

Jacob Beilock

Dear Department of Ecology,

I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed FRE dam on the upper Chehalis River. I am a student at Bellingham Technical College in the fisheries science program. We do lots of hands on work with salmon and see the loss that is brought from trying to tame the rivers. Salmon numbers are not doing well and putting up more dams will ensure their demise. Lately we studied the dams on the lower Snake River and whether or not they should be breached. While the answer to that is complicated by the power generated by those dams along with the transport for goods they provide, there is no complication with whether this dam should go up (the only "positive" it provides is meager flood control). It should NOT go up.

No power will be generated by this proposed dam. Habitat will be buried. Fish will die. The river will die. Algae blooms in the reservoir, choking gills, killing peoples dogs, children told by their parents they can't go swimming, ruining a summer's day. When that algae dies, eutrophication will occur removing oxygen. A sludge of nutrients will build at the base of the dam unable to go downstreams and spread out over the land. Downstream farms close because they can't grow and compete with megafarms halfway across the country.

The people the dam was to protect will leave. Culture erased. Species gone. When the salmon are gone, they will not return.

The salmon will not return once they are gone.

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 cannot be replaced.

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. I urge Ecology to pursue these solutions instead of the proposed dam.

Thank you for considering my comments.

If this dam goes up, I will spend my life as a scientist, advocate for salmon, advocate for the harmony we need to return to with nature, fighting to tear this dam down. The more we fight the Earth, the more we will be humbled by our planet.

Sincerely,
Jacob Beilock