

# THE COURIER-TIMES

JANUARY 12, 1939

## *County Chamber Hears About \$750,000 WPA River Project*

Skagit river revetment work projects and honoring of leading Skagit county dairymen were the two subjects discussed at the monthly meeting of the Skagit County Chamber of Commerce at the Wixson hotel here Tuesday night. Frank Evans was in charge of the program, which included a display of a lifelike model of the revetment work at Lyman, and an interesting talk by Iner Nelson, government engineer in charge of the river work here for the past three years.

The facts brought out in a lengthy discussion were as follows: some \$260,000 has been spent in revetment work on the Skagit river under the first project which started in December, 1935; most of this work has stood up well under all kinds of conditions; there are a few places, such as Utopia, where engineers claim log tows have started damage which has resulted in considerable undermining of the work; some means of financing maintenance of the work must be provided and a new \$420,000 WPA project, all ready to start now, to place more revet-

ments all along the Skagit river, wherever necessary, will commence as soon as the county commissioners can agree with the government engineers on the matter of a new drag line.

Nelson said that the county was expected to maintain the work after it was completed, but County Commissioner John Mason stated that the county had no funds for maintenance. Nelson said that when the completed revetment work is turned over to the county, a small maintenance crew could keep it in repair at a small annual cost.

Jack Davis of Burlington stated he had gone down the river in a small boat to inspect the work, and that it was holding up remarkably well. Fred Fellows, Lyman banker, said the work at Lyman had saved the town, and that anyone who said the work as done by Nelson's men, was no good, is crazy.

Several farmers joined Mason in telling of the big cost of maintaining dikes along the lower river, paid by a district tax on the farmers. They claimed that it would be unfair for the county to pay for maintenance of the revetment work, since they had paid for their diking by a special tax on the farms. G. Knutzen of Burlington stated that he considered the maintenance of the river banks was a county problem and not something that the upper river should be forced to finance.

A. H. Ward said that immediate action is needed to repair damaged work such as at Utopia and that an emergency should be declared, while financing plans can be worked out for further maintenance. Mason said he was in sympathy with the work and had all he could do to help. He said the towboat men denied injuring the revetment with their log tows, but those in charge of the work state they have positive evidence of the damage.

President John Gould of the chamber and H. L. Willis of Mt. Vernon told of plans to honor Emil Youngquist, whose herd has made a national production record.

A dinner will probably be held to honor him and other leading dairymen, and a committee was named with Willis as chairman, and Condon Barclay as the member from this city.