

Chehalis Basin Strategy

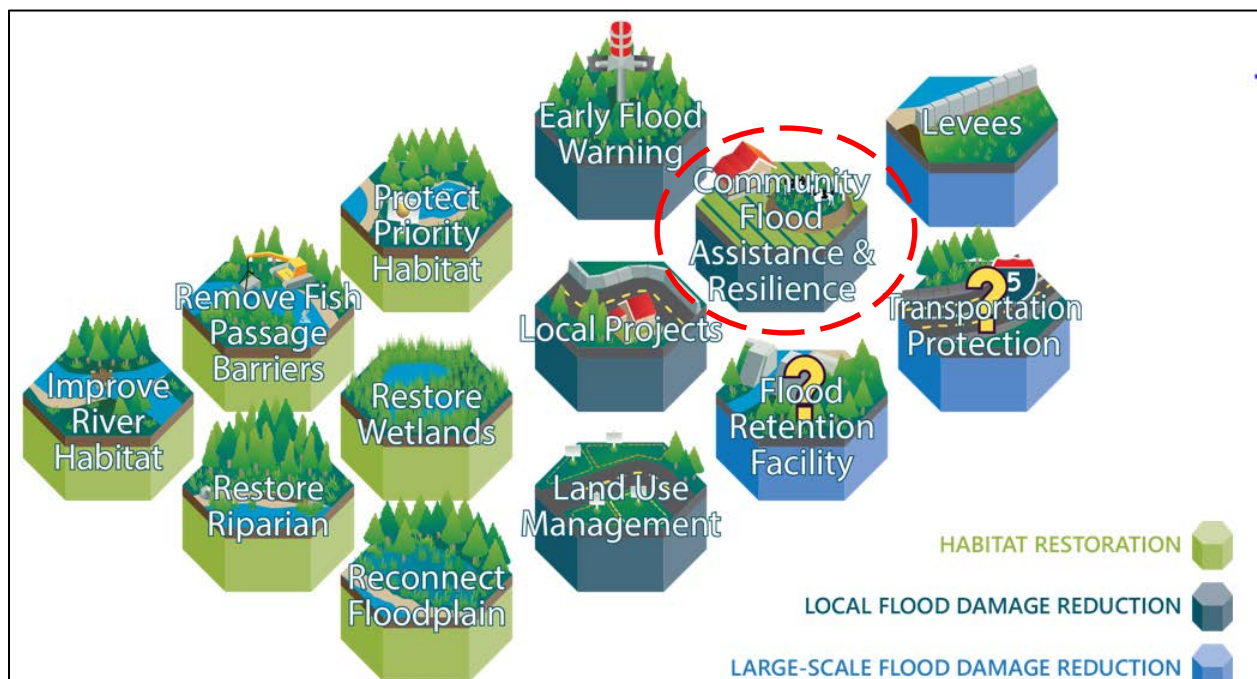
The [Chehalis Basin Strategy](#) is a collection of potential actions to improve and restore river habitat and reduce flood damage. Success requires a basin-wide strategy that includes near-term and long-term actions, as well as local and large-scale actions. The long-term goal of the Strategy is to integrate these actions to most effectively and efficiently make the basin a safer place for families and communities impacted by flooding, and to improve and restore aquatic species habitat now and for future generations.

The approach to reduce flood damage will require a combination of large- and local-scale actions. Local-scale actions may include acquisitions, structure retrofits (e.g., structure elevation, flood vent openings, etc.), local flood damage reduction projects, land use management, utilization of updated regulatory flood data, use of the Chehalis Basin Flood Warning System, and more. Local-scale actions need to work in concert with implementation of large-scale actions, as well as basin-wide efforts to restore aquatic species habitat. Local-scale actions will be needed both in areas affected by large-scale flood actions, and areas not protected or affected by large-scale actions.

Community Flood Assistance and Resilience (CFAR) program

The Community Flood Assistance and Resilience (CFAR) program is envisioned as a basin-wide program to address property damage from flooding (inundation) and erosion hazards from channel migration. It is anticipated CFAR will include local-scale actions like acquisitions, structure retrofits, and projects that may help landowners understand and address escalating flood insurance premiums.

Chehalis Basin Strategy Elements Under Consideration



Draft Goals for the CFAR Program

1. Provide technical and financial assistance to local communities and landowners to protect lives and property from river flooding and channel migration.
2. Reduce direct economic damages to property, including buildings and their contents, and associated indirect adverse impacts on people, businesses and communities in the basin.
3. Encourage compatible human uses, economic activities, and improved habitat conditions in flood-prone and channel migration areas.
4. Develop criteria to prioritize state investments throughout the basin in a way that considers local government readiness and landowner willingness; potential benefits to areas not otherwise protected by large-scale flood damage reduction elements of the strategy; and consistency with ecosystem restoration goals in the Aquatic Species Restoration Plan.
5. Undertake activities in a coordinated, cost-effective and environmentally-sensitive manner.

Development of the CFAR Program

[Office of Chehalis Basin](#) (OCB) will coordinate with Basin local government planners, building officials and emergency managers to understand the needs, priorities and capacity to implement the types of actions described above. Input from the [Chehalis Basin Board](#) suggested an efficient way to connect with local governments would be through the [Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority](#). OCB will also be engaging tribal staff and community members. To date, OCB has introduced staff from Grays Harbor County, Aberdeen, Hoquiam, and Elma to the purpose and potential actions of the CFAR program. We will be seeking to schedule initial outreach conversations for July and August, in coordination with French & Associates, with staff from Bucoda, Oakville, Lewis County, Pe Ell, Chehalis, and Centralia.

Our goal is to implement some on the ground, early opportunity actions in summer/early fall 2019, and to develop a framework for the overall program for Board consideration by summer/early fall 2020. Recommendations on the overall program will be considered by and incorporated into the Chehalis Basin Board's recommendation on the long-term strategy, scheduled for late fall/early winter 2020.

More Information

[September 2018 staff memorandum to Chehalis Basin Board](#) outlining recommended approach for developing CFAR program.

[March 2019 presentation to Chehalis Basin Board](#) outlining progress and example policy considerations for CFAR program.

[June 2019 presentation to Chehalis Basin Board](#) outlining history of potential CFAR program actions and example case studies.

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