

Umatilla Rapids Years Struggle Continued

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During the 12 year period of activity of the Umatilla Rapids association, among the officers and active leaders were the following: J. N. Teal, Marshall N. Dana of Portland, Governor Julius L. Meier, G. A. Hartman and Senator Roy Ritner of Pendleton as presidents; Senators McNary, Stanfield and Steiwer of Oregon, Senators C. C. Dill and Homer Bone of Washington, and Senator Borah of Idaho; Congressmen Nick Sinnott, Robert Butler and Walter M. Pierce of Oregon; Knute Hill and Sam Hill of Washington; Dr. Elwood Mead, director of the U. S. Reclamation Bureau, and many other leading citizens throughout the entire northwest, and all the leading newspapers, to the cause of which the Pendleton East Oregonian was especially devoted. The only opposition to the cause was through the Columbia Valley association, which was a branch of the Portland Chamber of Commerce and its executive secretary, R. H. Kipp. This organization frequently muddled the waters and delayed action in its attempts to defeat navigation and its rate making effects, and the development of power in the interior.

The association published a brief of several hundred pages containing data in favor of the dam, and secured an appropriation of \$10,000 from the state of Oregon when Walter M. Pierce was governor, and \$50,000 from the Federal government for a survey of the rapids site. A brief preliminary survey was made through \$1400 raised by popular subscription and the engineering firm of Lewis and Clark of Portland did this work. E. R. Crocker, a brilliant young engineer of the Reclamation Service was then appointed to make the Government survey which resulted in a very elaborate collection of facts. His estimates and figures have been largely confirmed by subsequent surveys by army engineers. The Crocker report is available in the U. S. Reclamation Bureau offices and is current among a number of citizens and associations.

On the basis of the Crocker report the Umatilla Rapids association succeeded in having a bill introduced in Congress by the late Nicholas Sinnott, and the association conducted a hearing before the Committee on Reclamation and won a favorable report from that committee.

This measure was supported by the Portland Chamber of Commerce, by the governor, and by all the senators and representatives from Oregon in Congress, was also supported by Tacoma, Seattle, Spokane and other active forces throughout the northwest, and its passage seemed then assured. The cost of power production had been found to be low by the engineers that transmission lines were proposed to Portland, Seattle, and other main centers, and electricity for all local railways was considered. Plans for manufactur-

ing plants were made and Henry Ford sent engineers to inspect the possibilities for automobile works, in the west. The bill had been introduced in the congress of 1926 by Senator McNary and Congressman Sinnott, and at a conference in May, 1927, it was agreed by the directors of the Umatilla Rapids association, and Dr. Elwood Mead, director of the U. S. Reclamation Bureau, and Senators McNary and Steiwer, and representatives Sinnott and Crum-jacker to reintroduce the measure in 1927, and this measure got past the Reclamation in joint session of both houses.

About this time a complete survey was ordered of the entire Columbia river, by a resolution in congress at a cost of \$750,000, which was entrusted to the War department and the Army engineers. Further work on the Umatilla Rapids bill was therefore, or for other reasons, postponed until the army engineers could complete the survey. And so the whole matter rested until March, 1932, when the report was presented to Congress.

This report showed as the most feasible plan a series of ten dams in the Columbia: Grand Coulee, Foster Creek, Chelan, Rocky Beach, Rock Island Rapids, Priest Rapids, and Umatilla Rapids; John Day Rapids, The Dalles and Warrendale, now Bonneville.

Following this report came a new national election and Franklin D. Roosevelt became president. He showed great interest in the development of the Columbia. U. S. Senator C. C. Dill, who had been a great factor in the nomination and election of Roosevelt, was awarded with the authorization of Grand Coulee dam in Washington, and at the same time Portland mustered all its economic and political strength to capture the Bonneville dam. This was granted largely through the efforts and influence of Senator McNary, when "Charley got his dam."

The result was that the Umatilla Rapids was left out in the cold. The Umatilla Rapids association had ceased to function during the three or four years of delay and discouragements, and now failed to rise again.

