

## Beyond “Fish and Flood” and “Aggressively Pursue an Integrated Long-term Strategy”

Homework  
Due: 2/17/23 at Noon

### Context

Thank you for the robust discussion at your February Board meeting. As we discussed, I have heard the above phrases used as shorthand descriptors for your charge. As we start preparing for the final strategy negotiations, it is time to better define what those words mean on the ground so you can enter that phase with a clearer consensus about what success looks like. I appreciate the devil will be in the final details, but your actions from this point forward will benefit from more clarity. If you don't do it now, it will be harder down the road when words are often used more positionally.

This clarity is also essential to guide your discussions and decisions until the formal negotiations start. For example, when I ask you in the near future to agree now on the information you will need to make the best decision later, I will suggest the discussions be filtered through the lenses of your Umbrella Question.

For homework purposes, I did some editing to the February meeting drafts (Appendix A) for flow and identification of key areas for further refinement. I did not include the legislative concepts. I have highlighted them below for ease of your review. Please consider their possible inclusion for clarity and fidelity.

### **RCW 43.21A.730, Office of Chehalis Basin**

(1) The office of Chehalis basin is established in the department. The primary purpose of the office is to aggressively pursue **implementation** of an integrated strategy and **administer funding** for long-term flood damage reduction and aquatic species restoration in the Chehalis river basin.

(2) The office of Chehalis basin **must be funded from appropriations specified for Chehalis river basin**-related flood hazard reduction and habitat recovery activities.

(3) In operating the office, the department must follow, to the greatest extent practicable, the **model being used to administer the Columbia river basin water supply program** established in chapter 6, Laws of 2006. [ **2016 c 194 § 1.**]

### **RCW 43.21A.732, Chehalis Basin Strategy**

The Chehalis basin strategy must include a **detailed set of actions** to reduce flood damage and improve aquatic species habitat. The strategy must

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be amended by the Chehalis board as necessary to include new scientific information and needed changes to the actions to achieve the overall purpose of the strategy. The strategy must include an implementation schedule and quantified measures for evaluating the success of implementation. [ 2016 c 194 § 3.]

### RCW 43.21A.731, Chehalis Board

(1) The Chehalis board is created consisting of seven voting members.

...

(5) The board is responsible for oversight of a long-term strategy resulting from the department's programmatic environmental impact statement for the Chehalis river basin to reduce flood damages and restore aquatic species habitat.

(6) The board is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the strategy and developing biennial and supplemental budget recommendations to the governor.

[ 2020 c 17 § 1; 2017 c 27 § 1; 2016 c 194 § 2.]

Additionally, I did not add concepts from the Columbia River Partnership. Do you want to “borrow” any of their concepts? <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/vision-salmon-and-steelhead-goals-restore-thriving-salmon-and-steelhead-columbia-river-basin>. Here are some possible examples.

### Vision for the Columbia Basin

The Partnership shaped a powerful Vision as a call for action:

A healthy Columbia Basin ecosystem with thriving salmon and steelhead that are indicators of clean and abundant water, reliable and clean energy, a robust regional economy, and vibrant cultural and spiritual traditions, all interdependent and existing in harmony.

### Qualitative Goals

The Qualitative Goals capture different social, cultural, economic, and ecological values and describe desired outcomes throughout the Columbia Basin. The Goals call to:

1. Restore salmon and steelhead in the Columbia Basin to healthy and harvestable/fishable levels.

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2. Provide diverse, productive, and dependable tribal and non-tribal harvest and fishing opportunities for Columbia Basin salmon and steelhead in fresh and marine waters.
3. Produce hatchery salmon and steelhead to support conservation, mitigate for lost natural production, and support fisheries, in a manner that strategically aligns hatchery production with natural production recovery goals.
4. Make decisions within a broader context that reflects and considers effects to the full range of social, cultural, economic, and ecosystem values and diversity in the Columbia Basin.

Together the Goals recognize a sense of urgency to help Columbia Basin salmon and steelhead now and well into the future.

Finally, I sense potential tension surrounding the following questions. Please consider addressing them in your proposed edits.

- a. “When avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating impacts, are we looking at those legally required or are we going beyond those given climate change.
- b. What if the impacts are not within our practical or jurisdictional control?” I suggest these be addressed in your next draft.

At your March meeting, we will complete your working draft as a group. Recognizing the umbrella question will evolve over time, I suggest it be part of each presentation, especially external ones, going forward so everyone genuinely appreciates what is needed to get to a resolution that has evaded the Basin over the decades. We will also discuss how to get input from your partners, constituents, and the public in order to increase the chances of broad support for your recommendations.

