

Brendan Bowen

I strongly oppose the construction of this proposed dam on the Chehalis River. This is a massive project—45% wider than the last failed proposal, requiring 65% more concrete, and carrying a price tag of up to \$2 billion. There is no clear plan for how this will be paid for, yet it will almost certainly fall on Washington taxpayers. That's a huge gamble for a dam that would only protect some structures some of the time.

The Chehalis is one of the last free-flowing rivers on the West Coast and the largest watershed entirely in Washington. It produces mostly wild salmon, which are critical not just to our local ecosystems, but to Southern Resident orcas that rely on Chinook as a primary food source. This river is too important to drown behind concrete. We are in an era of dam removal, not building new ones, and there are already better, less destructive alternatives through the Local Actions Non-Dam plan.

This dam would harm salmon habitat, degrade water quality, raise water temperatures, and devastate Tribal lands, culture, and livelihoods. It's expensive, unnecessary, and environmentally destructive. Washington cannot afford to gamble with billions of dollars and one of its last wild rivers.