

Jake Van Noppen

I feel that building dams in this current age with all the science that shows how detrimental these structures are to fish passage is a waste of time and simply a bad band aid to a bigger problem. I oppose the the plan to construct a large dam on the upper Chehalis River. The proposed footprint of the reservoir will impair spawning habitat for reduce survival rates of salmon and steelhead creating a warm water reservoir. The only action we can do to help these fish in the current state is provide more suitable habitat for fish to spawn and freely migrate without the implement of unnecessary dam's. The site for the proposed dam sits directly on the highest spawning densities for salmon and steelhead, it has also been identified as key rearing habitat for these fish. Another key issue is maintains and improving fish diversity which currently is being achieved on the Chehalis river without outside influence. By placing a dam on the Chehalis river you would be cutting of possible genetic diversification from happening by having two distinct groups above and below the dam. As stated in the DEIS, the proposed dam would have irreparable impacts on all Viable Salmonid Population parameters for steelhead and salmon abundance, productivity, spatial structure and diversity. The dam is also 45% wider causing an increase to 824 acres and 6 miles of habitat lost for salmon and steelhead. The goal of this proposed dam is only to slowly release water during potential floods merely reducing the impact for downstream communities. Is the cost and loss of diversity and habitat worth it to this already struggling species? I think not it's time to explore other options for fixing the flooding problem instead of just putting up another dead beat dam, It's time to do better and explore more sustainable options. This would include sitting all affected parties down and coming up with a solution that benefits everyone.