

Melissa Holloway

I respectfully submit this comment in opposition to the proposed dam on the Chehalis River.

The Chehalis River is one of the last remaining large, undammed river systems in Washington State. Its free-flowing condition supports salmon recovery, healthy floodplain function, water quality, and the overall ecological balance of the basin. Constructing a dam would permanently disrupt these systems through blocked fish passage, altered sediment movement, and long-term impacts to downstream habitat.

I am concerned that this proposal places irreversible environmental and cultural harm above more effective, lower-risk flood-management solutions. Scientific studies and recent flood-reduction projects demonstrate that strategies such as floodplain restoration, levee setbacks, riparian rehabilitation, and improved land-use planning can significantly reduce flood risk while preserving the river's natural function.

The Chehalis River also holds deep cultural, subsistence, and treaty-protected importance for Tribal Nations and local communities. Any action that permanently alters the river threatens resources that cannot be mitigated or replaced. Once constructed, a dam would impose long-term consequences on future generations who will bear its environmental and financial costs.

For these reasons, I urge decision-makers to reject the dam proposal and instead pursue flood-management solutions that are sustainable, scientifically supported, fiscally responsible, and respectful of Tribal sovereignty and community voices.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this comment.