

# Ryan Masuda

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed flood retention facility (dam) on the Chehalis River. As one of Washington's last major free-flowing rivers, the Chehalis is too ecologically and culturally significant to be permanently compromised by a project that fails to address the root causes of our basin's flooding issues.

My opposition is based on the following critical concerns:

## 1. Catastrophic Ecological Damage

The Revised DEIS clearly indicates that this project will have "significant and unavoidable" impacts on our environment. The construction of a dam would destroy irreplaceable habitat for salmon, steelhead, lamprey, and countless other species. We are already seeing sharp declines in wild fish runs; we cannot afford a project that threatens the local extinction of spring Chinook or further degrades the complex food webs that support everything from otters to orcas.

## 2. Violation of Tribal Treaty Rights

The Chehalis River holds immense cultural, spiritual, and historical importance. Proceeding with this dam despite the clear opposition of the Quinault Indian Nation and the Chehalis Tribe is a violation of tribal sovereignty and treaty-reserved rights. Our community must respect these indigenous rights rather than pursuing a project that would permanently harm the ancestral lands and resources of the People of the River.

## 3. Better, Science-Backed Alternatives Exist

We do not have to choose between flood protection and a healthy river. The Local Actions Non-Dam (LAND) alternative offers a smarter, safer path forward. By focusing on restoring floodplains, strengthening local infrastructure (like levees and floodwalls), and investing in community resilience, we can protect homes and businesses without destroying our natural heritage.

## 4. Long-Term Ineffectiveness

A dam is a short-term "band-aid" solution that will not stop major flooding long-term, especially as climate change increases the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. Spending hundreds of millions of public dollars on a structure that offers limited protection while causing maximum environmental harm is an irresponsible use of taxpayer resources.

I urge the Department of Ecology and the Chehalis Basin Board to reject the dam proposal and instead prioritize the LAND alternative and the Aquatic Species Restoration Program (ASRP). Our community deserves real, sustainable solutions that protect both our people and our wild rivers

Sincerely,

Ryan Masuda