

Carol Melton

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.

I have long ties to the region, as my grandparents moved to this area from Missouri in the 1940s. Having had grandparents, parents, an aunt and cousins living in the area, I have spent much time there over the past 60 years, and I am very familiar with the ongoing, widespread, problem with flooding. While we do definitely need a solution, I do not feel this FRE dam is that solution. The risks and costs far outweigh the benefit. 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,

Carol Melton