### The Assignment

*Here is the suggested version for you to track-change edit. If you are not familiar with “track-changes,” just type it out the way you want it to read, and my team will convert it... for one devil dog... no negotiating... operators are standing by! Either way, we will combine and synthesize your collective input and send it to you beforehand so we can jumpstart your discussions during the March meeting.*

**Recognizing** the clear urgency to take effective, integrated actions that are timely, practical, politically viable, and cost beneficial;

**How can we** work with and incentivize basin residents and partners to voluntarily restore and protect native aquatic species and natural habitat, enhance tribal and non-tribal harvest levels [or: support self-sustaining, abundant, harvestable fish populations throughout their historic ranges, or

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combo of the two], and protect cultural resources in the face of climate change (add: flood and drought?) and population growth;

**While at the same time** significantly prevent, reduce, and minimize basin-wide flood damage to human, aquatic species, and natural infrastructure from a changing climate, before the next catastrophic event;

**Thereby** creating an equitable, balanced, and sustainable long-term strategy that supports the net (gain or benefit?) [recognition of personal, socioeconomic toll on people/communities] for all those who live, work, and recreate in the Chehalis Basin while simultaneously avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating any associated negative consequences to aquatic species and flood protection?

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### APPENDIX

#### Facilitator’s Draft at Start of 2/2/23 Board Meeting

**Facilitator’s Note:** The following draft came from my Assessment, and it was presented simply as an example of what umbrella questions can look like to kickstart the discussion.

**How can we** restore and improve native aquatic species and natural habitat, support tribal and non-tribal harvest levels, and protect cultural resources;

**While at the same time** significantly prevent and reduce flood damage;

**Thereby** creating a balanced and sustainable long-term strategy that supports the interests of all those who live, work, and recreate in the Chehalis Basin while simultaneously avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating any associated negative consequences?

#### Status at End of Board Meeting

**Facilitator’s Note:** This version captures your February brainstorming session.

**How can we** work with and incentivize basin residents and partners to voluntarily restore and improve-protect native aquatic species and natural habitat, support tribal and enhance tribal and non-tribal harvest levels for: support self-sustaining, abundant, harvestable fish populations throughout their historic ranges, and protect cultural resources in the face of a changing climate and population growth

**While at the same time** significantly prevent, and reduce, and minimize basin-wide flood and drought damage-flood damage from a changing climate to human and natural infrastructure, before the next catastrophic event

[sense of urgency – from fish, flood, and funding perspective]

**Thereby** creating a balanced, and sustainable, and implementable long-term strategy that supports the net-interests [recognition of personal, socioeconomic toll on people/communities] of all those who live, work, and recreate in the Chehalis Basin while simultaneously avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating any associated negative consequences as seen through the eyes of ASRP SC for aquatic species and as seen through eyes of FA for flood damage?

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**Commented [KG1]:** Look to CBP goals

**Commented [SI2R1]:** The RCW does refer to the Office of Columbia River but the specific comment made during the Board meeting was referring to the Columbia Basin Partnership’s work to define “abundant” fish populations. See, below.

**Commented [KG3]:** How do you know when you’ve achieved abundant, harvestable levels with climate change? Do we have to do more because of climate change and pop growth?

**Commented [KG4]:** Does this belong here or with fish statement?

**Commented [KG5]:** Practical, legal, fundable, politically viable, etc

**Commented [KG6]:** Net-gain or net-benefit for both fish and flood

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Above Draft “Cleaned Up” for Readability Purposes

**Facilitator’s Note:** *This version is cleaned up for ease of your review.*

**How can we** work with and incentivize basin residents and partners to voluntarily restore and protect native aquatic species and natural habitat, enhance tribal and non-tribal harvest levels [or: support self-sustaining, abundant, harvestable fish populations throughout their historic ranges], and protect cultural resources in the face of a changing climate and population growth;

**While at the same time** significantly prevent, reduce, and minimize basin-wide flood and drought damage from a changing climate to human and natural infrastructure, before the next catastrophic event[sense of urgency – from fish, flood, and funding perspective];

**Thereby** creating a balanced, sustainable, and implementable long-term strategy that supports the net-interests [recognition of personal, socioeconomic toll on people/communities] of all those who live, work, and recreate in the Chehalis Basin while simultaneously avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating any associated negative consequences as seen through the eyes of ASRP SC for aquatic species and as seen through eyes of FA for flood damage?