

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
INTRAOFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

DATE FEBRUARY 8, 1954

TO: Robert L. Jones, Regional Manager - Region III
FROM: Willis A. Evans Fisheries Management Supervisor -- Region III
SUBJECT: Navarro River - Mendocino County - Jetty Project

Subsequent to our trip to Mendocino County and discussion of the Navarro River jetty project with local people, I have had an opportunity to review the file material. It is quite a sizeable file and the pertinent information may be summarized in chronological order as follows:

Year

1880 - A jetty consisting of wooden piling and cribbing was constructed by the lumber company operating in that area. It apparently succeeded in keeping the river mouth open, allowing passage of logs and small crafts at all times of the year. Pictures of this jetty are available in our files,

1914 - The jetty was burned at this date and never replaced. Thereafter, annually, the sand bar at the mouth completely shut off the river preventing entrance of anadromous fishes during the early winter months,

192? - Agitation was begun by local people for rebuilding of the jetty, During 1927 and 1928, local people succeeded in opening the mouth at periodic intervals by manual means. At this time, certain legislative members were interested in the project, and it was brought forcibly to the attention of the Fish and Game,,

1928 - Mr., John Spencer, of the Division, investigated the matter and outlined a plan for carrying out this project. During 1928, negotiations were instigated to obtain necessary right-of-ways from the Albion Lumber Company» At the same time, the necessary permission for construction of the jetty was requested from the U. S, Army Engineers, At that time, it was estimated that the jetty could be replaced for approximately \$5,000, utilizing river timber and an old wharf made available by the Albion lumber Company, Due to the cost of the project, it came under the jurisdiction of the State Department of Public Works, It was, therefore, turned over completely to that Department. Due to legal difficulties in the wording of the right-of-way agreement, satisfactory arrangements were not made with the Albion Lumber Company until the end of 1928,

- 1929 - By May of 1929, local people began: inquiring as to what the current status of the project was. The preparation of plans for construction by the Department of Public Works was completed by 1929.
- 1930 - During the late summer of 1930, the jetty was actually constructed by the Department of Public Works at an estimated cost of 14500. No actual plans and specifications of this structure are available in our files. The jetty was extremely short-lived. During November 1930, winter storms largely demolished it. May I quote from a local news article of the time: "I wonder if the Fish and Game Commission inspected the jetty that was constructed at the mouth of the Navarro River this summer? If not it is too late now as the ocean got a little rough last night and scattered it all over the beach. Surely children would know better than try to stop the ocean with a few small rocks loosely piled upon the sand."

Local indignation directed toward the Fish and Game Commission for the destruction of the jetty brought forth articles pointing the responsibility to the Department of Public Works.

- 1950 - During the intervening twenty years, apparently little agitation occurred regarding construction of a jetty. It is our understanding that local people would periodically open up the bar in order to permit access of anadromous fishes. During January of 1950, the matter was again called to the attention of the Department of Fish and Game by Senator Biggar. On January 19, 1950, the construction of a jetty on the Navarro River was submitted to the Wildlife Conservation Board as a proposed project by the Mendocino Coast Fish and Game Club, Fort Bragg. During February of that year, Mr. Gordon referred the matter to the Bureau of Fish Conservation for investigation and report, terming it Project #85. FA(0) - Navarro River Jetty.

It was recommended almost immediately that \$10,000 be allotted from the Wildlife Conservation Board funds for carrying out necessary engineering studies for this project. The Wildlife Board declined to allocate any moneys for engineering and indicated that they would consider construction of the project after preliminary engineering had been completed. An attempt was therefore made by the Division of Fish and Game to transfer \$5000 from the 1949-50 budget to the Division of Water Resources for the carrying out of the necessary engineering work.

The Department of Finance denied the request for transferring of funds. However, the red-tape was finally unraveled to the

extent that \$5000 was transferred to the Division of Water Resources for the purpose of financing the preliminary engineering studies, By August of 1950, the Division of Natural Resources was still waiting the transfer of funds to initiate the work. During the latter part of 1950, an engineering investigation was made of the proposed jetty*

1951 - At this time, it was suggested by our Division that possibly a sea-level tunnel or culvert might be more practical at this location than a jetty. Therefore, both items were given consideration by engineers. The report concluded that the initial cost of constructing a jetty would be approximately \$350,000 with an average annual maintenance cost of \$50,000. They further concluded that construction of a sea-level tunnel was not feasible due to the fact that the tunnel would be clogged with sand periodically throughout the year. After considerate exchange of correspondence engineers concluded that one tunnel site might be available where clogging with sand would not be a problem* This was some distance from the mouth along the north bank of the stream. However, this site was not acceptable to the Bureau of Fish Conservation, since it was feared anadromous fishes would not find the small three foot entrance.

Further geological investigations were made to determine whether the old rock jetty constructed by the State would serve as a sufficient base for the construction of a conduit. The engineers' report concluded that the base was satisfactory, and, nevertheless, it was their conclusion also that the mouth of the structure would fill with sand several times annually. The engineers' report is available in our files.

During October of this year, it was recommended by the Bureau of Fish Conservation that a \$40,000 item be included in the current fiscal budget for the construction of the Navarro River fishway, or conduit. This apparently was the estimated cost. There is no indication that any money was budgeted for this project. However, we are attempting to fill in the remaining gaps in the near future,

One point worth noting is that through the entire file there is no discussion of the feasibility of the project from the biological standpoint. It is merely mentioned that the opening of the river mouth on a continuous basis would provide better fishing opportunities for anglers. It would appear that this phase of the matter requires more investigation than is available from the files. I will attempt to discuss this matter with our various fisheries

biologists acquainted with this project in the very near future. The basic question is, is it desirable to permit entry of adult anadromous fishes prior to the time that the natural run-off is sufficient to create a natural breakthrough of the bar?



Willis A. Evans
Fisheries Management
Supervisor
Region III

WAE:fo