



South Sound Fly Fishers
P.O. Box 2792, Olympia, WA 98507
Est. 1965

Monday, February 2, 2026

Bobbak Talebi, Director
Southwest Region Office
Washington State Department of Ecology
300 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, WA 98503
Bobbak.talebi@ecy.wa.gov

Dear Director Talebi,

On behalf of the South Sound Fly Fishers Club (SSFF), and in accordance with our bylaws to assist the State of Washington and the Federal Government in the conservation and propagation of natural resources, I am writing to formally express our strong opposition to the proposed dam on the Chehalis River.

Established in 1965, the South Sound Fly Fishers Club has over sixty years of continuous involvement in conservation, education, and stewardship efforts throughout Washington State. Our organization currently represents more than 100 members who are deeply invested in the long-term health of the Chehalis River and its fisheries.

The proposed project poses an unacceptable risk to the river's ecosystem and its wild fish populations. Construction and operation of the dam would result in significant and irreversible impacts to already vulnerable populations of spring and fall-run Chinook Salmon, Coho Salmon, and steelhead. Habitat degradation and reduced fish passage survival would be devastating to these species.

Additionally, the project would negatively affect water quality, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities both upstream and downstream. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) itself acknowledges catastrophic ecological impacts consistent with damage observed in other dammed river systems. The dam would further exacerbate existing river temperature issues, undermining critical restoration progress that has already been achieved.

Beyond these environmental consequences, the proposed dam would cause long-term harm to summer stream flows and downstream water rights, extending as far as Grays Harbor. These impacts would be permanent and detrimental.

We strongly believe that a dam is neither the most effective nor the most responsible approach to flood management in the Chehalis Basin. Proven alternatives exist, including relocating vulnerable infrastructure, restoring natural floodplains, and addressing harmful forest practices in the upper basin.

Meaningful development reforms that respect the river's natural processes are essential to protecting both the environment and our communities. For these reasons, we urge the Department of Ecology to reject this proposal and to pursue solutions that ensure the long-term health and vitality of the Chehalis River for future generations.

Sincerely,

Bruce Lincoln
President
South Sound Fly Fishers

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Lincoln". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "B" at the beginning.

cc: SSFF Board of Directors