

Finley Discusses Willamette Flood Control Project's Effect On Fishing Industry

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Editor's note — In the following article, first of a series of four, William L. Finley, noted Portland naturalist, discusses the Willamette valley flood control project and its proposed dams from the standpoint of possible effect on the fishing industry. In this first article Finley discusses two possible methods of flood control as set forth by army engineers.

BY WILLIAM L. FINLEY

When the army engineers were allotted \$300,000 to study and report the situation along the Willamette river in Oregon, it was in accordance with the flood control act of 1936, wherein if the federal government appropriated funds to carry out a project the state or local interests should also contribute a proportion of the expense.

Colonel Thomas F. Robins, division engineer, in his report, document 544, published by the house of representatives, stated that complete protection of the area subject to overflow was not warranted and could not be provided for. However, partial protection of important areas could be obtained either by a system of levees or bank protection works along the Willamette river, or by a series of dams and reservoirs at the headwaters. He also said that if the cost of dams and reservoirs had to be carried by flood control, it would be more economical for this partial protection of land to be handled by the building of levees. Next, he brought up the question of the building of dams and reservoirs that could be used for other purposes and not solely for flood control.

The question proposed was a matter of costs and results, for flood control only by a levee system \$33,000,000; for flood control by dams and reservoirs \$62,075,000. **Other Uses Suggested**

The report of the army engineers suggested that if the dams and reservoirs were constructed to control floods on the Willamette, these structures could be used for other purposes such as the development of power, irrigation, etc. On the other hand, Major-General J. L. Schley, chief of engineers of the war department, and Brigadier-General M. C. Tyler, senior member of the corps of engineers for rivers and harbors, stated that according to the 1936 flood control act if the government pays for construction, that "local interests be required to bear the costs of lands and damages as provided in that act, including the costs of railroad relocations and the facilities for the propagation of fish and related works, and be required to maintain and operate the reservoirs on completion."

In the two reports of the engineers mentioned above, it is stated in five different paragraphs that according to the estimated cost of \$62,075,000 for this Willamette valley project, the government is to pay \$43,430,000 and the local interests are to pay \$18,645,000.

The national resources committee appointed by President Roosevelt, of which Harold L. Ickes, secretary of the interior, is chairman, had experts make a study of flood control and other problems. This committee stated, "If projects deserve federal contributions, they certainly also deserve local contributions, and unless local interests are prepared to make appropriate contributions on their own behalf, the federal government normally should not participate in the improvement they seek. The fact that a state or city wishes to save its own money cannot properly increase any federal obligation to help it. The fact that a state or city claims to be unable to contribute anything toward a waterway project it seeks, might well lead to postponement of the undertaking until its economic status has improved."

Pressure Groups Rapped

What have the local promoters of the Willamette valley project done in high-jacking the government to foot the whole bill? Anticipating this very eventually, the national resources committee took the stand that we should not "permit pressure groups and special local interests to obtain unfair advantages at the expense of federal taxpayers."

The next step of the manipulators was to get the flood control act of 1936 revamped into another flood control act of 1938. Relating to the Willamette valley project, this relieved the local interests from helping to finance flood control for their benefit. The government is now to pay all costs. Should the taxpayers try to balance the budget, or should the pressure groups in all parts of the country be permitted to lift millions of dollars from the taxpayers' pockets and run the nation more in the red?

By Gene Ahern

Finley Now Home From League Meets

William L. Finley, vice president of both the Izaak Walton League of America and the National Wildlife federation, has returned to Portland after campaigning for the conservation of fish resources of the West.

Finley said both the Izaak Walton league and the Wildlife federation, in conventions at Chicago and Washington, passed resolutions favoring conservation of important salmon runs, and that a levee instead of a dam system be adopted in the Willamette Valley project for the perpetuation of fish.

Finley Plan Omits Dams

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League Favors Revetments

JENNINGS LODGE, April 8 (Special)—Recommendations that flood-control phases of the Willamette valley project be effected by revetments rather than by the seven dams contemplated were contained in resolutions adopted by the National Wild Life federation at Washington, D. C., March 18 to 20, and by the Izaak Walton league of America at Chicago March 28 to 30.

So declared William L. Finley, noted Oregon naturalist and vice-president of both organizations, following his return to his home here Sunday from the two conventions.

The resolutions, he said, contended the levees would not interfere with salmon runs and would cost approximately half as much as the seven dams.

Finley spoke before the conclaves, declaring that Oregon laws now allegedly prohibit construction of dams without the consent of the state game and fish commissions and that fishways must be built. He also told the conventions of the effect of dams on salmon runs in the Clackamas and Sacramento rivers.

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Finley Is Back At Home

William L. Finley, internationally famous naturalist, is back at his home in Jennings Lodge. Of late he has caused considerable commotion by his opposition to high dams in the upper Willamette river. In a telephone message to the Banner-Courier Finley said that he expects to speak in Oregon City in the month of May. *Or. City Courier*

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Frank Kahlfeld

OREGON CITY, April 9.—Frank Kahlfeld, about 65, gardener employed by William E. Finley, naturalist, was found dead Monday at the foot of a stairway leading to the basement at the home of Mrs. C. D. Atchley, Hull avenue, Jennings Lodge. Deputy Sheriffs William Koehler and Tom Steenson and Coroner Tom Myers, who investigated, believe the man met death some time Sunday when he fell down the stairs. Kahlfeld, a native of Germany, had been employed as a gardener for Finley for five or six years, and prior to that time worked for other residents of the Jennings Lodge district. The body was taken to the Oregon City Funeral home. He has no known relatives.