SKOKOMISH RIVER AND ANNAS BAY

Setting

The Skokomish River flows from the Olympic Mountains into the southern part of the Hood Canal, discharging there through two main distributory channels. The lower Skokomish valley and delta are within the Skokomish Indian Reservation and are relatively undeveloped. The delta is used mainly for agriculture. The seaward tidelands include seal-hauling (nesting) areas.

Shoreline and Wetland Changes

At the time the 1884 map was prepared the Skokomish delta was shown as marshes enclosed by forested upland. Patterns on the historical map that indicate periods of cleared agricultural land are the only evidence of manmade change preceding the early mapping. The shoreline configuration shown by the 1952 topographic map is similar to the shoreline of 1884 along most of the delta.

Although dikes are not shown on the 1952 topographic map, some filling apparently was begun about 1908 (Dreier, written commun., 1978). Aerial photographs taken in 1975 show about one-third of the former marsh was enclosed and filled, and often became ponds.

Compilation of Map

The 1884 topographic survey (T-1560b) was the source for the historical map information. The most recent U.S. Geological Survey topographic map suitable as a base map was the 1952 Portlacq quadrangle, at a scale of 1:62,500. Control for data transfer was mainly agreement of major topographic features along the east and west channels of the Skokomish valley. The only cultural feature used to provide control was an old road along the east bank of the river, assumed to correspond to the route of present day Highway 14.

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES AND SOME PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

| Progradation (seaward advance of shoreline) | Minor progradation has occurred near the river mouth. Probably about the same as the amount of recession elsewhere near By.
| Shoreline recession (backward retreat of shoreline) | Minor shoreline recession has occurred near the river mouth.
| Channel incision | None apparent.
| Channel straightening | None apparent.
| Diking or substantial filling of subaerial delta land near salt-water shoreline | Dikes have been built on the eastern half of the subaerial delta land.
| Diking or substantial filling near stream banks | Dikes have been built along the banks of the distributary channels.
| Other artificial fill on subaerial delta land | None apparent.
| Landfill on interdistributary delta land | None apparent.
| Loss of subaerial wetland | None apparent.
| Loss of interdistributary wetland | Some. The present-day interdistributary area is about 0.5 sq km less than that mapped in 1884.
| Some planning considerations | The delta is a relatively natural state, especially the western half. The remaining wetland and unmodified shoreline, if managed properly, can retain the benefits of valuable fish and wildlife habitats.

HISTORICAL CHANGES OF SHORELINE AND WETLAND AT SKOKOMISH RIVER AND ANNAS BAY, WASHINGTON

By

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