

I strongly oppose the proposed flood retention facility (dam) on the Chehalis River.

As an enrolled Chehalis tribal member and subsistence harvester, my family and I depend on the Chehalis River for our livelihood and cultural practices. My family has lived on this land for generations. I am a wild harvester who gathers along the Chehalis River, and this work provides essential income for my family. The proposed dam would make my traditional way of life impossible by devastating the ecosystems I depend on for harvesting.

Impacts on Fish and Wildlife:

This project would have disastrous effects on fish populations and wildlife habitat. The Chehalis River supports critical salmon runs and diverse wildlife that are essential not only to my subsistence practices but to the entire regional ecosystem. Commercial and subsistence fishermen would face devastating losses. The environmental impacts outlined in the EIS do not adequately address the long-term destruction this dam would cause to fish passage, spawning habitat, and the interconnected food web that sustains our community.

Flood Plain Safety Concerns:

I live in the flood plain. My home was raised after the 2007 flood, and I understand flood risk firsthand. However, constructing this dam puts homes like mine at even greater risk. Dam failures and unintended flood consequences could be catastrophic for downstream communities. There are better alternatives for flood management that don't involve destroying the river ecosystem.

Request:

I urge the Department of Ecology and all decision-makers to reject this project. Please pursue alternative flood damage reduction strategies that protect both communities and the natural resources that sustain our way of life.
Thank you for considering my comment.