

LONG LIVE THE QUEEN: This was the historic moment just after the crown was placed on the head of Queen Elizabeth II in Westminster Abbey. Father of Canterbury, who placed the crown. Flanking her are two arch

Federal Engineers Explain River Flood Control Project

6-2-53

An estimated flood control benefit of \$143,000 annually accruing from execution of the army engineers' flood control plan for Santa Cruz would be almost evenly balanced by an estimated annual "benefit cost" of \$134,000, city officials were told today.

R. J. Johnson, chief of the planning and report branch of the district engineer's office in San Francisco; and I. H. Steinberg, chief of branch for flood control, were here today to explain the flood control plan for the San Lorenzo river and Branciforte creek which was published a few days ago.

This ratio between benefits and benefit cost will be an important consideration in the deliberation of the engineer board on rivers and harbors which will pass on the plan in Washington before it can go to congress.

Based on 1951 estimates, the plan requires federal appropriations of \$2,413,000, and "local co-operation" to the extent of some \$670,000.

However, the latter figure may be somewhat lower as Johnson stated this morning that the Water-Market street bridge, replacement of which is included in the \$670,000 figure, is satisfactory when current work is completed. Acquisition of the island in the river mouth, now

being considered by the city council also would deduct further amounts from the total.

The engineers explained to Mayor Cliff Dysle, City Manager R. N. Klein, City Engineer Alexander Russell, and Chamber of Commerce Manager James E. Townsend that it would help to guide the project through the river and harbor board in Washington if local interests would lend active support. They agreed upon questioning that the Branciforte creek phase could be dealt with separately from the San Lorenzo river phase of the plan, but advised that no attempt be made to deal with the plan other than as a whole.

City officials estimated that right-of-way acquisition for the San Lorenzo river phase would present less difficulties than at Branciforte creek. The question of state aid to the project is still unresolved, but efforts would undoubtedly be made to approach the legislature for contributions to the right-of-way fund. (State aid was given for right-of-way acquisition when the Pajaro river control project was carried out a few years ago).

The engineers agreed that acquisition of the island in the river mouth by the city would be a contribution toward final realization of the plan in any event. The city's attempt in this direction is predicated upon the need for parking space as well as flood control.

Engineers also agreed that the projected flood wall would not be "a thing of beauty" but pointed out to the unsightly river front at the present time, and the enhancement of property values sure to be a consequence of flood protection.

They estimated that with congressional action in approving the plan and appropriating needed funds, it probably would take three to four years until construction could start.

At the same time, the engineers announced that they had submitted claims to the state for the state's share toward the erosion control survey cost, and that they were prepared to begin that survey as soon as the state funds are forthcoming.

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