

THE CONCRETE HERALD

Formerly the Hamilton Herald Established Nov. 23, 1901. Oldest Paper in the Upper Skagit.

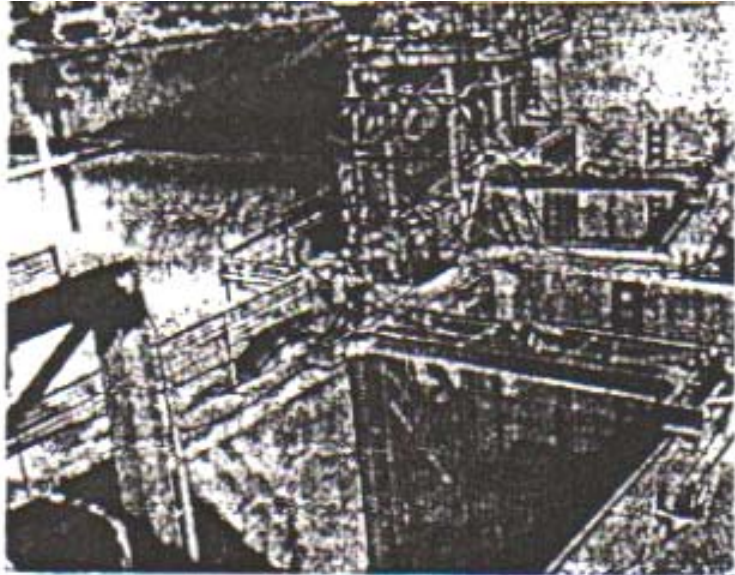
31 July 1958

PHOTO FEATURE — BAKER FISH DAM WORKS WELL ON SOCKEYE RUN

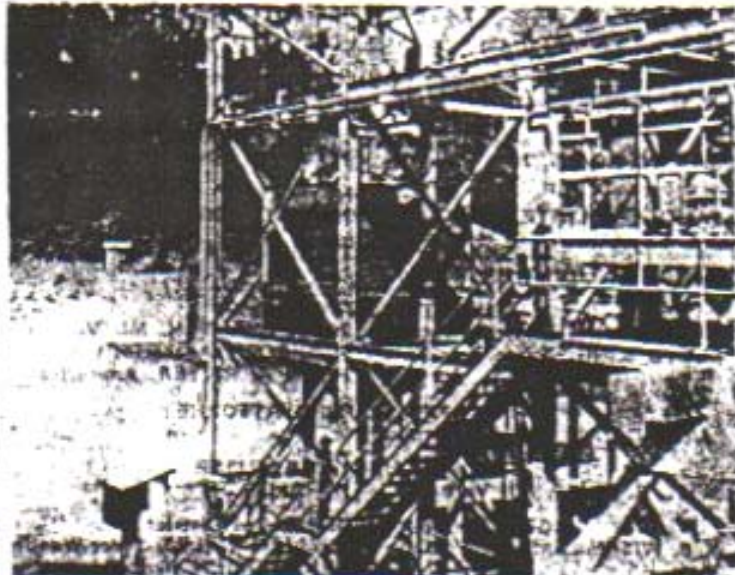
A good run of Sockeye salmon is giving the new fish trap installation on the Baker river here a through testing as to efficiency. The trap was put into use a few weeks ago and since that time has done very well in providing a method of getting the salmon to the spawning grounds on the upper Baker. To date the number of Sockeye taken in the trap and transported by truck to Baker Lake has been more than double the entire run of last year.

The low dam, which is located just below the highway bridge on the Baker at Concrete, seems to be low enough for the salmon to jump but the construction has been such that the overflow strikes an obstruction of large rocks on the lower side that produce such a turbulence that the fish can not get a chance to jump. For further protection against the fish getting above the dam in periods of high water in the Skagit, the low dam can be raised about two feet mechanically to provide the extra height.

When the salmon are unable to jump the falls they find themselves in a quiet pool beneath the falls and from there are guided into long holding tanks at the east bank of the river. When the tanks are to be emptied of fish a



The fish are trapped beneath the spill over the dam in a large pool of quiet water that leads them to two holding tanks. The tank pictured here is the second tank and shows the traveling screen that herds the fish along to the next stage.



After being herded through the holding tanks and into a small tank with a bottom that rises and urges the salmon into the elevator tank shown here, the tank is lifted, full of water and fish, on it's way to the tank truck.

traveling screen herds them from one tank to the other until they finally end up in an elevator tank full of water which can be closed completely for the trip from the trap to the waiting tank truck.