Walter M. Pierce had been elected congressman, and the Hermiston Commercial club called a banquet in his honor in January, 1933, just before he left for Washington, and the whole matter was presented to him. This was well before the authorization of Grand Coulee and Bonneville, the following summer, but local residents had caught the drift of the straws in the wind. Congressman Pierce agreed to become active and a long letter was addressed to the president. No immediate results came.

Late in June, Dill and Grand Coulee were on every tongue. Hermiston Commercial club sent a delegation to Grand Coulee to see Senator Dill. They reported back friendly assurance and help from the then big senator of the west, and at that session of the Hermiston Commercial club they threw \$100 on the table and appointed E. P. Dodd to go as a special ambassador to Walla Walla, Pendleton, Pasco, and other points, to arouse greater public interest in the Umatilla dam.

He organized the Tri-State Development League with Lee Mantz of Walla Walla chairman, D. F. Baker of Walla Walla treasurer, G. A. Hartman of Pendleton vice president, E. P. Dodd executive secretary, and Fred Kemp, Prosser, Roy Lindley, Dayton, Roy W. Ritner, Pendleton, S. E. Notson, Heppner, R. S. Erb and Burton L. French of Moscow as directors, and 27 counties were included in the membership rolls. This association func-

tioned actively for a year and raised and expended \$1200. The people of Walla Walla became interested in the Umatilla dam and more as the time passed, and the argument became more impressive. They then proposed formation of a much larger association to include all river organizations from Lewiston to Portland, and all the Pacific Northwest Inland Empire.

In March at Walla Walla, the Inland Empire Waterways association was organized, and adopted a seven point program, including the ship locks at Bonneville, Umatilla dam, dams on the Snake, channel between Celilo and Umatilla, and further work on the Columbia. The Dalles joined vigorously in this campaign and secured its main object—the ship locks. The channel development from Celilo to Umatilla which had been a few years previously authorized has come to fruition with the completion of the construction now contracted and underway.

But the Umatilla Rapids still stands untouched. Rumors are afloat that the dam will soon be ordered by the president, that the army engineers may start construction any time.

