

SKAGIT RIVER HEARING TODAY

Over one hundred citizens and farmers gathered at the Commercial Club rooms today in attendance at the river hearing under the direction of the United States war department. The hearing got under way promptly at eleven o'clock with Col. W. J. Barden presiding. The staff from the government engineers' office present at the hearing included Col. Barden, his principal assistant H. J. M. Baker, assistant Lieut. K. M. Moore and the stenographer C. F. Anderson.

No time was lost in getting the hearing under way. H. L. Willis represented the local river committees. He spoke at length regarding the need of immediate and permanent river improvement. He stressed upon the fact that the shipping demands upon the river were great and gradually increasing to a greater extent. He recited the fact that something like 8000 tons of produce was shipped on boats via the river during the past year. He also touched upon the seed and dairy shipments.

Manager Humphrey gave facts concerning the shipment of the two condensers, stating that seventy-five per cent of their product goes out by boat, aggregating 86,000 tons so far this year, valued at two and a half million dollars.

Capt. H. H. McDonald gave a description of the inconvenience of shipping on account of the present condition of the river.

James O'Hearne stated that his companies, produced about 96 million feet of logs, equal to 384 thousand tons, and that the same went out by the Skagit river.

Sidney Lewis of the Clear Lake Lumber Co., stated that his company was not now using the river, but was looking for a better outlet and would no doubt use the river if it presented more conveniences.

James Thompson of the Carnation stated that his company shipped exclusively by the boat.

F. C. Johnson, secretary of the Farm Bureau, gave a splendid talk, describing the inconveniences of the farmers in getting their products out on the river. He gave much data concerning the tonnage of produce shipped away from this section. He stated that 25 thousand tons of hay, grain and potatoes were shipped this last year. Also that 18,000 tons of straw, 900,000 bushels of oats, 30,000 bushels of wheat and 30,000 bushels of potatoes were shipped.

Alfred Polson talked up on the seed shipments, stating that a million pounds of seeds were shipped this year by the seed growers association and probably a million pounds also by the seed growers outside of the association. This amount of seed is valued at about \$200,000.

Other speakers were R. W. McKinstry, F. N. Haley, C. C. Nelson, P. W. Truman of Lyman, J. O. Rudene, W. J. Knutzen.

Commissioner George Reay spoke upon the flood matter, calling the attention of the engineers to the fact that if the river was improved, the danger from floods would be reduced. The cost of the last flood to the county alone, cited Mr. Reay, was over \$24,000 for damage to roads and bridges.

At the conclusion of the hearing, Col. Barden reviewed the situation, touching upon past floods, going back as far as 1815. He stated that the government does not consider the matter of river floods, but considers matters of this kind, from a strictly navigation standpoint.

All of the data received orally was taken down by the stenographer while the written data was filed with the engineering staff.