

Forest Shomer

Dear Department of Ecology,

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. 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.

The exploitation of the Upper Chehalis, as well as similar river systems in western Washington, appears to be primarily for the benefit of dubious, expensive technologies which inevitably, if they endure, become more energy-efficient and make the ruination of headwaters like the Upper Chehalis, unnecessary. These energy-consumptive technologies must instead become energy-conserving BEFORE they get fully implemented, in order to prevent extinctions as an unintended consequence.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,