

Mark Smith

The Chehalis River has long been one of the richest natural resources to SW Washington for decades, it has provided transportation, recreation and abundant natural resources that supported growth in and around its valley. Do to its natural flow and elevations it also supports a very large flood plain full of rich seasonal wetlands. This made the Chehalis valley very desirable for human settlements and business development. Over the years we have encroached on this valley filling in critical flood plains and diverting and blocking seasonal flows that were critical for natural flood control and wildlife enhancement. These areas have become commercial development and commerce centers in the middle of ancient flood plains.

With each new development the flood risks increases.

There is no doubt that flood risks and solutions need to be addressed. However, we need to make sure that we do so using Nature Based Science and Solutions that Commune with Nature so we can be assured they will last and support both human and natural needs. The proposed engineered dam is based on old river management engineering and like all man made structures will not last. If we are going to look at the level of investment that is being proposed we want to make sure it is sustainable and naturally maintained.

We must learn to work with natural flood areas and not try to control.

Thank you for taking time to consider my suggestion towards your solution development.