

Lee First

I am deeply opposed to the proposal to construct a dam in the Chehalis headwaters.

This is a disaster made much worse by developing in the floodplain, and industrial forestry in the headwaters.

Ford's Prairie Industrial Park is being built right now - a giant new floodplain filling project, right next to the river. Just down the road, the huge Unfi facility, on fill right next to the river. And on Rush Road, next to the Newaukum River – an enormous new fill - for what? Another truck stop? Who permits these, and why? This needs to stop – all these fills make it less safe for the rest of us.

Imagine the progress that might have been made if there had been a concerted effort to get people out of harm's way since the 2007 flood. And with the dam not slated to be built on the absolute most optimistic timeline, by 2042, that's another 17 years, or 35 years total since 2007, that Lewis County and the cities could have been elevating/floodproofing/relocating. The myopic focus on the dam has come at the expense of many years of potential progress on proven solutions.

Yesterday I received an update from the Office of the Chehalis Basin, which included this statement: We look forward to continuing to build a safer, more resilient Basin in the year to come. I do too, but a dam is NOT the solution.

A hugely expensive dam that nobody knows how to pay for, nobody has agreed to own, operate or maintain, or accept liability for -- is not the answer!