

## Anonymous Anonymous

Dear Department of Ecology,

[SEP] I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed FRE dam on the upper Chehalis River. 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 that are already extremely vulnerable and struggling to rebound. Among many other things, one of my personal priorities is that harm to salmon equates to harm and the eventual demise of the beloved and already critically endangered SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER WHALES.

This stretch of the river is one of the Basin's key spawning areas, and once damaged, these habitats (supporting a huge portion of the food source of the whales) cannot be replaced in an acceptable timeframe. And based on the DEIS, despite efforts to allow fish passage, there will still be unavoidable losses and changes to their environment that will lead to significantly reduced numbers.

[SEP] 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. Additionally, dams have or are coming down all over the country (to include in WA) to improve river health and water quality in the face of rising costs and diminishing returns on keeping the dams operational. Why would we follow this trajectory that has such a significant risk of following that same path to wastefulness of time, energy, money, resources, and nature?

[SEP] More effective, cheaper, less damaging flood-reduction approaches already exist, including the Local Actions Non-Dam Alternative (eg, repairing riparian zones which needs to occur anyways, reconnecting side channels and flood plains, etc). Perhaps even adjusting the airport levee in addition to the other changes would be of benefit. Raising the I-5 seems like a cheaper and less destructive alternative for the commuting situation?

It appears to me that the Chehalis is the last major free-flowing river in southwest Washington and that the risks of this proposal outweigh potential benefits. I urge Ecology to use those resources to pursue these solutions (emphasis on the plural) instead of this one proposed solution - a dam. Thank you for considering my comments.