
PETITION.

SUMAS, February 15th, 1892.

The undersigned landowners, residing in Sumas, in the Municipality of Chilliwack, and interested in the lands subject to overflow from the waters of the Fraser River, which are proposed to be dyked and reclaimed, under the provisions of the Act incorporating the British Columbia Dyking and Improvement Company, Bill No. 22, 1891, to be cited as the "Fraser River Dyking Act of 1891," beg to present to the Honourable the Speaker and to the Honourable Members of the House of Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, the following memorial and remonstrance:—

We pray for the immediate repeal of the above mentioned Act; and if it be not repealed, that it shall never be proclaimed, under the provisions of section 56 of the said Act, for the following, amongst other reasons:—

1st. Because its general tenor is at variance with our best interests.

2nd. Because the agreement made between ourselves and the representatives of the said Company is not carried out in the Bill.

3rd. Because, for instance, we were promised *one* year's test of the proposed dyke, whereas under section 29 of the said Bill, the works shall when completed be passed upon by the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works.

4th. Because many of its provisions permit the Company unduly to delay the beginning and the completion of this much needed and now too long delayed reclamation of fertile and valuable lands.

For instance, under section 14, the Company has *two* years after the passage of the Act to deposit a map or plan and specifications, while the Lieutenant-Governor is empowered from time to time to extend the time for depositing such map or plan and specifications; and *two* months after such deposit and *one* month's advertisement, actual construction *MAY* commence. And, to crown all, the Company shall commence actual construction within *two* years and complete within *four* years after proclamation, leaving this large and valuable section of country in its present deplorable condition for an indefinite period, and exposing the owners of these lands to a certain and very heavy annual loss, amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

6th. Because the map or plan and specifications shall be prepared by an engineer *or* SURVEYOR; and we submit that no mere land surveyor should be connected with a dyking and reclamation scheme of such importance and magnitude.

7th. Because, under section 21, the power given to vary or alter, from time to time, proposed lines of dykes, maps, plans and specifications, is unlimited, and therefore dangerous, imperilling our interests.

8th. Because, under clause 2 of section 29, the provision made regarding land covered by back-water is altogether insufficient to guard the interests of owners, for, while dues shall not be assessed upon lands during cover by back-water, the owners of such lands shall be liable to further assessments when the back-water is removed, in such manner that lands though injured and destroyed as far as fruitful use is concerned, are subject to additional assessments upon removal, putting the owner actually in a worse condition than the one he occupied when without a dyke.

9th. Because the owners of lands in Sumas are enjoined to pay an unfair share of the cost of protecting the lands of proprietors along the Luck-a-kuck.

10. And finally, because under section 54 any person interested in this Act, which would include a member of the Company, may apply summarily to a Judge of the Supreme Court for the appointment of a person to act in the place of the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, upon whom shall devolve all the powers and duties conferred by this Act upon the said Chief Commissioner, including the very grave and very responsible charge of declaring, immediately after the completion of the works, our lands *well and effectually dyked*.

We trust that it will not be accounted to us an inexcusable negligence that we have not ere this presented this petition and remonstrance, inasmuch as, until recently, none amongst us had become aware of the grave dangers and perilous risks we incurred under the loose language used and the eminently unfair provisions contained in this Act.

And we pray that, if it be possible, the said obnoxious Act be at once repealed; and if this be not possible, that it shall never be proclaimed, as provided.

And your petitioners and memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

CHARLES WILSON,	THOS. H. IRWIN,
THOS. M. HALL,	A. H. WANE,
J. WILSON,	MATHEW HALL,
THOS. CARTER,	CHAS. M. RICHARDS,
CHESTER CHADSEY,	THOMAS EDWARDS,
CHAS. CARTER, JR.	J. L. ATKINSON,
SAMPSON TOOP,	HUGH H. GEMMELL,
LOUIS L. CHADSEY,	A. C. BOWMAN,
GEORGE HALL,	H. JOHNSON,
CHAS. CARTER,	JOHN A. LUMSDEN,
GEO. W. CHADSEY,	FRANK A. LUMSDEN.