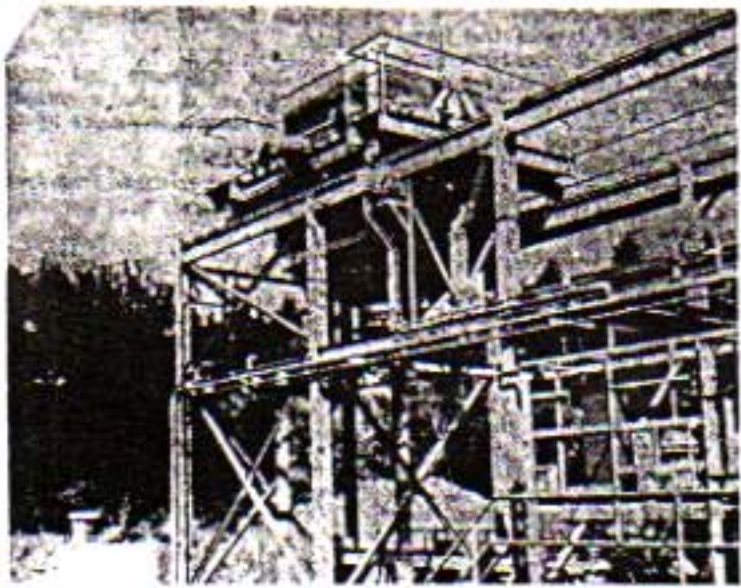
The tank is lifted to the top of the structure, moved along toward the bank and then lowered in position just over the truck.

When the operator has the truck ready to be loaded a valve is released and the fish, water and all, tumble into the truck.

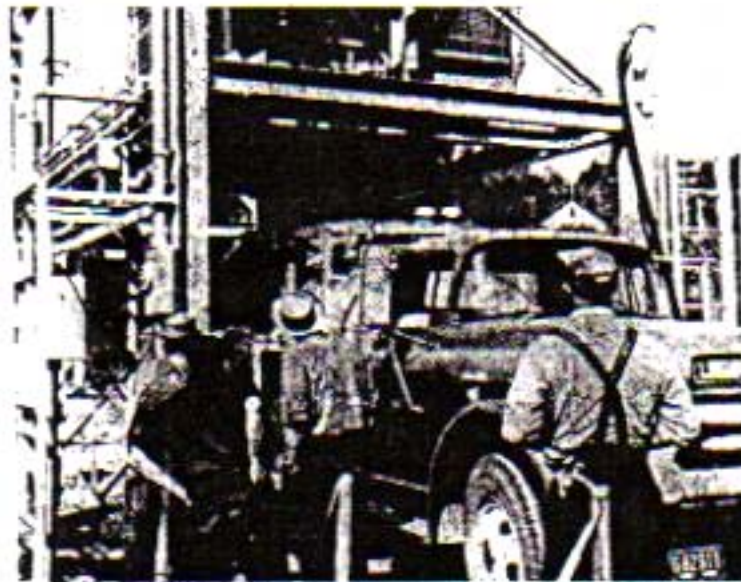
The truck is equipped with two gasoline pumps which provide aeration of the water during the long ride from Concrete to Baker Lake. The company maintains two trucks for this purpose so that one is always available. Lifts are usually made every day, except when fish are not numerous enough to warrant. The big lift comes on Monday morning after the trap has had two days to build up its population.

The entire installation was built by Puget Sound Power and Light Co.¹ under supervision of the fisheries people and the cost and operation will be borne by the company.

It has been proven that the trapping and handling of the salmon run is efficient. The next step will be to wait for a period of years to see whether or not the fish return over the dam as expected to revive the periodic salmon "runs" to somewhere near their former strength. The Baker was at one time a principal target for the Sockeye run. The present fish handling facilities is the result of years of experiment conducted here to find a solution to the problem of getting the fish over the high power dams.



As the elevator tank reaches the top of the lift it is picked up by a traveling car that moves it forward to the loading platform above the truck. There it is lowered into position for transfer.



The truck that hauls the salmon to Baker Lake by road is first filled with water. When the elevator full of fish is in position to spill into the truck's tank the valve is released and the water and fish are transferred by gravity. Water in the truck tank is forced out as the new water comes in, so that the fish are in water at all times. Double gas pumps on the truck insure aeration of the water during the trip to the lake.

¹ Now known as Puget Sound Energy (PSE).