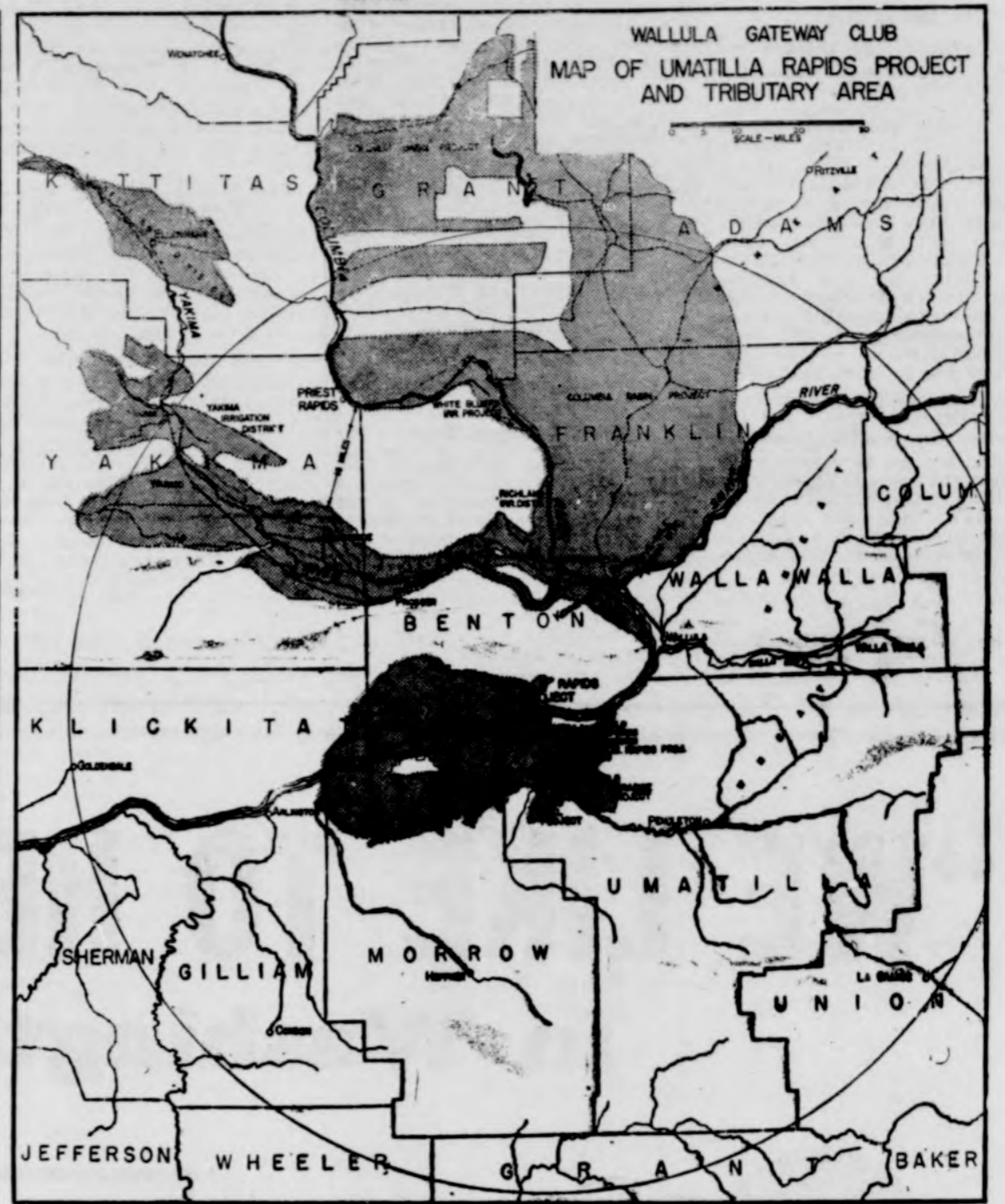
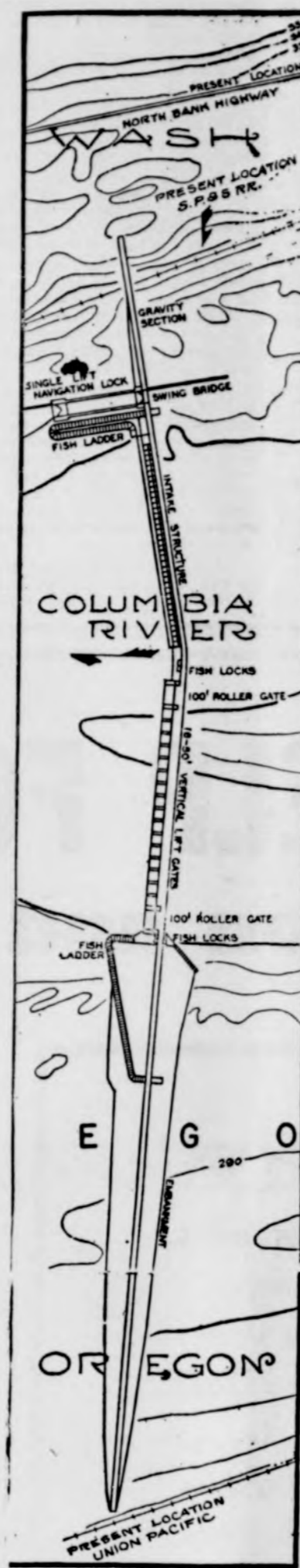
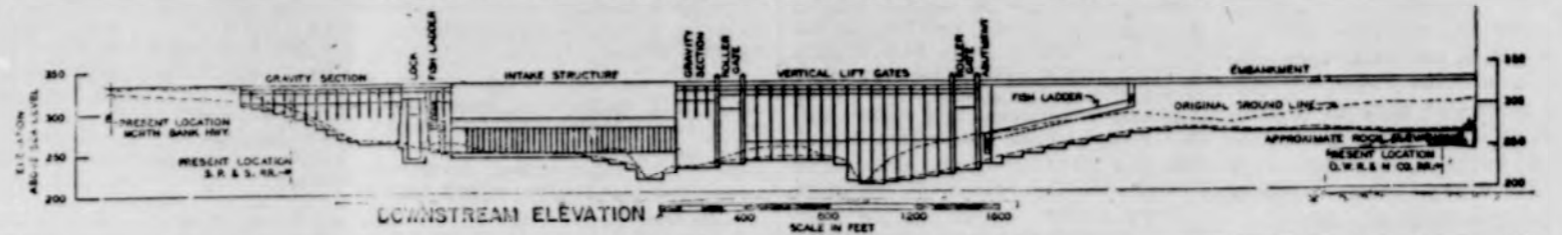
The Inland Empire Waterways association has raised and expended around \$25,000 during the past two years. At its last annual meeting it reported a deficit and a desire to raise more funds to continue its work, and was instructed to devote its entire energies and abilities toward the Umatilla dam, and nothing else. Last spring the board of army engineers sitting in session in Washington, D. C., reported adversely on the immediate construction of the dam, following a report and brief

