

Julia Spencer

Hello Department of Ecology,

I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed FRE dam on the upper Chehalis River, which I strongly oppose.

We already know dams are terrible for maintaining healthy ecosystems, meaning they are also terrible for humans who rely on those functioning ecosystems (all of us). This is why we're now paying for costly and disruptive dam removals.

Based on the DEIS, the project would cause significant and unavoidable harm to salmon and steelhead, including major losses of Spring Chinook, Coho, Fall Chinook, and Steelhead populations. This stretch of the river is one of the Basin's key spawning areas, and once damaged, these habitats can not be replaced. Not only do these species have a right to live and thrive, but we have a duty to uphold tribal treaty rights that we signed upon colonization of this land. We must ensure these culturally important species, and food sources, remain viable.

I am also concerned about the scale and cost of the proposed structure, as well as the unresolved safety and geotechnical risks identified in the DEIS. At an estimated \$1.3–\$2.3 billion, the dam would offer limited benefits while putting the river's ecological health and the communities that rely on it at long-term risk.

More effective, less damaging flood-reduction approaches already exist, including the Local Actions Non-Dam Alternative. We must embrace natural climate and habitat-conservation solutions that offer multiple and enduring benefits to all species, not quick fixes that ignore ecosystem health and cause more problems than they solve. I urge Ecology to pursue these solutions instead of the proposed dam.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
Julia Spencer