



The Chehalis Basin Strategy: What We Accomplished Together in 2021

New projects and progress making
an impact in the Chehalis Basin

The Chehalis Basin Strategy was launched in 2010 to meet two of the Chehalis Basin's greatest challenges—reversing the decline of salmon and other aquatic species, and protecting communities from catastrophic flood damage.

The Chehalis Basin Strategy is at work *now* and already delivering results for Basin communities, economies, and ecosystems.

Since 2012, nearly \$100 million has been invested across more than 100 projects that benefit both people and aquatic species.



Chehalis River

“The Chehalis Basin is an important place — home to distinct communities, vital commercial and tribal fishing and shellfishing industries, productive timberlands, significant agricultural production, and the I-5 key commercial corridor. Meeting the twin goals of reducing flood damage and restoring aquatic species is vital to the Basin’s future. I appreciate the hard work of the board to create a shared path forward. **The Chehalis Basin Strategy is a priority for Washington State, and I am deeply invested in its continued success.**”

— Washington Governor Jay Inslee, August 2021

By the Numbers

100+

On-the-ground projects completed or underway today in the Chehalis Basin

37

Flood damage reduction projects completed between 2017 and 2021

66

Aquatic species restoration projects completed between 2017 and 2021

12,700

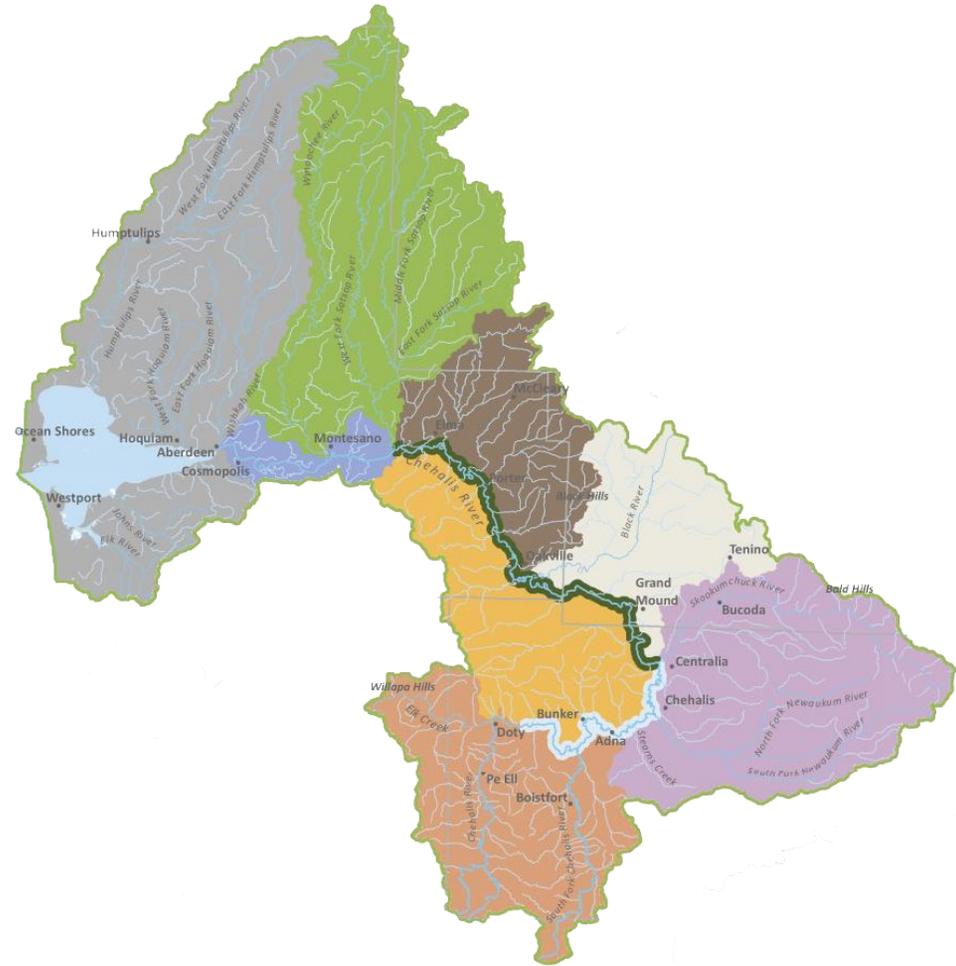
Feet of river shoreline re-vegetated in 2021

288

Acres treated for invasive plants in 2021

45

Property owners consulted in 2021 to lower flood insurance premiums and protect homes from flood damage



10 ecological zones of the Chehalis River Basin



Vegetation management on the Satsop River



Oregon spotted frog

What's Happening on the Ground

The Chehalis Basin Strategy works on all scales to restore aquatic species habitat and protect communities from flood damage — from helping individual families, to investments that benefit the entire Chehalis Basin.

Read on to learn about some of projects implemented at every scale in 2021.

