

# Yakima Valley Takes

(For editorial comment, see Page 10)

Matters of moment to Seattle and the Puget Sound area were being stirred this weekend in Ellensburg, a pleasant, rodeo-noted, cattle-raising college town which has been drouching for years in the warm Kittitas Valley.

Because Ellensburg now is but two hours away by divided highway from the center of the state's population and economic growth, it is important to note that this weekend the Yakima River Conservancy, Inc., a small but determined nonprofit organization, was holding a two-day Yakima River Watershed Land-Use Conference.

CONFERENCE keynoter was Dan Kiley, a nationally respected regional planner from Vermont who was associated with Eero Saarinen in developing both the Dulles Airport in Washington, D. C., and the dramatic 630-foot Gateway Arch in St. Louis.

This writer was privileged to fly with Kiley earlier this week as he followed the Yakima from its Snoqualmie Pass headwaters into the Cle Elum Canyon, along its placid path across the Kittitas Valley to where it finally twists and plunges through the Yakima Canyon to its junction with the Naches River at Yakima.

Kiley, whose tousled white hair is no more striking than his frank comments, saw much more in the Yakima than does the Seattle motorist who once cursed slow, two-lane traffic in the Cle Elum Canyon and who now cannot wait for that new divided highway also to bypass the Yakima Canyon two-lane road.

Kiley began his comments where the Yakima begins — at the pass.

"Look at that mess," he said, pointing down to the "Main Street" sprawl of ski huts, lodges and parking areas along the highway. "It is typical of the worst problem in America — lineal highway development.

"Public roads should not be permitted to provide continuous access to private developments. What we are looking at is typical of the way we Americans scatter things. What is needed is

a cluster, a village such as they do so well in European ski areas.

"THERE SHOULD be a scenic easement along both sides of the road for whatever depth it takes — 200 or 300 feet, or more. Then if the developers make a mess of things, the tourist won't see it."

Kiley also took critical note of land developers trying to divide the riverbank into small lots, of a smoke pall which spread over half the Kittitas Valley from a fire burning on the City of Ellensburg riverside dump, of reports that sewers and packing plants are polluting the river, of highway utility poles which, he said, should be replaced by Normandy poplars.

"You are acting in time to save this river and valley," Kiley told David Burt, a Central Washington State College English professor who is Conservancy president. "Your decision on how to use your land must first start with a philosophy of values. I cannot tell you what to do, but perhaps I can light a spark to that decision."

If Kiley succeeded in doing that this weekend, he will have fanned into flame a Conservancy program which could be far-reaching, indeed. The Yakima River Conservancy already advocates these proposals:

- The Legislature's approval of a Yakima River Parkway Drive with its limits "set at the visual horizon" for the entire length of the river from the pass to Yakima.

- Designation of the Yakima Canyon as a "conservancy" with its use reserved for presently-established grazing, agriculture, recreation and scientific study.

- Designation as "scenic highways" by the Legislature of Highway 10 from Chinook Pass along the Naches River, and the White Pass Highway east from the summit to their junction at Naches.

- Creation by the Legislature of a Yakima River Watershed Commission to identify and reserve from conflicting public or private uses those areas within the watershed which are best adapted for nature preserves, most adapted for preservation in a wild state and of those

Long,



Walt Woodward -

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## Beautiful View

needed for study."

- Establishment of a regional research and planning center at C. W. S. C.

- Continuing encouragement of users of the waters of the Yakima River and its tribu-

taries "to return water to the streams as pure as when it was taken for use."

ALL THIS is quite an order, especially when it is remembered that the Yakims

is not a "wild" river. It is a popular thing these days to "save" wild and turbulent rivers. But the Yakima is, rather, a "civilized" stream which, years ago, was tamed at its source by irrigation

dams.

But sweeping as the Yakima River Conservancy is in its demands, it really is asking only those things which are necessary to the purity and beauty of one of this

state's great river systems.

In Ellensburg this weekend, they simply were saying that a civilized river also is deserving of a fate better than that of becoming a visually cluttered sewer ditch.

## Tomorrow

## May Be Too Late

WALT Woodward, Times columnist, reports today on the facing page on activities of the Yakima River Conservancy, Inc. It is made up of conservation-minded citizens in Central Washington who would preserve sections of the upper Yakima River Valley.

There are few among us who have not driven along the Yakima River to marvel at the grandeur, a delight especially at this time of year when the fields and hill-sides take on their fall colors.

Industrialization and other developments are beginning to pick

up speed in the valley. Participants in the Yakima River Conservancy are foresighted in taking steps before it is too late to preserve what they can of the valley from air and water pollution and other harmful activities.

*Naturally, the surrounding areas must have economic growth, and this cannot be thwarted. Yet, there must be accommodation for both economic growth and conservation of its beauty. This will be a test of whether effective planning can establish the ground rules where roles and areas are defined before it is too late to do so.*

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