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Work Starts At Dangerous River Points

Wallgren's \$216,000 Skagit River Job Under Way

As part of Congressman Mon Wallgren's proposed \$2,000,000 flood control project on the Skagit river, Engineer Iver Nelson is now at work on a WPA project for which \$216,000 has been appropriated for revetment work on dangerous portions of the river bank lying from Burlington to a point east of Hamilton. Nelson hopes to have some 120 men working before long and now has approximately 50 men on the job. This is just the start of the flood control and erosion relief program which Congressman Wallgren plans for the Skagit river, to extend from far up the river to its mouth.

Actual work has started at the C. Brider place at the Sterling bend near Burlington. The banks are being sloped for placing the brush mats and revetment. A trestle is being built across the slough to reach the big growth of willows in the old Sterling bend channel. Tool houses and other portable buildings are being constructed.

Another crew of men is at work building a concrete mixing plant on the river bank, just below the Northern Pacific bridge near Sedro-Woolley. This is near a big supply of gravel and will be used for making fascine cores which are wrapped in willows, and will be fastened by steel cables to the toe of the brush mat.

Concrete blocks will also be made, to be placed on top of the brush mats, all of which will be fastened by cables, with mats and fascines extending well under water to prevent erosion. Engineer Nelson estimates that the work as outlined will take about a year with a full crew of 122 men.

Some ten projects have been mapped out along the river between Burlington and Lyman, as the most dangerous places, together with four other locations, at which flood control work will probably be done later. Both Burlington and Sedro-Woolley have been threatened by possibility of the river breaking through into slough channels, and either running through the towns or causing huge damage.

This danger will be removed by the work now under way, Nelson believes. One of the worst points on the river is the Burlington bend, and some three quarters of a mile of brush mats and revetments are to be constructed there as one of the first projects. Another project calls for a long stretch of protective work above the Sedro-Woolley bend.

Then at the danger point at Burns bar, above Sedro-Woolley, some 2,000 feet of revetment work is to be built. This is one of the main danger points at which the river threatens Sedro - Woolley. Another bad place is the Reese farm, where the river has cut far into a new channel, and at this point some 1,500 feet of erosion protection is to be built.

Then at Ross island, near Utopia, almost a mile of revetment will be built. The river at this point is now more than a mile from its original channel and cutting more every year. Another bad place is near the Christ Wolfe farm, where more revetment work will be done.

Several places near Lyman are included in the program of revetment work, including one place extending a quarter of a mile just above Lyman and another half a mile of bank protection below Hamilton, where about 2,000 feet of brush mats will be installed.

While there have been numerous surveys of the Skagit river made during the past 20 years, this is the first systematic campaign for actual constructive work to prevent continuation of the erosion, which has caused loss of hundreds of acres of the most fertile Skagit valley farm land. Plans have already been made for obtaining additional appropriations to carry on this work both further up the river and from Burlington to the mouth, and Congressman Wallgren is still working to get additional funds to complete his two million dollar Skagit river flood control and erosion program.