Residents & Families

- **Aberdeen** | Helping residents and businesses use elevation data to protect buildings from flood damage and lower flood insurance premiums. *Recently*, the Chehalis Basin Strategy helped a business in Aberdeen save \$20,000+ every year in insurance fees!
- **Chehalis Basin homes** | Consulting property owners to help them protect their assets from flood damage, using techniques like floodproofing, vent correction and installation, and elevating homes, and potentially lower their flood insurance rates.
- **Cloquallum Creek** | Protected a resident's home and septic field from rapidly eroding into Cloquallam Creek as a part of a new pilot program to address unnaturally high rates of streambank erosion.



Wynoochee River



Foundation flood openings in a Bucoda home



Satsop River



Wynoochee River

Communities

- **Lower Satsop River** | Monitoring and slowing erosion and improving floodplain connectivity to improve river habitat, reduce flooding to community infrastructure, and lessen damage to important agricultural properties.
- **Aberdeen** | Helping the City of Aberdeen enter the Community Rating System, with a goal to lower flood insurance premiums by 15 percent or more for residents and businesses.
- **Chehalis Basin** | Supported Basin-wide flood safety and preparedness by hosting workshops for Chehalis Basin permit officials and emergency management staff about floodplain regulations and regulating after a disaster.

Ecosystems

- **Skookumchuck River** | Restored 4,700+ feet of shoreline and protected 102 acres of land. Added 24 new engineered log jams and created 24 additional pools in the river to create habitat for salmon and other species.
- **Stillman Creek** | Protected 6,800 feet of shoreline along Stillman and Lost creeks.
- **Satsop River** | Restored natural floodplain processes through the installation of 45 engineered log jams and 43,000 native plants and shrubs along 1 mile of the river.
- **West Fork Chehalis River** | Corrected a fish passage barrier at the Marker 19 oxbow, restoring fish passage to over 7 miles of spawning and rearing habitat as well as restoring access to over 1,500 ft. of stream channel.



China Creek

“Local organizations and restoration practitioners have really pulled together over the past year to get some great habitat projects on the ground and under development with the new funding coming through the Chehalis Basin Strategy’s Aquatic Species Restoration Plan.

As just one example, we’ve completed a barrier correction project in the West Fork Chehalis River and **coho salmon have already been observed spawning upstream for the first time in decades.** Elsewhere in the watershed, the Aquatic Species Restoration Plan’s new “project development funds” are really paying off by helping get both relationships and designs in place so that our partners can do more great work in the years ahead.”

— **Kirsten Harma** | Watershed Coordinator, Chehalis Basin Partnership & Chehalis Basin Lead Entity for Salmon Recovery

Full Chehalis Basin

- **\$70 million** was approved by the Washington State Legislature to distribute equally across habitat and flood damage reduction projects in the Chehalis Basin, from 2021-2023.
- **Met with 130 residents** in spring 2021 through community briefings about the Chehalis Basin Strategy.
- **Upgraded the Flood Warning System** which provides critical safety alerts to Chehalis Basin residents. New improvements included relocating key weather gages and webcams, upgrading the website’s dashboards, and signing up more than 1,300 new users.
- **Scaled up implementation** for Aquatic Species Restoration Plan projects, shifting from planning and early project piloting to completing large on-the-ground projects.
- **Kicked off long-term flood planning efforts** through the newly-established Local Actions Non-Dam Alternative effort.
- **Engaged in important conversations** regarding the proposed flood protection dam, and continued moving forward on final state and federal environmental reviews.

What's Next for the Chehalis Basin?

We're just getting started! After a lot of exciting progress in 2021, we're looking forward to more on-the-ground impact in 2022. Some examples of what's to come include:

