



January 16, 2024

TO: Flood Authority Members
FROM: Jen McAdoo, Staff
SUBJECT: Flood Warning System Updates

The following will be discussed at Thursday's Flood Authority meeting. Please feel free to contact me (jennifer.mcadoo@icf.com) with questions.

Background

The Chehalis River Basin Flood Warning System is **actively managed**, always with the goal in mind of delivering accurate, timely, and useful flood warning information. Toward that end, the following provides an update on recent Flood Warning System activities.

Recent Flood Warning System Activities

1. **Gage Alert Sign-Ups** -- Each year before the start of flood season, the cache of existing subscriptions for the Flood Warning System's Gage Alert Program is cleared and a campaign is launched to renew and add new sign-ups. For 2022-23 flood season, there were a total of 2,542 gage alert sign-ups. For the 2023-24 flood season to date, sign-ups are up to 3,930! This has surpassed the stretch goal set for the 2023-24 flood season of 3,500 sign-ups. Accordingly, a new stretch goal of 4,000 sign-ups has been set. As of 1/16/2024, we are 70 sign-ups away from reaching the 4,000 goal!



2. **Skookumchuck Reservoir Gage** -- At the Flood Authority's 11/16/2023 meeting, the Flood Authority authorized staff to move forward to the Chehalis Basin Board (CBB) as described [here](#) to replace the Skookumchuck Reservoir gage with a new Flood Authority owned gage. On 12/07/2023, the CBB authorized moving forward to replace the gage contingent on approval by TransAlta. On 1/14/2024 Flood Authority advanced a DRAFT access and maintenance agreement to TransAlta at their request and following several productive meetings and site visits. Optimistically, following TransAlta legal and risk management review, a new Flood Authority gage could be installed and up and running by the end of February 2024 (still in time for the remainder of 2023-24 flood season).

3. **China Creek FCS (Flood Control Structure) Gage** -- On 12/05/2023, City of Centralia Council member Max Vogt notified the Flood Authority that the China Creek FCS Gage's reporting cycle of once per hour was inadequate for how fast China Creek rises (China Creek is a very flashy system). WEST came up with a solution to move China Creek FCS gage reporting to cellular reporting thus enabling a reporting interval of once per 15 minutes. On January 9, 2024, WEST informed the Flood Authority that the China Creek FCS gage is now fully and formally reporting every 15 minutes to both the Flood Warning System website as well the National Weather Service. See [here](#).
4. **Chronicle News Article on Flood Warning System** -- On 12/01/2024, the Chronicle reported on the success of the Flood Warning System as part of their regular series covering the elements and success of the Chehalis Basin strategy. See [here](#).
5. **Gage Group Meeting** -- The Flood Authority's informal Gages Group is scheduled to meet 2/02/2024. The group tends to meet one or two times per year, depending on topics to cover. The group is comprised of representatives from USGS, NWS, Ecology, Thurston County, Lewis County, Grays Harbor County, City of Centralia, City of Aberdeen, and local public works, roads, and emergency management departments. The upcoming 2/02/2024 meeting will focus on reviewing the 2023 Basin Gage Plan, the NWS's efforts regarding Skookumchuck and lower basin river forecasts, and other recent Flood Warning System updates and activities.