made by the Inland Empire Waterways association and addresses of approval by Senators Steiwer and McNary, and Congressman Pierce. After this report the Portland Chamber of Commerce sent out statements taking opposition to further consideration of the Umatilla dam, and advocating a \$250,000 channel through the rapids for iron-clad boats. This proposition is fostered through the organization of the Inland Navigation company, a Seattle concern. All of these new proposals are said to be put forward by unknown capital to delay the actual construction of the dam.

The report of the army engineers met strong opposition of the popular and political interests, and the Portland and Seattle proposition have been allowed to subside. The argument and interest in the rapids dam and its general benefits to the Inland Empire in particular, and the entire Pacific Northwest, have been so strongly woven into the thoughts and lives of the people that it cannot pass as it is into the history of an attempt to achieve a great public good, but may any time be revived into a real live achievement of the continued and patient labors of a deserving people.

Acting as a local guardian of the cause now is the Wallula Gateway club, organized last winter with E. P. Dodd, president; William Switzer, vice president; Roy Penney, M. L. Hedrick, E. D. Martin, W. Meiners, F. B. Jones, Harry Hull, A. C. Houghton, C. G. Blayden, Ralph Saylor and C. H. Esselstyne, all representing the local communities. This association keeps in touch with whatever activities that may be used toward any early authorization of work on the dam.

Board of Engineers at Washington to Consider Merits of Plan to Extend Navigation of Columbia; Annual Savings of Millions Seen for Producers in Inland Empire Area



Two views of the Umatilla Rapids dam as proposed and drawn by U. S. Army engineers. The circle on the map shows the area within 75 mile radius of the dam-site. This includes most of the Yakima and Columbia Basin projects, the Kennewick, Pasco, Walla Walla valley and all nearby irrigation projects, and many wheat districts and towns to which transmission of electric power would be at much less than half the cost from Bonneville or Grand Coulee.

The dam will cost \$23,000,000, including navigation locks and bridge, and when built will open the Columbia to barge and steamboat navigation to Priest river rapids and make possible the development of the Snake to Lewiston. It is also the key to all economic or rate making navigation on the Columbia above Vancouver, since 90 per cent of the tonnage of the watershed of these rivers is above the Umatilla rapids.

When the dam is built it will provide 420,000 horse power, or 2,700,999,000 annual kilowatt hours at a cost of one and two tenths mills per K.W. This power generated at Bonneville and transmitted 165 miles to Umatilla rapids would cost four times the cost of generation at Umatilla dam. This is considered the cheapest possible power on the Columbia.

For irrigation, gravity and pumping with this low cost power, 250,000 acres of new land may be reclaimed within practical costs. Navigation at Umatilla Rapids would result in a total savings to the million people of the Inland Empire over \$6,000,000 in freight rates. Power units at the dam would make possible the use of electricity in every home within 75 miles, for light, power, heat, refrigeration and air conditioning—all modern uses in town and on farm. With cheap power, sufficient lands would be brought under new irrigation and intensified agriculture of immense proportions which we may call the future UMATILLA RAPIDS EMPIRE.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE PIONEERS
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