

Avon Bypass could be fishing paradise

The proposed Avon Bypass for Skagit River waters may well prove to be a trout fisherman's paradise when it becomes a reality.

Recent discussions over recreational users of the proposed bypass have been focussed on its development as a virtual eight-mile lake containing an endless supply of trout, Skagit County Engineer Lloyd Johnson told the Herald today.

Participating in the discussions were Johnson, representatives of the United States Army Corps of Engineers and spokesmen for the federal Fish and Wildlife Service and the state Game Department.

SALMON PROBLEMS

Original plans had called for stocking the bypass with both salmon and trout for sports fishermen. But fish and game experts advised against the inclusion of salmon because of difficulties which might be encountered in enabling the salmon to return to the Skagit River and head upstream to spawning grounds.

Trout would be grown in hatcheries and released into the by-

pass at intervals to keep sportsmen supplied.

The federal government is also interested in acquiring right of way along the bypass itself for development as public recreational sites, Johnson said today. Both state and local governments also will participate in developing public recreational sites, Johnson noted.

STUDY SCHEDULED

During the next two years, the Avon Bypass proposal is scheduled to undergo a study by state government. Results of the study will enable the 1965 Legislature to act on the proposal.

In the meantime, the Corps of Engineers is gathering data and statistics about the bypass.

Members of the Inland Empire Waterways Association discussed the proposed bypass and appeared to favor it at their recent directors' meeting in Mount Vernon, Johnson reported.

The proposal also won recent approval from the Washington State Grange.

District State Highway Engineer Paul McKay recently conferred with Skagit County Commissioners on the need for bridges along the bypass when it is built.