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SKAGIT MIGHT OBTAIN GOV'T RIVER DREDGE

Suction Dredger at Grays Harbor Been Idle for 2 Years, Says Gaches

WOULD COST NOTHING

Dirt Could Be Used To Widen Dikes, Restore Banks That Have Been Washed Away

It is quite possible that Skagit County can obtain, without cost, a government suction dredge for use in the Skagit River channel if the county will make concerted appeal to the proper authorities in Washington, it is the opinion of Charles Gaches, local farmer.

Such a dredge, built by the government for use in northwest waters, is now stationed at Grays Harbor, where it has been laying idle for the past two years, Mr. Gaches states.

Because its use in dredging the Skagit River would be an aid to navigation, it is thought that this equipment could be obtained without expense to the county, saving at least \$150 per day, the minimum charge made by private contractor.

The rapid depositing of sediment in recent years has resulted in bringing the river bottom up to a level almost as high as the farming land, especially along the South Fork, and increased the necessity of building higher and higher dikes all along the lower end of the valley.

At the same time, the river has been cutting away the banks, making it more easy for high water to undermine and come through on the inside of the dike. As happened during the recent freshet, it is explained by the local man.

The dredge sucks the sand along with a certain percent of water from the bottom of the river and ejects it through a ten-inch pipe. Large quantities of dirt can be removed from the bottom of the channel quickly with this machine.

It is suggested by Mr. Gaches that the dirt be used to make present dikes around fifty feet wide and to restore the sloping banks that have been eroded away, thereby practically eliminating the danger of a break for many years.

"People of the county have been awakened to the fact that existing dams on the upper Skagit do not insure against floods," he stated. "This is an opportune time to demand that something be done."