Jason Dix

Dear Department of Ecology Team,

My name is Jason Dix, and I live along the Chehalis River near Chehalis, Washington. I'm writing in response to the recent flood event and as a follow-up to suggestions from community members to share direct, local observations with your department.

Over the past several years, I've informally built a small network of river observers — neighbors, farmers, and property owners positioned both upstream and downstream along the Chehalis and Newaukum Rivers. During this most recent event, our on-the-ground observations consistently reflected changes in river behavior earlier than many of the generalized online reporting systems. This local, real-time information played a critical role in helping us remain calm, prepared, and responsive without unnecessary panic.

I would like to respectfully share a few core observations and concerns that emerged from this event:

1. Local, real-time data is proving highly valuable.
Community-to-community observation provided earlier and more actionable insight than automated dashboards alone. There is real value in integrating human observation into regional flood intelligence.
2. River behavior is highly variable and location-specific.
The Chehalis and its tributaries (including the Newaukum) respond very differently depending on rainfall pattern, soil saturation, upstream releases, and debris flow. Broad regional forecasting does not always capture these localized dynamics.
3. Community communication gaps still exist.
Many residents rely on informal networks and personal observation because official alerts sometimes feel delayed, generalized, or difficult to interpret in practical terms.
4. There is strong public interest in cooperative, non-political solutions.
Across property owners and land managers, the dominant interest is not blame — it is resilience, preparation, and a clearer understanding of river mechanics over time.

My intent in writing is not to criticize existing systems, but to express a sincere interest in how state-level hydrology, modeling, and ecological management might better integrate with localized, community-based observation networks in the future.

If useful, I would be very willing to:

• Share time-stamped crest and recession observations from our local network
• Participate in any listening sessions or working groups related to basin-wide flood resilience
• Help serve as a bridge between rural landowners and agency-level planning

I appreciate the work your department does in managing complex ecological and hydrologic systems under difficult conditions. My hope is simply to contribute grounded field insight in a way that supports better outcomes for everyone who lives along these rivers.

Thank you for your time and service to our region.

Respectfully,
Jason Dix
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