

Flood project study

Report due in fall

An early-fall target date has been set by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers officials for completion of reports to be presented to Congress on year-long study of the Avon Bypass flood control proposal.

Results of the study that began last summer will be sent to Washington, illustrated with pictures showing damage caused by Skagit River floods.

The Corps' findings and proposals will be aired in a public hearing to be scheduled here after completion of the report and before it is forwarded to the nation's capitol, County Engineer Lloyd Johnson explained.

AUTHORIZED IN 1936

Johnson, working with the federal engineers as flood control coordinator for Skagit County, explained that the Avon Bypass project was first authorized by Congress in 1936. It has been frequently discussed since that time and was revived in the spring of 1962 by the Corps of Army Engineers as the most practicable

solution to Skagit River flood problems.

As outlined earlier by corps officials, the bypass would consist of a channel 340 feet wide at its bottom extending from the Skagit River to Padilla Bay.

From an intake structure south of Burlington, the proposed canal would run eight miles almost directly west to Padilla Bay. Excess flood waters could be diverted into the channel during high water and emptied into the bay.

COST \$10 MILLION

The corps' report will include recommendations that recreational and fisheries facilities be added to the bypass project. Fishing, boating, swimming and water skiing all would be possible along its length, a spokesman pointed out. The proposed bypass could also provide uses in fish farming, drainage, irrigation.

Cost of the bypass has been estimated at \$19 million. Federal aid would provide about \$15 million of this total, with local financing from Skagit County, the

state, diking districts and possibly flood control zones financing right of way costs and construction of highway bridges made necessary by the project.