

Chehalis Basinwide GI Study

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers– General Investigation Study for Chehalis Basin Watershed

Updated May 12, 2011

Study name(s):

- Official name: Chehalis River Basin Ecosystem Restoration Study
- Also known as: Chehalis Basinwide General Investigation, Chehalis Basin GI, Chehalis River Basin Ecosystem Restoration Project

Key Parties for Chehalis Basinwide GI Study:

- Federal: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District Office
- Local Sponsor: Grays Harbor County (note: State of Washington has been requested to become local sponsor; decision pending outcome of 2011 legislative session)

Scope for Chehalis Basinwide GI: entire Chehalis River Basin

Timeframe and funding for Chehalis Basinwide GI Study:

Sept. 29, 1999: Congress authorizes General Investigation Study under Public Law 106-60. \$100,000 appropriated in FY 2000 for Reconnaissance Study.

Nov./ Dec, 2000: Chehalis River Basin 905(b) Reconnaissance Study issued. (See <http://www.nws.usace.army.mil/ERS/reposit/Chehalis905bFinal.pdf>). Corps identifies federal interest in feasibility study for two purposes: ecosystem restoration and flood damage reduction of the Chehalis River Basin.

- Problem areas found by 905(b) study:
 - Need for flood control on basin wide/sub-watershed level
 - Degraded ecosystem functions and processes necessary to support flood control, water quality, and fish/wildlife habitat through the basin
- Types of restoration/flood damage reduction actions listed in report:
 - Basin-wide flood warning notification system
 - Construction of bypass channels
 - Upstream storage
 - Protecting of existing municipal infrastructure
 - Dredging of waterways
 - Fish & wildlife habitat restoration
 - Streambank stabilization
 - Land use modifications (buyouts, easements, fencing stream corridors)
 - Assessment of instream structures (culverts, bridges)
 - Water quality improvements
 - Floodway modifications
 - Structural modifications
 - Replacement or placement of structures to alleviate flooding

Sept. 2001

- Cost sharing agreement signed w/ Grays Harbor County, Corp for ecosystem only
- Project Management Plan developed and signed; study began (see http://www.co.grays-harbor.wa.us/info/pub_svcs/Lead_Entity/library/chehalis_project_management_plan.pdf)
- Anticipated timeline: Oct. 2001- Dec. 2005 (est. cost \$5 million)

2001-2009:

- No federal funding appropriated for GI study until 2009
- Chehalis Basin Partnership invests approximately \$1 million in water quality/quantity studies with funding from state salmon restoration funds

2009:

- Congress appropriated **\$574,000** based on a request from Senator Murray and Representatives Dicks and Baird for a basin-wide approach to ecosystem restoration, flood damage reduction, water retention, and watershed management in the Chehalis River Basin Study.

2010:

- Congress appropriated **\$672,000** per request from Murray, Dicks, Baird.
- During the fall, the Chehalis Basin Flood Authority and the Chehalis Basin Partnership both requested that the State of Washington become the local sponsor for the Basinwide General Investigation, broaden the scope to include both ecosystem restoration and flood damage reduction, and include two “without” project conditions: one assuming that the Twin Cities project would be built, and one assuming that it would not. This request is still pending, in part waiting on the outcome of the 2011 Legislative session.

2011:

- Corps staff pursuing hydraulic modeling that extends from the Lewis County line to Grays Harbor under the Basinwide GI. A scope of work for approximately \$300-400,000 has been circulated and may have been signed by Grays Harbor County to obligate these funds and hire West Consulting to do this work.

Summary of recent funding

<p>FY09 Omnibus Appropriations bill (Energy and Water Appropriations section) Source: Public Law 111-8 Link to conference report</p>	<p>Corps of Engineers Investigations CHEHALIS RIVER BASIN, WA \$574,000 Requested by: Murray, Baird, Dicks From Sen. Patty Murray's 2008 press release: <i>This funding will go to a study of the largest river basin in Washington state, will evaluate options for restoration of wetlands and riparian habitats and will provide flood risk management in a watershed that has been severely damaged by last year's flooding. The President did not request any funding for this project.</i></p>
<p>FY10 Energy and Water Appropriations bill Source: Public Law 111-85 Link to conference report</p>	<p>Corps of Engineers Investigations CHEHALIS RIVER BASIN, WA \$672,000 Requested by: Murray, Baird, Dicks From Sen. Patty Murray's FY10 request list: <i>Funding would allow the Army Corps of Engineers to continue studying measures to reduce flood risks and restore the ecosystem throughout the Chehalis River Basin</i></p>
<p>FY 11- ??</p>	