

MEMO FOR: RECORD

SUBJECT: Skagit Levee and Channel Improvement Project - Meeting with
Skagit County Officials

1. On 14 December 1978 the following met to discuss the Skagit Levee Project:

Forest Brooks	Regional Planning Section
Jesse Amador (Parttime)	Regional Planning Section
Ray Skrinde	Skagit County Advisor
Gene Sampley	Skagit County Engineer
Don Nelson	Skagit County road engineer
Vern Cook (Parttime)	Design Branch
Jim Newman (Parttime)	Regional Planning Section
Ernie Sabo	F&M Branch
Bob Newbill	F&M Branch

2. We began by discussing the recreation features on the project. Mr. Newman said that we were dropping the IAC (Spudhouse) site from our plans because of the problems involved in the county requiring title from the Washington Department of Game. The development at the three remaining sites (Whitmarsh, Young's Bar, and Conway) would consist of minimal facilities to improve access, parking, safety, and sanitation. These items would be cost shared on a 50-50 basis. The bike trails have been removed from our plans but the beautification items as explained on 1 December 1978 would be included.

3. Mr. Sabo and Mr. Newbill told the county officials that the proposed levee work by Diking District #1 in West Mount Vernon near Baker Street appeared quite similar to what we were planning for the area. If the District were to construct the \$50,000 project, we would not be tearing it out in a couple of years. We may have to adjust the levee alignment in that area somewhat but the toe ditch would still be usable.

4. Mr. Cook said that Colonel Poteat had talked to George Dynes today about the project and asked that a meeting be scheduled to brief Mr. Dynes on the project next Thursday. Mr. Nelson gave us a copy of a letter he had received from a Nookachamp resident (inclosure 1) and asked for some assistance in answering the letter. We told him we could determine the relationship of the 1975 flood to the 100-year with and without project conditions.

5. Mr. Sampley suggested that we explain the local costs during our presentation at next weeks' workshop. He thought an explanation similar to the one in yesterday's (13 Dec) Mount Vernon paper (inclosure 2) would help explain some questions on the local financing. Mr. Nelson asked two questions from the city of Mount Vernon: (1) What is the estimate of the local cost inside the city of Mount Vernon, and (2) what effect will the project have on building codes or insurance?

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We told Mr. Nelson we did not have the answers handy on local cost, but we would develop them. Mount Vernon and Anacortes are both looking at HUD Urban Renewal Grants to fund part of their portion.

6. Mr. Sampley said that he had talked to the county commissioners and they were interested in preparing the 50 year repayment of the local costs. We then discussed details of the workshop for next week.

Brooks

BROOKS

2 Incl
as

cc w/incl:

Farrar

~~Brooks~~ *FB file LOCAL*

Cook

Newman

Ch, F&M

Mettling, ERS

Ch, Plng Br

Swanson

RECEIVED
DEC 13 1978

December 12, 1978

SKAGIT COUNTY

Don Nelson
County Engineer

Mr. Nelson:

I am seeking information concerning the water level expected in the Nookachamps valley if the proposed dike raising takes place.

We live in the basin affected by the backwaters of Nookachamps creek.

To illustrate our concerns it is necessary to tell you that in 1951 we had about 1 foot of water in our house. Our house is elevated on a rise which made the water in the fields about 6-10 feet deep depending on the tides. At that time there was also water around the downtown area of Clear Lake.

In 1975 it lacked about 1 ft. of coming into the main house. We attribute that in part to the additional dam or luck.

In 1951 the dikes broke below and saved us. It is our concern that raising the dikes will not only increase the amount of water, as stated in the paper, but will increase the frequency of higher water than normal on our property. It does not seem at all equitable to use one part of the valley as a catch basin when as it stands now we all take our chances.

I would also raise the question of who would be liable if in doing the expected raising of the dikes it made the entire Nookachamps valley farm land less valuable and more prone to property loss and destruction.

I would appreciate hearing from you concerning these questions or to sit down and go over them with you or someone who is knowledgeable.

Yours truly,

Donald E. Austin

Arce

P 002434

Local levee share

Engineer says closer to \$3 million

13 Dec 78
Mt Vernon

MOUNT VERNON — Skagit County's share of the bill for Army Corps of Engineers levee improvements on the Skagit River is closer to \$3 million than the \$10 million announced by the Corps last week, according to County Engineer and Public Works Director Gene Sampley.

Sampley explained to the county commissioners Tuesday that the Corps figure assumes the county has no rights of way for the \$55 million project. The county actually has about 75 percent of the rights of way, he stated.

Easements on the remainder might also be cheaper, he commented.

The \$10 million figure also assumes the county will construct the best possible roadways to replace those which must be moved, Sampley said. But the county can get by with a less expensive plan, he explained.

Roadway relocation could be a portion of the project which local contractors could construct, he offered.

A public meeting on the latest Corps proposals for Skagit levee improvements, which would offer 100-year flood protection to Mount Vernon and Burlington and 50-year protection to rural areas below Mount Vernon, is set for Wednesday, Dec. 20 at the county courthouse.

According to Corps of Engineers figures, the county share of the project would be \$9.4 million, with \$3 million in road relocation, \$3 in acquisition of rights of way and \$1.6 million for other costs, which could include relocation of boat ramps, connecting dikes and flood gates, Sampley said.

The county must also pay \$1.6 million in design and engineering costs.

Actual costs for the county share of the project may not be known until the Corps completes design work, but the county share should be closer to the \$3 million previously submitted to county officials, he stated.

In a related matter, Sampley presented a copy of letters he will send regarding inclusion in the Corps legislative package to Congress of a county request for a 50-year loan to help finance the county's share of the levee improvement project.

Continued funding for work on levee improvements from the railroad bridge just north of Mount Vernon upriver to Sedro-Woolley is expected to be considered when Congress reconvenes in January.

A letter to the Corps also requests that the total project be broken down to smaller increments so that local contractors can bid and perhaps benefit the local construction industry, Sampley said.