

Julie Whitacre

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. This harm is unacceptable. We need to do everything possible to protect salmon populations and free-flowing river ecosystems.

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,

Julie Whitacre
Bellingham WA