

Leaders in Public Life Urge Willamette Plant

River Sewage Project Declared Imperative to City If
Standard of Health to Be Maintained

As the final shot in the battle for the approval of the proposed \$6,000,000 bond issue for the construction of the Portland sewage disposal plant, the Anti-Pollution council has compiled statements from more than 50 prominent public officials, club leaders and citizens.

The following remarks relate specifically to the effort to clean up and purify the Willamette river, and represent the best thought of state and community leaders on the subject:

Julius L. Meier, Governor—

Oregon should take advantage of this opportunity. Results will not only be beneficial to the public health, protect fish life and clear up a general nuisance, but will also aid materially in relieving our unemployment problem.

Dr. William Levin, State Health Officer—

The question is not whether the Willamette river is polluted, but, rather, what are we going to do about it? Swimming in the river is fraught with great danger. It is indeed fortunate that none of the towns below Portland have to use the river water for their drinking supplies.

Ernest Cole, President Multnomah Anglers and Hunters' Club—

In leaving the stream as it is, we are doing our best to destroy the fishing industry, which is one of our most important industries, for the Willamette river is conceded to be the greatest salmon spawning grounds in the world.

Charles Stricklin, State Engineer—

The problem of sewage disposal is not a local problem, but rather one in which all states are now vitally interested. It is necessary that Oregon people shall become cognizant of the method of properly handling their sewage matter and that the work start as soon as possible.

Native Sons and Daughters of Oregon—

By evidence easily and abundantly demonstrable, we are approaching a condition whereby we and our posterity may be robbed of one of the rich legacies with which nature has endowed this fair commonwealth, namely, the recreational and social benefits which we all derive from the presence of our beautiful Willamette river, and the ravishment of this wonderful stream is due solely to the pollution caused by the dumping of the septic wastes of thousands.

John Veatch, Chairman, Oregon State Fish Commission—

The Willamette has nearly reached its saturation point in raw sewage, after which it will be impossible for fish life to survive in it. The end of Oregon's \$10,000,000 salmon industry is in sight if the Willamette is not cleaned up.

William L. Finley, Naturalist—

The Pacific northwest is America's greatest playground, and the rivers are our greatest resources for recreation.

We cannot expect tourists, who come here by the thousands to view the beauties of the state, to exclaim in rapture over the Willamette river. The dumping of raw sewage in the river is a menace to fish life, as well as to health. It is destructive to private property as well as to the fishing and tourist traffic industries. Our rivers must be made assets instead of liabilities.

Ed F. Averill, Former State Game Warden—

We spend thousands of dollars in inviting the world to come to Oregon to see our beautiful streams. And then we do all in our power to convert these self-same streams to open sewers, unfit for use by man or fish or beast. And we call ourselves civilized.

Mayor Joseph K. Carson—

The Columbia is the second largest clear water stream in the United States, and the Willamette is one of its tributaries. The keeping of these rivers clear of pollution is a matter of national concern. We must go forward with the projects of sewage disposal plants and make the state of Oregon the greatest playground of America.

Zane Grey, Novelist—

In the desire for great industrial and agricultural development, the people should not lose sight of perhaps an even greater if less tangible esthetic value. I earnestly hope that the people of Oregon realize

the full value of this wonderful gift from nature and will make every effort to conserve it and hand it on to future generations as they themselves have found it.

John B. Ebinger, President, Oregon State Council, Izaak Walton League of America—

With Reconstruction Finance Corporation money available at a low rate of interest, with no additional tax burden, secured by and repayable solely from the revenue of the project, with the pressing need of employment, the urgent necessity of preserving our natural resources and guarding the public health and safety, and with the government making a gift of 30 per cent of the capital sum of such loans, it would seem that now is the time for the municipalities of this state to undertake construction of sewage disposal plants and thereby restore our beautiful streams to their natural purity and maintain them so.

Willamette Democratic Society—

There is conclusive evidence that the Willamette river, which should provide the people of the city of Portland with social and recreational benefits beyond measure, is in actuality a menace to health and a poison trap for the fish life which is one of Oregon's greatest resources.

Rufus C. Holman, State Treasurer—

A sewage disposal plant project, aided by R. F. C. funds, would supply work to the jobless. It would protect health, life, wild life and beauty. It would be a self-liquidating project more certainly than any other of which I have knowledge.

Former Mayor George L. Baker—

The elimination of pollution in the Willamette and its tributaries is an outstanding necessity at this time and should be carried out immediately. The state should present a solid front in order to carry this project through. For the first time in history a chance is offered to relieve the general taxpayer of the burden and with this method open, time must not be lost in the preparation of the necessary plans.

Mrs. Read M. Ireland, President, Women's Greater Oregon Association—

The Women's Greater Oregon association feels that nothing should be left undone to protect the clearness and purity of the streams and rivers, not only for the benefit of Oregon's own citizens, but for the many tourists who come to enjoy our beautiful country and its sports.

Dr. John G. Abele, City Health Officer—

Tests of Willamette river water, taken by our office over a two-year period, demonstrate conclusively that it is a very definite menace to public health and that the only safeguard we have is for our voters to pass the sewage disposal plant bond issue. It would be criminal not to take advantage of the present opportunity, afforded through the generous terms offered by the federal government.

Deplores Loss Of Waterfowl In Northwest

During the past 20 or 30 years, some 75,000,000 acres of land in the United States and Canada has been drained, ostensibly for agricultural reclamation, or has dried out naturally.

With the water has gone also the feeding grounds and the breeding grounds of ducks and other waterfowl, and unless adequate measures are taken to restore the water to a large part of this area and to conserve the watered areas now available, the time will come soon when waterfowl in the States and the Canadian border areas will be as extinct as the dodo.

These conclusions are arrived at by William L. Finley, noted Oregon naturalist, following attendance at the annual meeting of the advisory board of the migratory bird treaty act, at Washington, D. C. Finley returned Saturday.

1931 WORST YEAR

"Reports indicate that 1931 was the worst season in history for wild ducks and geese," said Finley, "because of lack of water, the culmination of 20 or 30 years of draining and drying of waters in the northern United States and in Canada.

"Because the waterfowl have been forced to congregate in concentrated areas where water remains, those in those certain areas believe the wild waterfowl population in general is growing. Such is not the case. The population is decreasing rapidly, because of restricted breeding and feeding grounds.

"In our own state, for instance, lower Klamath Lake, formerly covering an area of 85,000 acres, is no more. It has been dried out largely by promoters. Malheur lake and other lakes also are low. As the water goes, the natural water level falls lower, necessitating deeper drilling for water in all areas, and threatening a general aridity that is potential with disaster.

UNSUITABLE TO AGRICULTURE

"Promoters who claim that reclaimed lake areas are more valuable for agricultural purposes than in their natural state, base their argument largely upon a false premise.

"Really the lake-bed areas are heavily alkaline and not suitable for agricultural purposes, and promoters fail to consider the value to the state of the bird-life, the fur-bearing animals and the fish dependent upon the lakes, to say nothing of the recreational assets of such areas to the population at large."