



"Public Input Needed on Flood Damage Reduction Proposals"

December 2007 and January 2009 brought epic floods to our Chehalis River watershed. Communities throughout the Basin were impacted significantly, many forever. Floods of the scale experienced in 2007 and 2009, do permanent and lasting damage. Floods damage infrastructure. Floods damage homes, schools, communities and families. Floods destroy jobs and businesses. Floods also sear indelible memories into those of us who've experienced them, memories we do not want to repeat.

We do have floods, however. It rains in Washington and rains a lot. We will have big floods again. We know this. As Chair of the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority and member of the Governor's Chehalis Basin Work Group I can tell you we are better prepared than we were in 2007 and 2009, much better prepared.

- We have a state of the art basin-wide flood warning system to provide ample warning and allow the public to follow events on the web (see www.chehalisriverflood.com).
- We have completed (or will soon complete in time for this winter's flood season) many local projects that provide real flood mitigation now and protect infrastructure, jobs and our communities. We have completed projects in Adna, Bucoda, Chehalis, Montesano, Pe Ell, and Grays Harbor, Lewis and Thurston counties.
- We are developing a comprehensive restoration plan for salmon and other aquatic species in the Basin and will be recommending next steps to the Governor and Legislature.
- We are also evaluating the long-term approach and immediate next steps to reduce flood damage. By the end of the year we will make recommendation to the Governor and Legislature on whether to proceed with a dam in the upper Basin above Pe Ell, additional protection for Interstate 5 and the amount of funding for protecting homes and businesses in the Chehalis floodplain.
- We strive for transparency in all that we do knowing it is best for all and regularly update our website (www.ezview.wa.gov/chehalisfloodauthority) with project updates, construction photos, decisions, announcements and more.

I know many in the Basin are frustrated by the slow progress on mitigating flooding. That is understandable as the issues are complex, they are expensive, they do take time and to be meaningful they must be broadly embraced. This is hard, slow work. That being said we are at a critical juncture and need your help and involvement.

We have two important upcoming public meetings that will be instrumental in setting the stage for flood hazard reduction and aquatic species restoration throughout the Basin for years to come. Mark your calendars and plan to attend. We need to hear from you. Meetings will be:

- **October 1, 2014, 6 to 8 p.m., Veterans Memorial Museum (100 SW Veterans Way; Chehalis, WA; 98532).**
- **October 2, 2014, 6 to 8 p.m., Aberdeen City Hall (200 E Market Street; Aberdeen, WA; 98520).**

Thank you for the opportunity to share my sense of progress and hope for the future. I am hopeful and know the work we've done and the progress we've made will help to ensure we don't have a repeat of 2007 and 2009.