

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

IN THE MATTER OF:

RESOLUTION NO. 21-046

CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR A BASIN-WIDE
SOLUTION TO FLOODING AND AQUATIC SPECIES
RESTORATION

WHEREAS, the Chehalis Basin, the second-largest watershed in Washington State, suffers from the dual problems of catastrophic flooding and significant degradation of aquatic species; and

WHEREAS, the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority ("Flood Authority") is comprised of local government representatives from communities across the Basin, including Lewis County, Thurston County, Grays Harbor County, the town of Pe Ell and the cities of Centralia, Chehalis, Napavine, Hoquiam, Aberdeen, Cosmopolis, Montesano, Oakville and Bucoda; and

WHEREAS, all of the communities are negatively affected by periodic Chehalis River flooding in the Basin, the largest source of which originates from the mainstem Chehalis River above Pe Ell; and

WHEREAS, Lewis County continues to support efforts to protect our families and communities from the catastrophic floods that hit our Basin, and Lewis County also continues to support aggressive habitat restoration projects to turn our declining fishery into a vibrant fishery; and

WHEREAS, the Chehalis Basin strategy includes the Aberdeen-Hoquiam North Shore and West Segment of the North Shore levee, continued development of local flood and fish projects, a basin-wide aquatic species restoration plan, and a potential flood storage facility that would retain 65,000 acre-feet of flood water during catastrophic storms, thereby decreasing peak flood levels from Pe Ell to Cosmopolis; and

WHEREAS, the Flood Authority stated its support for the Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District's proposed Chehalis River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Project through the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process on April 21, 2020, noting that the institutional governance capacity existed in the Basin to identify and implement sufficient "technically feasible and economically practicable" mitigation as required (the "Final CRBFA Letter re DEIS 4-21-2020" can be found in the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority's online library at https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1492/37643/local_resolutions.aspx); and

WHEREAS, the Flood Authority again stated its support for the Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District's proposed Chehalis River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Project through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process on November 13, 2020, noting that the District's project, if considered at a Basin-wide scale along with other local flood damage reduction and habitat restoration measures, would substantially benefit aquatic species and people, property and livelihoods (the "CRBFA Letter Re NEPA DEIS 11-13-2020" can be found in the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority's online library at https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1492/37643/local_resolutions.aspx); and

WHEREAS, in the NEPA Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) process, the US Army Corps of Engineers reviewed 61 different alternatives for reducing catastrophic flood damage and found that only those alternatives that included a proposed water retention facility met the objective of flood damage reduction to a level sufficient to proceed to full DEIS-level analysis, a view consistently held by the Flood Authority as part of its long-standing support for balanced, Basin-wide solutions to address flooding and aquatic species restoration in the Basin; and

WHEREAS, the state Department of Ecology's DEIS, as well the US Army Corps of Engineers' DEIS, show the District's proposed Chehalis River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Project would deliver significant reductions in catastrophic levels of flooding for Basin communities and also would provide substantial reductions in impact and flood inundation for thousands of structures, including homes, schools, churches, small businesses, state highways and Interstate 5, provided that adverse impacts, however negligible, are acceptably mitigated; and

WHEREAS, the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority, the Office of Chehalis Basin, the Chehalis Basin Board, the Chehalis Basin Flood Control Zone District and the Chehalis Basin Strategy together provide a well-structured governance and funding framework that has delivered much positive "flood" and "fish" benefit to the Basin since the catastrophic floods of 2007 and 2009; and

WHEREAS, this framework is essential to obtaining valued input and participation from tribal partners, who have committed to working within this framework to find solutions that benefit fish as well as all people; and

WHEREAS, these are challenging times with financial resources and capacities stretched thin as a result of the global pandemic.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Lewis County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) offers its continued support of the integrated processes and actions outlined above of the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority, Office of Chehalis Basin, Chehalis Basin Board, Chehalis Basin Flood Control Zone District, and Chehalis Basin Strategy as the best way to continue to efficiently deliver the most beneficial combination of flood hazard reduction and aquatic species restoration all Basin citizens, stakeholders, and "flood" and "fish" interests deserve.

DONE IN OPEN SESSION this 1st day of February, 2021.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
Jonathan Meyer, Prosecuting Attorney

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEWIS COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Eric Eisenberg
By: Eric Eisenberg,
Chief Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

Gary Stamper
Gary Stamper, Chair

ATTEST:



Lindsey R. Pollock, DVM
Lindsey R. Pollock, DVM, Vice Chair

Rieva Lester
Rieva Lester,
Clerk of the Lewis County Board of
County Commissioners

Sean D. Swope
Sean D. Swope, Commissioner

BOCC AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Resolution:

BOCC Meeting Date: Feb. 1, 2021

Suggested Wording for Agenda Item:

Agenda Type: Deliberation

Continuing support for a basin-wide solution to flooding and aquatic species restoration

Contact: Rieva Lester

Phone:

Department: BOCC - Board of County Commissioners

Description:

Continuing support for a basin-wide solution to flooding and aquatic species restoration

Approvals:

Publication Requirements:

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