David Muller

The Department of Ecology needs to include in the Draft EIS that there are minimal impacts to fish and wildlife habitat and remove the statement that there are significant adverse impacts, as well as include the positive benefits resulting from preventing damages to fish and fish and wildlife habit by minimizing the catastrophic effects of excessive flooding. For more details see the attached comments below.

Dave Muller Comments
on Chehalis River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Project Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement

- I grew up in PeEll and have lived in the Chehalis Area for over 50 years
  - While I have not been directly impacted by flooding my family and friends have experienced numerous flood events over the years.
  - I have observed devastating economic losses to citizens and businesses as well as loses to public buildings, County Roads, State Roads, and Interstate 5

- The Corps of Engineers was granted authority to develop flood reduction plan for the Chehalis Basin in 1933.
  - For almost 100 years local, State and Federal Jurisdictions have conducted numerous studies for reducing flooding.
  - Every 10 to 20 years after the latest flood event, another study is completed to reduce flooding.
  - Studies included every possible plan; dams, levees and dikes, dredging, elevating homes and businesses, buying out homes and businesses, and relocating or elevating roads and highways including I-5
  - Unfortunately as we all know, nothing substantial has ever been done to reduce flooding and help the citizens and businesses impacted by the periodic damages of flooding

- After the 2007 flood, officials again took up the cause to come up with a Flood Reduction Plan
  - Over the last 18 years the most comprehensive effort ever has been conducted to finally come up with a flood reduction solution
  - We now have a Comprehensive Flood Reduction Plan along with an Aquatic Specifies Restoration Plan.
  - This is a Win for the citizens and businesses and public facilities in the Basin and a Win for Aquatic Species with fisheries enhancement.
  - It is time to expedite the process of permitting and approvals to get these improvements and solutions completed.

- The proposed Flow-through dam minimizes the environmental impacts.
  - Not a traditional fish and sediment blocking dam.
  - State of the art design that allows fish and sediment to move through except during limited catastrophic flood events for short periods (just a few weeks once every several years)
  - Expect blocking of flow through for less than 2 percent of the time.
  - Department of Ecology (DOE) Draft EIS should recognize the benefits of this design over a conventional dam and reservoir that blocks flow permanently. And therefore, does not cause significant adverse impacts to fish and wildlife (i.e. river not blocked at

all in most years, and even when severe flooding is predicted only blocked for a short period of a few weeks).
  - DOE should note in the Draft EIS the very small salmon spawning area impact by the proposed flow-through dam. (WDFW studies showing only 3 salmon redds annually above the site representing less than 1% of salmon spawning basin wide). See WDFW study information below.
  - DOE should also note in the Draft EIS that the flow-through dam actually provides a positive benefit to salmon spawning and habit and other aquatic species in severe flooding events by holding back the catastrophic flows and thereby saving spawning beds and preventing the mass wasting of the river beds and banks.

- Extensive fisheries, environmental studies have been completed over the past 15 years.
  - WDFW salmon redds count over the past 8 years,
  - Average of 3 redds per year above the dam site (less than 1% of basin)
  - Average of 617 redds per year basin wide (blocked less than 0.1% of basin wide spawning)
  - The Flood Control Zone District has also identifies numerous mitigation opportunities around the basin to address the Dam impacts.
  - A thorough mitigation plan will be part of the project design, permitting and development

- NEPA Draft EIS and the Army Corp of Engineers looked at many other Alternatives to the Flow-through dam.
  - 61 different alternatives studied to reduce catastrophic flood damage
  - Freeway levees and dikes to protect Interstate 5
  - Relocating and/or buying out the residences and businesses
  - Every possible alternative, including alternatives developed by group opposed to the water retention dam.
  - None met the flood reduction levels of the comprehensive flow through dam plan
  - In addition, without the dam there is no viable plan to protect Interstate 5. I-5 levees would also have significant adverse impacts on fish and wildlife and those unfortunate to be left outside the levees and downstream would see worse flooding.

- This is a Win – Win for the people and the fisheries, it is time to quit studying and move to implementation and development.