

BEFORE THE U. S. ARMY ENGINEERS CORPS

Skagit River Basin Hearing

February 5th, 1961

Mount Vernon, Washington

SUMMARY OF DRAINAGE DISTRICT #17 of SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON

[Part of the File No. 3]

Gentlemen:

Drainage District #17 is a municipal corporation of Skagit County, Washington organized under the laws of the State of Washington.

This district is a distinct organization from Skagit County and is governed by three elected commissioners.

The purpose for which the district was organized was to construct, maintain and operate ditches and drainage facilities in lower Skagit County easterly from and along the Skagit River and South of Mount Vernon, Washington.

The district encompasses approximately 4,680 acres of extremely fertile farm land and a portion of South Mount Vernon and Conway in the County. Various county roads cross from and run parallel with U. S. Highway 99 which crosses the district from Northerly to Southerly.

In the original construction Drainage District #17 had direct outlets into the South Fork of the Skagit River at Conway, Washington, and by gravity into the South Fork through the river dike by boxes and gates against high water and tides. The cost of drainage by this method was of course minimal.

Subsequently the river bottom became filled with sediment and it became impossible to drain in this fashion. Pumps were installed which while expensive, aided the water disposition. However, pumps within the range which could operate without confiscatory costs could only handle a portion of the water necessary. Lands suffered, crops were ruined, highways were flooded and even homes were flooded and the general economy of the district was endangered. Seeking escape the

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district was bonded to build the so called "Salt-water Ditch", with gates at the salt water end--which ditch extended southerly in the North portion of Stanwood Bay.

Relief in the district was immediate. No more yearly floodings(except breaks in from the river on one or two occasions) and no more pumping costs. The district land could be drained and crops produced commensurate with the fertile lands capacity to produce.

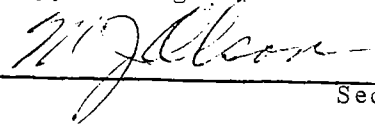
Gradually again silt and deposits from the Skagit and Snohomish rivers have invaded the drainage and capacity of the salt water outlet. The district again must assist the drainage with pumps and the continued expense of this operation and cleaning operations again has raised the district operating costs, is affecting the production of the lands in the district and harming the individual income and affecting the general economy.

Dredging the South Fork and permitting again gravity drainage at Conway, Washington would eliminate water and flooding Dredging would also relieve the pressure of waters backing up from the salt water gates.

The Board feels that relief to the district would save the general economy of the district and estimated loss of from \$25,000.00 to \$50,000.00 per year due to reduced production, increased costs and would enhance the value of district property probably many times.

DRAINAGE DISTRICT NO. 17 of Skagit  
County, Washington.

By



Secretary