

Mary Rawlins

Dear Department of Ecology,

As a member of Conservation NW I am using their comment letter below because I think it is clearer than I could be on my own. I think the Local Non-Dam alternative is a better choice to protect the river system. Time and again we have learned and re-learned the hard way that river basins are irreparably damaged by dam projects, to the long-term detriment of all species.

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.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
Mary Rawlins