

The Skagit News-Herald

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ASK \$100,000 FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SKAGIT RIVER

U.S. ENGINEERS REPORT

Favorably on the Proposition to Improve Navigation on Skagit River. Will Confine Water to Main Channel

The Seattle P.I. has the following to say of a report from the war department which is in the hands of congress, applying to proposed work on the Skagit:

“The accompanying map shows a section of the Skagit river, the improvement of which at a cost of \$100,000 is recommended in a letter to the house of representatives from the secretary of war inclosing an endorsement by the chief engineer of the war department. The improvement urged is outlined in a report made November 3, 1908, by Maj. C.W. Kuiz, corps of engineers, U.S.A., in charge at Seattle following the lines of a report made by Maj. H.M. Chittenden, his predecessor, in the preceding March. Maj. Chittenden’s plan for a channel around the Sterling bend, below Sedro-Woolley, and for a single navigable channel at the mouth, below Mount Vernon, instead of the present shallow and unreliable channels of the delta, provided for an approximate expenditure of \$175,000, Maj. Kutz, following criticism by Col. Lockwood, senior member of the war department’s board of engineers for rivers and harbors of some details of Maj. Chittenden’s plan, recommends a modified plan to cost \$100,000, through following to

a considerable extent the plan outlined by Maj. Chittenden. The chief obstacles to navigation in the Skagit as seen by Maj. Chittenden in his report are “the shoals at the mouth of the stream, the bad bars or shoals which interfere with low water navigation and the great quantity of driftwood and snags in the river.”

Dissipated by Numerous Channels

Of the situation at the mouth of this river the Chittenden report said:

“Beginning with the junction of the north and the south forks in the delta of the river, the energy of the current is greatly dissipated by numerous channels and on the tide flats by a general dispersion of the current in all directions.” The report favored the partial closing of the north channel to increase the current energy in the main channel by way of the south fork. For this work Maj. Chittenden estimated a cost of \$95,250. He emphasized in his report that the commercial interests on the river justified the expenditure. In a previous report, April 15, 1907, he had pointed out that the total commerce on the river for

1906 reached 188,283½ tons, valued at \$1,766,452.

In his report of November 3, 1908 which is transferred to congress by the secretary of war, with the favorable indorsement of the chief of engineers of the army, Maj. Kutz made the following recommendations:

Wants Three Miles of Dike

As a result of a personal examination of the Skagit river from Sedro-Woolley to its mouth, including both north and south forks, the conclusion has been reached that the only means of securing a reliable channel or entrance to this river that will benefit existing commerce is by the construction of a dike at the mouth of the south fork, following generally the line laid down in the report of Maj. Chittenden, and by cutting off or regulating the flow through the other channels. The proposed dike consists of two rows of piles and a mattress foundation sixteen feet wide, weighted with a ton of rock to the running foot.

“To more effectually control the position of the channel a slight change in the position of the dike is recommended as shown on the accompanying blue print.

“A change in the position of the dike and mattress sill for regulating the flow through the north fork is also recommended, as in the new position the lengths and consequently the cost will be considerably reduced.

“To further reduce the cost the cutoff at the head of Tom Moore slough has been omitted. The amount of water flowing through this slough is at the present time not sufficient to unduly diminish the depth in Steamboat slough.

“It is believed that the work herein proposed will afford a reliable low water entrance channel to the Skagit river, and that

its cost is warranted by existing and prospective commerce.

“The estimate is as follows: 16,000 feet of retaining dike, at \$80,000; regulating dikes and mattress sill at head of north fork, \$6,000; cutting off subsidiary channels at the delta, \$5,000; superintendence and contingencies, 10 percent, \$9,000, total \$100,000.