Steve Willis

My name''s Steve Willis, and I live on the Satsop off the Chehalis River. I live on a farm down there, and I''d like to see something added to this shoreline management, and that''s being able to manage the aggregation of gravel in the main channels in these rivers. I''ve literally witnessed, since the, about 38 years ago, the shorelines came out, ran us off the gravel bars. And during that time, the rivers filled up with gravel, and the only way it''s going to continue to flow is by taking out huge chunks of land, which is ag land, it''s about 15 feet deep, and the lower Chehalis its about 15 feet deep. So you''ve got about 25,000 cubic yards of sediment going into the river.

Every time you lose an acre of land, we probably easily lost, you know, neighbors and everybody, over 40 acres in this 40 years. And, like I say, you create habitat by managing that gravel, creating pools for the fish to lay in while they wait to migrate upstream to spawn. And also this engineering project, log jams down there, and I''ve reached out to these people that put these engineer log jams in and told them where they''re going to fail at, and why they''re going to fail, and they don''t listen.

We''re just spending millions of dollars and there''s already a lot of that engineered log jams put in there. It''s either gone, washed away in this floodwaters or is no longer any type of habitat or protection because all that, the river channel''s already filled up in that section of the river, and it''s just basically you spend millions of dollars, that, bury logs in the gravel bar and they''re gonna rot. And I just, we don''t need to spend our money that way.

We need to be able to manage the gravel, because that sediment is not only going, it goes down into the harbor, and anything in the lower harbor, in a harbor there, is having to be dredged to maintain a shipping channel, and we''re spending millions of dollars there to take it, barge it, and dredge it, and then put it in barges and take it out in the ocean, and dump it in the ocean, which adds to sea level rise. And you''re not going to get that back like any, like, ice melts and it goes out the ocean, you might have a chance for it to evaporate, come back as snow and ice again.

But the dirt is literally destroying our land. And I''ve actually kind of [unclear] the Department of Ecology [unclear] destroying our [unclear]. And I think we should look at what''s been happening lower Satsop and Chehalis, and throughout Grays Harbor and Washington state. A good example might be even the Oso landslide, where that, what triggered that was when the gravel bar built up at the end of Steelhead Drive.

I scoured the whole day to that event that they put in there, all tied together, and then when that [unclear] that loose, it was basically put all that dirt [unclear], everything, [unclear] whole hillside down, killed 43 people. And I say, one thing I like to bring out, well, end up with Indians and fisheries is always all driving this all this a lot of times. And article 8 of the Indian fisheries needs to be reread and applied. Thank you.