

THE COURIER-TIMES

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Need More WPA Funds In Skagit River Erosion Work

The work of protecting the Skagit river banks from erosion will stop before it is much more than half completed, unless additional WPA funds are obtained, Iner Nelson, U. S. engineer in charge of this huge project for the past two years, told Congressman Mon Wallgren and some eighty Sedro-Woolley men at the Wallgren dinner here Tuesday evening. He reviewed the work that had been done and explained that because of each of the six separate jobs on which the revetments have been constructed was longer than planned, there will be four jobs untouched when the available funds are used up about March 1.

Ten jobs were included in the original project. The lengthening of the first six jobs, Nelson said, completes in lineal footage the original setup of 21,400 feet, or four miles, leaving four jobs still unfinished, with no funds available for the work out the original \$216,000 appropriation.

With the county as sponsor, contributing \$11,400 or 5 per cent, a total of \$228,000 will be spent. The county, as sponsor, furnishes the equipment with the exception of two ton-trucks, Nelson said. Up to the present time \$190,000 has been expended, leaving a balance of \$38,000 which, at the present rate of expenditure, will be used up by March 1.

"Three and one half miles of river bank have been protected by brush mat revetment from Burlington to Utopia," Nelson stated. "To complete this project, only one more job remains, the one we are starting now at Lyman.

"Since December 1, 1935, we have sloped the river bank, and have built a dike handling over 250,000 cubic yards of dirt; 16,500 cords of brush have been laid in the brush mat; 1,500 cubic yards of concrete blocks and cores have been poured or a total of 55,000 separate units. Fifty miles of cable and 215 miles of wire, twenty miles of poles and 19,000 willow stakes have been used. With more than 136,000 square yards of revetment laid and four willow slips planted to each square yard, more than half a million slips have been planted.

"It is estimated that, in one year, possibly 500,000 cubic yards of material has been prevented from sliding into the river and then being carried on to the Sound and the lower part of the river, by this revetment work. Progress has been considerably retarded by the lack of suitable and adequate equipment needed on a project of this size. To complete all the jobs of the original setup it is estimated that about two miles more of revetment work should be done at this time, with additional work sponsored later."