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Engineer Corps Recommends Federal Funds For By-Pass

Recommendation of flood control and allied improvements in the lower portion of the Skagit River valley by the Federal Government is being reviewed by the Army's Chief of Engineers for transmittal to the Congress.

The plan of improvement for the 68,000-acre delta flood plain downstream from Sedro-Woolley was developed by Seattle District of the Corps of Engineers and forwarded to Washington, D.C., with the concurrence of the Corps' North Pacific Division Engineer in Portland.

"Our studies have shown that a high level of flood control is essential if that area is to progress at a rate consistent with established state and national objectives for sound economic development," Col. Charles C. Holbrook, Seattle District Engineer, said, "Included in the project plan going to the Congress is a modification of the present Avon Bypass authorization to permit Federal participation in the construction of recreation facilities."

The value of lands and improvements in the Skagit delta area was estimated at more than \$113,000,000 in 1962. This flood plain is highly susceptible to flood damage which averages more than \$2 million dollars under present levels of development, Col. Holbrook said. The estimated first cost of the construction project which has been recommended and for which an appropriation of funds

by the Congress would be required, is \$5,770,000 for the levee and channel improvement and \$34,500 for the recreation facilities.

"To date, we have completed report studies on levee and channel improvements from Mount Vernon to the mouth. These improvements would increase flood protection in the delta from present three-year minimum flood frequency protection to an eight-year minimum protection.

"Funds are included in the President's budget to begin planning studies of the Avon Bypass project in fiscal year 1966. This project alone would increase protection of the delta from the present minimum three-year flood protection to 14-year-frequency protection. The Avon Bypass, with the proposed levee and channel improvements, would provide 35-year year flood frequency protection for the delta. The planning studies in 1965-66 for the Bypass are intended only to fix project costs and final alignment for consideration by residents of Skagit County.

"Finally," Col. Holbrook said. "we plan to evaluate feasibility of upstream multi-purpose storage in 1966, 1967. This project alone would be planned to control flow of the main river and tributaries so that with all three elements: levees and channel improvement, the Avon Bypass, and upstream storage, 100-year or higher flood protection could be realized for the

Skagit River flood plain from Sedro-Woolley downstream.”

A public notice regarding the Army Engineers’ report on its plan for the Skagit was issued recently by the North Pacific Division Engineer, Brig. Gen. Peter C. Hyzer. The full report or parts thereof, including illustrations, may be purchased for \$4.50 from the Seattle District Engineer, 1519 Alaskan Way S., Seattle 98134. Checks or money orders should be made payable to the Treasurer of the United States.

Specific new information bearing directly on the findings in the report may be submitted directly to the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, Washington, D.C., 30315, to reach the board by July 30. Statements submitted should not repeat material which is in the report or which was presented at any of the public hearings held by the Army Engineers.

Copies of the report are on file with the Skagit County Board of Commissioners and the County Engineer’s Office.