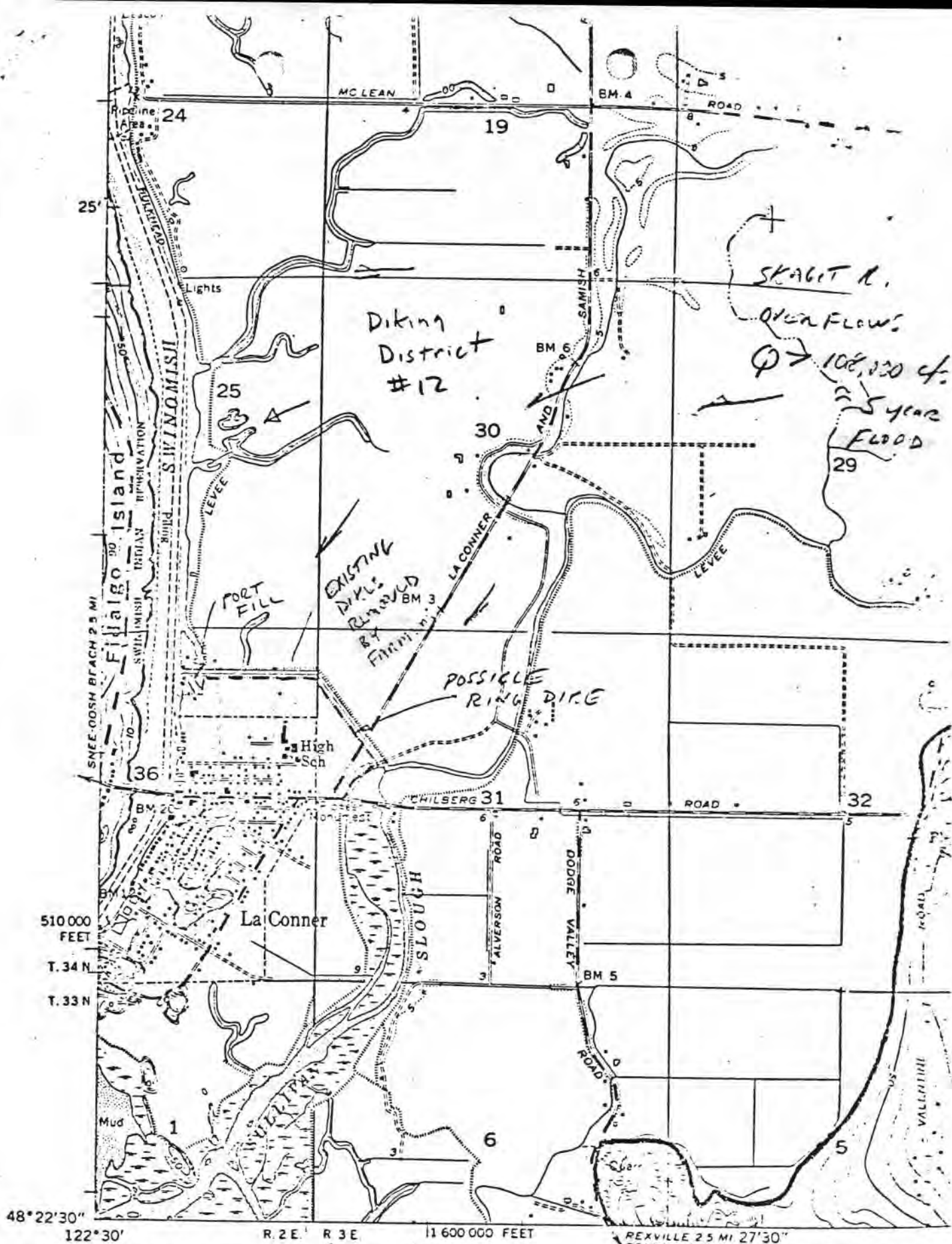
1 Incl
as

URABECK

P 002340

cc:
N&CP Sec
FPMS Sec
Urabeck
Basin Plng Sec file
Plng desk file

*In the meanwhile, who will
proceed w/ the 205? NO KTRAS.
Frank - We should move
slowly on being committed
to 205's. Robbins says a
max of \$500,000 is available
from revolving account to
make investigations where appropriate
and w/ the 205's. Feeling local there
is no Federal interest. This could
apply to ^{your} Montana investigation. AS 8/7.*



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
 Control by USGS and USC&GS
 Topography from aerial photographs by Kelsh plotter
 and by planetable surveys 1956. Aerial photographs taken 1954

Handwritten: FURNACE
 12.1.74

DECEPTION PASS
 1:62,500