

Jane Nicolai

This dam proposal is a boondoggle that has been dangled over the Chehalis River for more than a decade. It will not protect the area from floods and will do more harm to the existing forest, river, riparian zone, and all that rely on that area than its effectiveness at preventing flooding.

Heavy logging in the Willapa Hills has destroyed the forest matrix that absorbs rainwater and snowmelt. More water and faster coursing waters from this denuded terrain causes erosion and flooding.

Farmland and settlements have taken the place of ecologically diverse riparian zones, which if left in place, would contribute to the health of other aquatic ecosystems by filtering out pollutants and preventing erosion.

The cities of Chehalis and Centralia are built in a flood plain. A dam is not going to reverse the environmental damage that has been permitted and which has exacerbated flooding in the area or move the cities from their ill-chosen locations.

A dam will be costly, and destructive, and not provide the assurance its promoters describe.

Enlist biologists, hydrologists, and environmentalists (Wild Salmon Center is a good place to start) and a family of beavers for a fraction of the cost of a dam. Enrich the whole area with a healthy management of forests, rewild and restore habitat, and take conscientious care of the gifts of nature that you have.

Resist big businesses seductive promise that seeks money, brings destruction, and proves ineffective in the long run.