

February 8, 1961

R. P. Young, Colonel  
Corp. of Engineers  
1519 South Alaska Way  
Seattle 4, Washington

Dear Sir:

This report on flooding of the Skagit River as it pertains to dairy farmers was prepared by the Skagit County Unit of the Washington State Dairymen's Federation. The Dairymen's Federation is a commodity group organized to work in the best interests of the dairy farmer.

Dairymen whose farms lie in areas subject to flooding of the Skagit River have real reason to fear a rampaging river. They know what has happened to them in past floods and are more fearful of what could happen to them in a really large flood at present, or sometime in the near future.

Dairy farming has changed considerably since the 1951 flood. Milk is held in tanks, herds have expanded, cows are milked in parlors or milking barns and practically all herds are housed in sheds. This means that herds that were housed in the barn in past floods would have to be moved, resulting in a major upset in production and management practices. Dairymen whose herds are trained for parlor milking would face a real problem if they were forced to move out and not be able to find similar facilities available to handle their herds.

Flooding to the individual dairyman\* can be damaging and costly. During the '51 flood herds in the Nookachamps area had to be moved and some animals were reported drowned. In the Conway area herds were forced to move to higher ground. On Fir Island, one herd lost several animals from drowning. Another herd was caught in the fast rising water and was unable to be moved. It was three days before the water dropped low enough so the cows could be milked. The animals were in water all this time. Another Fir Island dairyman whose farm was directly in the flow of the flooding water from the Dry Slough break spent \$15,000. getting his land back in production. This amount does not include loss in milk production and other inconveniences as well as taxes required to repair dikes. Other farmers next to breaks in the dikes had similar experiences. The October 1955 flood at Lundeens on Fir Island, while not a large flood and did not force any herds to be moved, did interfere with the picking up of milk, lowered production and caused crop damage to at least two farms that did not have their potatoes and corn harvested. The crops were a total loss. A high river in the Spring in the Nookachamps area could cause damage to pastures and new seedings.

It is not the purpose of this report to show statistically and accurately the total damages that floods have caused to dairymen, but only to illustrate what dairymen have experienced and what their problems and hardships would be in any future floods. They are interested in flood control measures.

This report respectfully submitted by,

P 001165

*James Wylie*  
JAMES WYLIE  
SKAGIT COUNTY DAIRY FEDERATION

R. P. Young, Colonel  
Corp. of Engineers

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PRES: GERALD L. BATES,  
ROUTE 1, SEDRO WOOLLEY

SEC.-TREAS. RUSSELL AXELSON  
ROUTE 6, MOUNT VERNON

\*DAIRYMEN REFERRED TO IN REPORT:

Claude Davis: Loss of cattle in '51 flood  
Rt. 6, Mount Vernon

Russell Axelson: Cows stood in water 3 days  
Rt. 6, Mount Vernon

Hubert Johnson: Five acres of potatoes lost in '55 flood  
Rt. 3, Mount Vernon

Wylie Bros: Thirteen acres of potatoes and 20 acres of corn lost  
Rt. 3, in '55 flood  
Mount Vernon

Joseph Tellesbo: \$15,000. cost in reclaiming land from sand and debris  
Rt. 6, Mount Vernon