

DIXY AND THE by the kaopectate kid SKAGIT

Shelby Scates of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer recently awarded Dixy Lee Ray the Plucked Duck Environmental Extremist of the Year award for her work in uniting legislators, congressmen, Maggie, and every conservationist in the state in opposition to her plans for an oil port at Cherry Point. Not to be outdone by Seattle's dean of political writers, old K. K. has decided to give our Dixy Dumpling the Wild and Scenic Skagit Award for 1977.

We're sure that Senator Henry M. Jackson, who wrote and sponsored the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, calling for a study of the Skagit, will understand. Also, we know that Congressman Lloyd Meeds, who sponsored the current classification legislation and through whose district the river flows, will approve of the award. All those unsung bureaucrats of the U. S. Forest Service, who conducted five long years of studies and hearings before recommending inclusion of the Skagit, Sauk, Suiattle and Cascade Rivers under the act, will waive their claims to the award in favor of our governess. And the hard-working members of the Skagit Valley League will applaud our choice, we're certain.

Well, you ask, what did Governor Ray do to deserve this high honor? She's called everyone's attention to the pending legislation in a way no one else could possibly have done, that's what. We'll recapitulate a bit.

On August 22, 1977, Dixy met with four Skagit County officials who have been pushing for years for a flood control dam at the mouth of the Sauk. Since dams would be prohibited on the Skagit and its tributaries after their inclusion under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, these gents have naturally been opposed to federal classification.

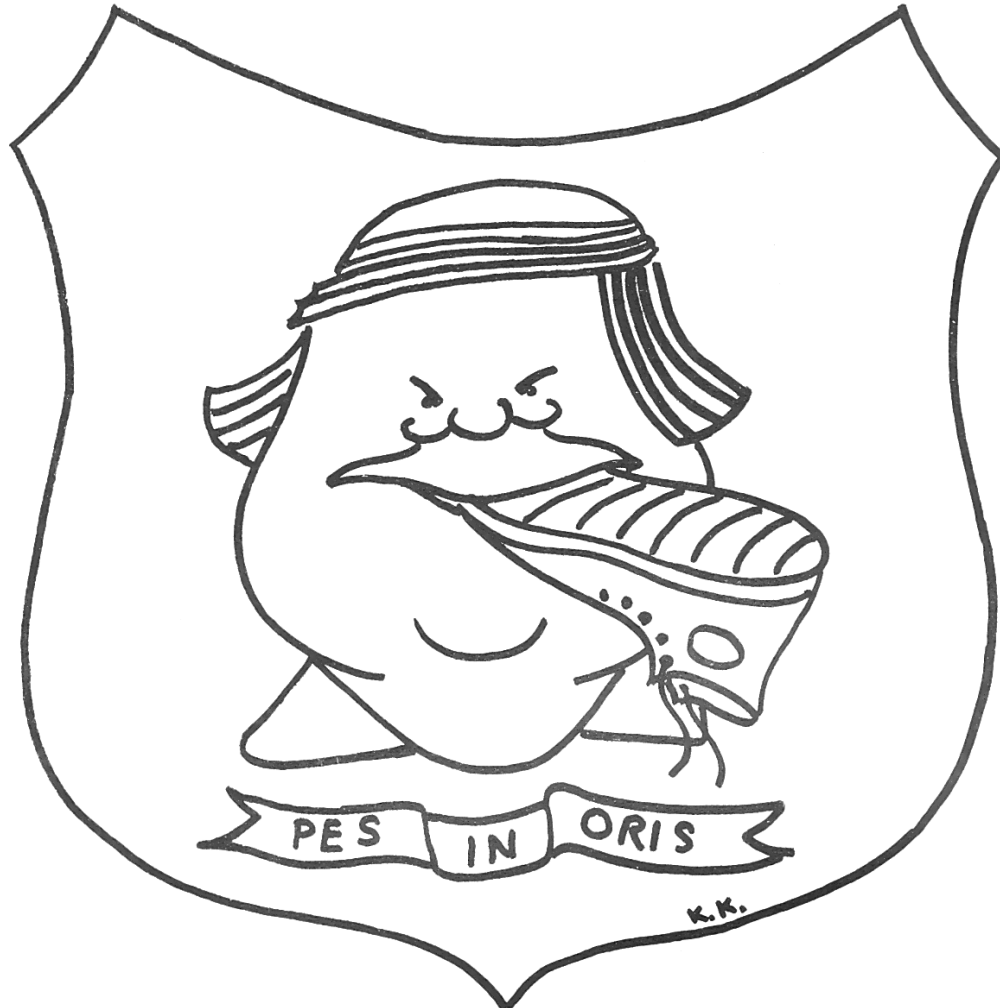
On the basis of her cosy tete-a-tete with these four axe-grinders, Dixy came out in mid-September against including the Skagit in the nation's Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Typically she made no effort to talk with anyone on the other side of the issue -- the Skagit area fishermen, Indians, sportsmen's organizations, Lloyd Meeds' office or (heaven forbid) environmental groups.

Dixy's rationale? She thinks the state can do a better job than the feds managing the Skagit and its tributaries under its new and toothless wild rivers act. Of course, she omitted mentioning that the state act applies only to the Skykomish, permits damming, applies only to state lands and has hardly any funding.

Obviously, the whole thing was a ploy by our Dixy Dumpling to help a few Skagit County characters in their campaign for a flood-control dam that even the Corps of Engineers concedes would be environmentally devastating and far from cost-effective. The good thing about her stand was that just about everybody recognized it for what it was -- her knee-jerk reaction to environmentally sound legislation. Both Seattle papers editorially castigated her for uninformed decision making and Lloyd Meeds pushed ahead with the wild and scenic river classification.

We think Dixy's opposition is just what the Skagit legislation needs to make it to President Carter's desk. If Dixy's agin it, it's gotta be good!

THE WILD AND SCENIC SKAGIT AWARD



1977