Ongoing Projects Continuing in 2022

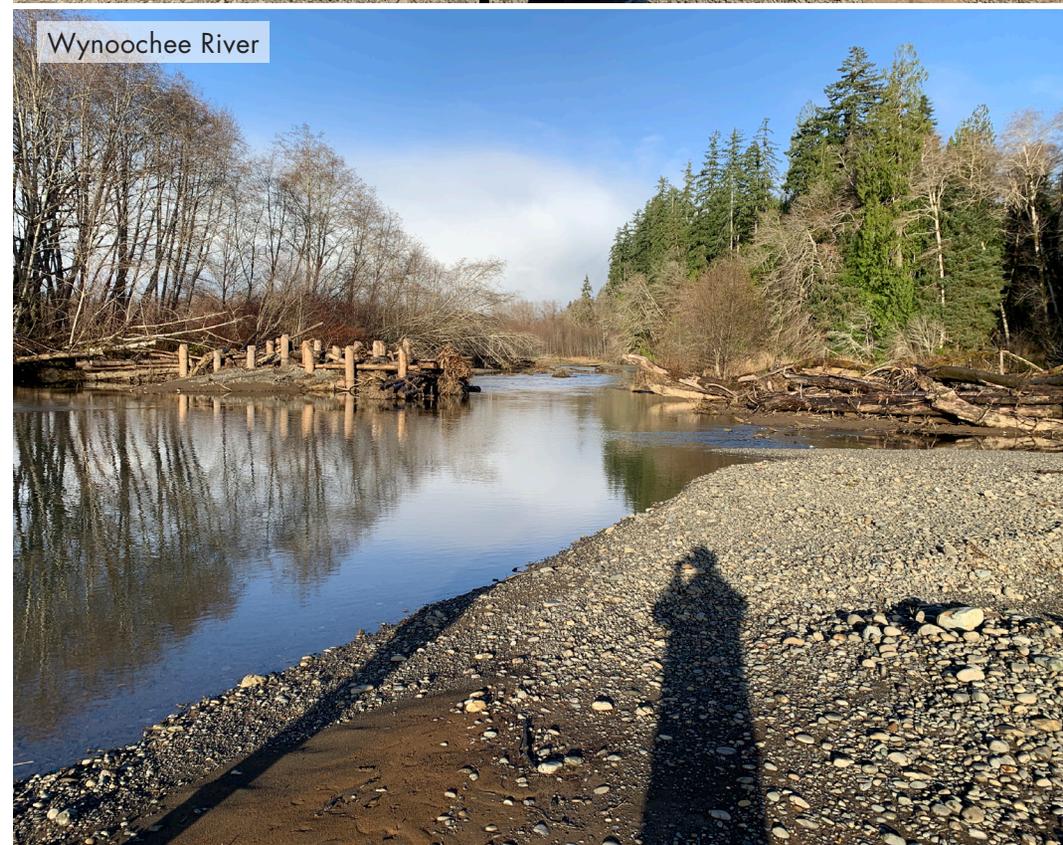
- **Chehalis Basin homes** | Continuing to help homeowners protect their properties from flood damage by implementing home retrofits.
- **Chehalis Basin officials** | Continuing floodplain management training for Chehalis Basin planners, floodplain managers, and emergency managers.
- **China Creek** | Continuing intensive restoration work, including improving aquatic species habitat, planting native plants and shrubs, and slowing down disastrous flooding.

Projects to Be Completed in 2022

- **Satsop & Wynoochee River** | Construction will be completed in 2022, restoring a combined total of 8,000 feet of shoreline.
- **Camp Creek** | This project will replace an undersized tidally influenced partial barrier culvert with an appropriately sized bridge on Camp Creek, a tributary to the Chehalis River in Grays Harbor County.



Crews at the Wynoochee River



Wynoochee River



Coho salmon in the Chehalis River

“The Chehalis Basin Strategy is the right solution to address flooding and fish. Local projects initiated by the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority are the Strategy’s first line of defense. From **a state-of-the-art flood warning system, to disaster-resilient infrastructure improvements**, the Strategy and its Local Projects Program have provided the Chehalis Basin and its residents far greater security than they’ve ever had.”

— **Scott Boettcher** | Lead,
Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority

“This has been a really exciting year for on-the-ground projects in Grays Harbor! A number of multi-year habitat and erosion reduction projects started construction this year and **we are already seeing benefits**; from salmon utilizing engineered log jams to shelter from high flows, to landowners experiencing less extensive flood damage, to our planting crews having renewed confidence that their trees and shrubs have less chance of being eroded away. There is a lot of hard work, learning, and adaptive management ahead of us, but I’m hopeful we can keep making progress on implementing more and more community focused flood damage reduction and habitat projects.”

— **Anthony Waldrop** | Project Manager, Grays
Harbor Conservation District

Projects Beginning in 2022

- **Aberdeen** | Phase 2 of the elevation certificate pilot program will begin in 2022, helping residents and businesses use elevation data to protect buildings from flood damage and lower flood insurance premiums.
- **Newaukum River and Stillman Creek** | Restoration will begin in summer 2022.
- **Cloquallum Creek** | Phase 2 construction to mitigate and enhance habitat characteristics will begin in 2022.
- **Aberdeen and Hoquiam** | Design and engineer three new state-of-the art pumping stations in low lying neighborhoods for construction in 2023.
- **Chehalis Industrial Park** | Design, engineer and permit several flood water evacuation and conveyance improvements for construction in 2023.
- **Aberdeen** | Develop a preferred conceptual design to daylight Fry Creek within the Sumner and Simpson Avenue corridor.
- **Cosmopolis** | Develop a plan to prioritize 4,500 feet of culvert improvements.

Everyone Has a Role to Play

The Chehalis Basin Strategy wouldn't be possible without partnership and working together with folks from all over the Chehalis Basin. Get involved by learning more and signing up for our newsletter to receive updates about projects and engagement opportunities.

Thank you to our core partners!

- Capitol Land Trust
- Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority and local Basin jurisdictions
- Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District
- Chehalis Basin Partnership
- Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation
- Forterra
- Grays Harbor County Conservation District
- Lewis County Conservation District
- Mason County Conservation District
- Quinault Indian Nation
- Thurston County Conservation District
- Washington State Conservation Commission
- Washington State Department of Ecology
- Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Washington State Department of Natural Resources
- Washington State Department of Transportation

We partner with dozens of additional entities across Chehalis Basin Strategy projects and are grateful for their stewardship of the Chehalis Basin.



Flood protection at the Montesano wastewater treatment plant

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