

CHEHALIS BASIN STRATEGY: 2017-2019 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH PLAN (DRAFT 10/4/17)

1. Goals and Objectives

The overarching goals of the Chehalis Basin Strategy 2017-2019 community engagement and outreach plan are to (1) support the Chehalis Basin Board in the development of a long-term Chehalis Basin Strategy that is supported by the broader Chehalis Basin community and addresses their key values and interests, and (2) build awareness and increase the support among potentially affected community interests and individual landowners to implement elements of the Strategy.

This community engagement and outreach strategy seeks to accomplish the following objectives:

- Identify and address the key values and interests of community members that could be impacted by elements of the Chehalis Basin Strategy
- Develop broad general public awareness of and assess support for the different elements of the Chehalis Basin Strategy
- Develop landowners' awareness of and interest in participating in habitat restoration and flood damage reduction projects
- Raise awareness of and engagement in the development of the Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP) and flood-damage reduction analyses (project-level EIS for a potential dam on the upper Chehalis River, Restorative Flood Protection feasibility analyses, Aberdeen/Hoquiam North-Shore Levee, floodproofing, etc.)
- Ensure community members are provided consistent information about the strategy in general, and habitat restoration and flood damage reduction specifically, from all entities conducting outreach in the basin (Chehalis Basin Board, state agencies, consultants, Conservation Districts, Chehalis Basin Partnership, city and town staff, land trusts, non-governmental organizations, etc.). This includes identifying timeframes associated with needs and actions (short-term versus long term-term, etc.).
- Ensure that feedback and perspectives received from community members and stakeholders are brought back to the Chehalis Basin Board in a consistent and timely manner

2. Considerations for Effective Community Engagement and Outreach

Below is a list of key considerations for effective community engagement and outreach:

- The towns and cities of the basin have their own local identities and perspectives, and trust in neighbors and long-time residents is a shared value. Appealing to this sense of community can be achieved by tapping into a variety of existing networks and local knowledge (e.g., local government, schools, churches, volunteers, etc.) and building relationships with the trusted leaders in different communities – going to where they live, listening to their stories, and respecting their position and perspective.
- Many groups involved in outreach in the basin have frequent contact with ~100 people or more, which makes for a large outreach pool. Reaching out to and utilizing these networks and organizational

structures, and being responsive to their feedback, can increase the effectiveness of broader Chehalis Basin Strategy outreach efforts.

- Public meetings tend to bring out the same people in the community, and are not necessarily effective unless the public has something to say “NO” to. Therefore, having a variety of outreach methods is vital to success (e.g., meetings, website, mass mailings, volunteers, newspapers, social media, postcards, etc.).
- Consistent messaging among groups involved in outreach is necessary to establish credibility. It is important to find ways to synthesize and close the gap of “listening – hearing – sharing” so that when those involved in outreach hear something or are asked a question that they do not know the answer to, the appropriate person is contacted.

3. Major Work Elements Requiring Community Engagement and Outreach

Below is a list of major work elements that require effective community engagement and outreach to support the Chehalis Basin Board’s development of a long-term Chehalis Basin Strategy.

Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP)

Key considerations and decisions for the Chehalis Basin Board

- What are the key interests and values of riverside landowners potentially impacted by the ASRP?
- What incentives or tradeoffs are landowners affected by the ASRP most willing to support?
- What are the key interests and values of the different communities and interest groups potentially affected by the ASRP?
- What is the perceived level of support for the ASRP by landowners and other communities and interest groups?
- What is the ultimate desired result for the protection and restoration of aquatic species?
- What level of investment is necessary to create the greatest potential for achieving the desired results for protection and restoration of aquatic species?
- What is the best way to measure results and progress on work towards protecting and restoring aquatic species?

Key milestones

- November 2017 – release of Draft Phase 1 ASRP
- December 2017 – development of landowner outreach strategy
- Summer 2019 – release of full Draft Phase 2 ASRP

Project-level EIS for Proposed Dam

Key considerations and decisions for the Chehalis Basin Board

- What are the key interests and values, and perceived level of support, of the local residents affected by flooding immediately downstream of the dam?

- What are the key interests and values, and perceived level of support, of the different communities and interest groups potentially affected by the dam?
- What incentives or tradeoffs are communities and interest groups affected by the dam most willing to support?
- Should the Board recommend proceeding to the next stage of permitting for construction of a dam?

Key milestones

- December 2017 – project-level EIS scoping meetings
- Spring/summer 2018 – principles and approach for development of impacts and mitigation plan
- Winter 2018/2019 – impacts and mitigation strategy available for review
- Spring/summer 2019 – release of Draft EIS

Restorative Flood Protection Feasibility Analyses

Key considerations and decisions for the Chehalis Basin Board

- What are the key interests and values of Newaukum sub-basin landowners in the affected area?
- What is the willingness and level of support of Newaukum landowners for RFP actions on their property?
- What incentives or tradeoffs are most appealing to Newaukum landowners, especially agricultural landowners?
- What is the most effective upland landowner compensation/relocation strategy, especially for agricultural landowners?
- What is the perception of the RFP by local communities surrounding, but not directly in the Newaukum sub-basin treatment area?
- What is the perceived level of support for the RFP by other communities and interest groups?
- Should the Board recommend proceeding to preliminary design for the RFP in the Newaukum sub-basin?

Key milestones

- October-December 2017 - targeted landowner outreach in Newaukum sub-basin
- April-June 2018 – development of upland landowner compensation/relocation strategy
- October-December 2018 – Board decides on whether to proceed to preliminary design in Newaukum sub-basin

Floodproofing and Floodplain Management Program

Key considerations and decisions for the Chehalis Basin Board

- What are the key values of residential and business property owners?
- What is the willingness and level of support of residential and business property owners to have their homes and businesses floodproofed?

- What incentives are most appealing to residential and business property owners?
- To what extent are property and business owners willing to contribute financially to floodproofing efforts or measures that would directly benefit them?
- What level of investment should the Chehalis Basin Board propose for a basin-wide floodproofing strategy?
- What are appropriate requirements for local jurisdictions to receive funding for floodproofing projects?

Key milestones

- May 2018 – circulate draft basin-wide floodproofing strategy to Flood Authority and other interested parties
- November 2018 – Chehalis Basin Board approval of basin-wide floodproofing strategy