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Why Any River Dikes?

People who really know the Skagit river seem to agree that the whole valley would be much better off if there were no river dikes at all, provided the bed of the stream could be kept deep enough and straight enough. A dredge is needed to do that job.

Not impeded by dikes, ordinary winter high water would help, not hurt, the Skagit valley. Dredging the river and perhaps small dikes would protect the crops from spring freshets that would do harm.

Leave the river alone and it rises at least half a foot a year at the mouth. Under our present system, dikes must be raised, too, every year. The dikes have never yet held the river at flood stage and when they do break, look out below.

The whole argument points to spending dike money on a dredge and getting at the bottom of the thing. What do you think?