

[Insert Organization's Letter Head]

September 1, 2023

[Author Organization POC]

[Author Organization Name]

[Author Organization Address]

To Whom it May Concern,

The Chehalis Basin Board (CBB) strongly supports Grays Harbor County's grant application for the Damon Creek at Kirkpatrick Road Fish Passage Project to NOAA's Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grants (RFPBRG) under the BIL and IRA, Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-HCPO-2023-2008056.

This project is consistent with the goals of the Chehalis Basin Strategy, which works with landowners to restore habitats for salmon and other aquatic life and prepares the Chehalis Basin region and future generations to be resilient to a changing climate and catastrophic flooding. This project supports the habitat restoration as well as climate resiliency goals of the Chehalis Basin Strategy by improving fish habitat access in a near-term priority implementation area and is designed to meet climate-change induced increased flows.

The RFPBRG prioritizes projects that correct fish passage barriers to sustain fish stocks managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, enhance stability of saltwater recreational fisheries, and enhance community resilience. This will be accomplished by correcting a 33% passable fish passage barrier on Damon Creek, a tributary to the Humptulips River, opening 5.82 miles of excellent upstream habitat to five species of managed salmonids, including Chinook, coho and chum salmon and steelhead and bull trout. The project has been sized to accommodate future climate-related flow increases, protecting the crossing and ensuring future unimpeded fish passage. Additional benefits include improving safety at the Kirkpatrick Road stream crossing, which is the only tsunami evacuation route to communities to the west. It will also improve public safety at the recreational boat launch downstream from the culvert, and will increase fish production to contribute to Quinault Indian Nation net fisheries in Grays Harbor as well as recreational saltwater fisheries in the Harbor and offshore. This project will have direct benefits to the Chehalis Basin Strategy by restoring access to upstream habitats and provides community resilience to climate change.

In summary, the Chehalis Basin Board strongly supports Grays Harbor County's Damon Creek at Kirkpatrick Road Project under the NOAA BFPBRG program. The CBB appreciates your thorough review of this application and looks forward to continuing its close partnership with Grays Harbor County throughout this important project.

Sincerely,

[Wet or digital signature]

[Name, Title]