

## Two Senior FBI on 1980 river-cash search say new Cooper theory holds water



1980, L to R: Asst. SAC Baker; couple that “found” Cooper surface bundles; shore chief agent Schreuder; one of his deep cash “shards”

**PRESS RELEASE (9/11/17):** Two revered former FBI agents that oversaw the 1980 Columbia River recovery of D.B. Cooper cash want a released hijack suspect reconsidered because they now suspect he set the whole thing up.

**Dorwin Schreuder**, the chief agent on Tena Bar, calls **Robert Rackstraw Sr., 73**, “the most likely one who did it.” **Retired Asst. Director Bill Baker**, Schreuder’s Portland superior at the time, stresses “this is more than a theory.”

Thirty seven years ago, the FBI told the media this river cash discovery suggested Cooper had drowned. Schreuder parroted that to the Seattle Times on 2/12/80: “If he were [alive], I think he’d be with his money.” But when the crime tape came down, soil experts told Schreuder and Baker there was a snag in that premise: The ransom was found both on top and deep down in the shore sand – which implied separate Cooper-cash arrivals, years apart.

The retired lawmen now think a cold case team, led by former FBI colleagues, has the answer. The private hunt was launched in 2011 by a California law enforcement trainer and author, Thomas J. Colbert, and his wife Dawna. The couple firmly believes Rackstraw, a highly-trained Vietnam vet and retired college department head in San Diego, was wrongly cleared and released by the Bureau -- curiously, just months after this river-money find.

Thomas Colbert looked up Schreuder in Montana last April, briefed him on the independent quest, and then forwarded a copy of the team's investigative book, *The Last Master Outlaw* – winner of 3 awards for true crime. Schreuder concluded that Rackstraw “is probably the guy, but of course you’ll have to convince a grand jury.”

He also noted the chapter on Rackstraw’s confirmed crime partner, Dick Briggs, the now-dead drug trafficker that multiple witnesses say bragged of planting the three 1980 surface bundles of Cooper cash, days before they were spotted. Schreuder said, “That’s interesting, but I bet you can’t explain the other money, found three feet down.”

A recent tip clarified just that: A credible source called the team with a ‘71 Cooper escape story, which involved 3 partners, 3 dirt airstrips and 3 small planes so he wouldn't be followed. Many of the logistical details have been substantiated by witnesses on the ground and in old FBI field notes, recently released by a judge's (FOIA) order.

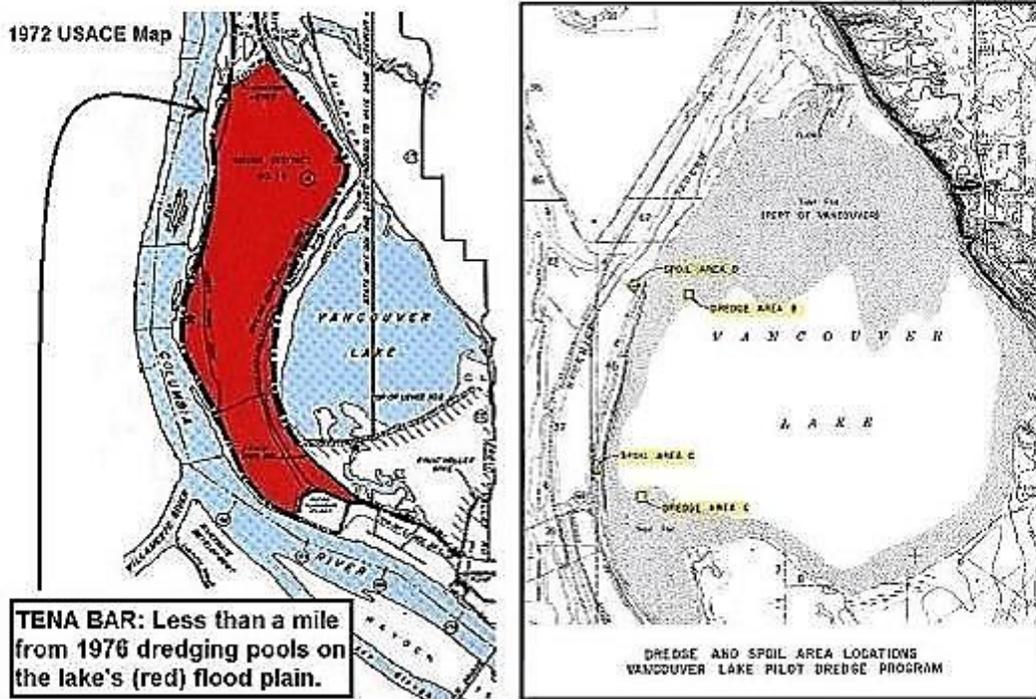
The escape source also disclosed there was one detour between airstrip landings: It involved the alleged dumping of \$50K of the ransom cash and briefcase bomb into Vancouver Lake, to “make it look like Cooper had drowned.” The lake spills into the Columbia River, just north of Tena Bar. Schreuder found this revelation “very interesting.”

Then Colbert revealed that Rackstraw, weeks before the ‘71 hijacking, was working under an alias on a dredging boat, learning its operation, on the Skagit River in Mount Vernon, Washington. All the deep money found at various depths at Tena Bar in 1980, in what appears to be an old tidal deposit, was chopped up into thousands of tiny “shards,” like it had gone through the blades of a dredging boat. Schreuder sighed, “Well, that’s it then.”

Baker was just as impressed. Rackstraw “has all the attributes of someone to do this successfully. These are issues that have to be examined and weighed” by the Bureau, and “I’m all for that.” **FYI:** More details at [DBCooper.com](http://DBCooper.com)

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## Why Cooper Ransom Cash was Found Twice on Columbia's Tena Bar



Multiple sources claim the three 1971 bundles of Cooper ransom money found half-buried in Tena Bar's sand in 1980 were planted by Rackstraw's confirmed crime partner. But no one could explain how thousands of little pieces of Cooper cash were located three feet down, all along the shore – until the cold case team heard the Cooper getaway tale.

After the plane-dropped cash (in failed "drowning" stunt) sank into Vancouver Lake, it appears it was later chopped up in a dredging (1976 program chart above). Over years, the cyclical flood plain delivered and buried it at Tena Bar. FYI: Weeks before Rackstraw's hijacking and flyaway, he worked under alias on a dredging boat along another WA river.



L to R: Surface bundles; expert shows how deep cash pieces were; one of them.