

Oregonian 3/28/82

Tillamook County studies building halt to stop flood threat

TILLAMOOK — Tillamook County commissioners may soon enact a temporary moratorium that prohibits any construction, filling, dredging or diking in eight land parcels along both sides of the Wilson River.

Included in the eight-mile area is a portion of a 96-acre parcel recently annexed to the Tillamook city limits, said Paul Levesque, a consultant working with Tillamook County.

A \$7.1 million, 160-unit convention center to be built by the Nendel's Inn chain has also been proposed for the area included in the moratorium.

The annexation is under appeal to the state Land-Use Appeal Board by a local citizens' group.

County Commissioners Jerry Woodward and Granville Simmons ordered a draft emergency order — outlining the 180-day moratorium — written after they heard testimony Wednesday outlining the flood danger posed by new diking south of the Wilson River and west of U.S. 101. The commissioners chose to delay any action on the emergency order, however, until board Chairman F.B. Knight returns from Washington, D.C., possibly Friday.

Jim Coon Sr., a member of Citizens for Responsible Development, told the county board that the flood zone maps used by the county are inaccurate and flooding will be increased by recent diking on three lots just west of U.S. 101. The citizen's group is seeking action from the county to prohibit such diking.

A mobile home park is slated to be built on one of those lots, Coon told the board, and crews worked well into the night Tuesday putting up a one-foot-high pad for one mobile home. "The Army Corps of Engineers says that will raise the level of the river," said Coon, who lives along the Wilson River more than a mile west of U.S. 101.

Harold Schild, office manager for the Tillamook County Creamery Association, said the association wrote a letter to the board in mid-March requesting the county do something about the diking. The City of Tillamook has also made a similar request.

"Water is now being restricted and it will ultimately affect our industry," Schild said. "If someone builds a dike on the south side of the river it will raise the water level at the creamery."

The creamery receives about 770,000 pounds of milk daily from Tillamook farmers, and it produces 30 percent of the milk sold in the state. Boilers

have been relocated in an expansion there, Schild said, and are now in a flood-prone area of the plant.

A one-day shutdown from high water would cost more than \$25,000, he said. A longer shutdown might force farmers to dump their milk.

One Tillamook farmer, Glen Zuercher, told the board that it should stop all building in the area until flood-plain maps can be updated.

Warren McMinimee, attorney for the county commissioners, then recommended that all building be stopped until the situation can be reviewed. "We've come to the conclusion we can't rely on the government map," McMinimee said.

As proposed, the order would prohibit any filling, dredging, mining, excavation, grading, diking or granting of septic tank permits or approach road permits west of the Sollie Smith Bridge, located 1.5 miles east of U.S. 101, Levesque said.

Levesque cautioned, however, that the commissioners may alter the conditions of the restrictions or its boundaries when they take up the issue.

