

MEMORANDUM

Date: August 3, 2021
To: Vickie Raines, Chair, Chehalis Basin Board
From: Andrea McNamara Doyle, OCB Director
cc: Chehalis Basin Board Members
Celina Abercrombie, WDFW
Josh Giuntoli, WSCC
Erik Martin, Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District
Re: Temporary Stop-Gap Funding For Chehalis Basin Strategy Work

Stop-Gap Funding For Chehalis Basin Strategy Work

Based on recent conversations with OCB's partners that are funded with Chehalis Basin Strategy capacity/participation funds, it appears some of those organizations are now at imminent risk of needing to re-assign or let-go staff, or stopping work under existing contracts due to lack of funds. The Board is scheduled to meet next on August 16, which is great news. However, because there is still some uncertainty about when the Board will approve a spending plan for the 2021-23 appropriation, and when new interagency agreements can be executed to distribute the 2021-2023 funds in accordance with a Board-approved spending plan, I am making contingency arrangements to use unobligated 2019-2021 funds between now and the end of September for the limited purposes of avoiding re-assignment or layoff of personnel at the following three agencies:

Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

I am authorizing up to \$400,000 through September, to enable existing WDFW staff to:

- Continue attending Chehalis Basin Board meetings, and as requested by OCB staff, support the Board's continued deliberations related to approving a new 2021-2023 budget and spending plan.
- Continue supporting and participating on the Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP) Steering Committee. ASRP Steering Committee agendas are being prioritized to focus only on advancing planning work, ongoing project work, reviewing/developing 2021-23 budget scenarios proposed by the Chehalis Basin Board, requests from OCB, and associated contingency planning.
- Continue participating, as requested by Ecology and United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), in developing the final SEPA and NEPA EISs for the proposed flood retention facility, and as requested by Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District (FCZD), in providing technical assistance on avoidance, minimization, and mitigation planning.

- Continue supporting and participating on the ASRP Coordination Team. The Coordination Team's agendas and work is currently limited to support of ASRP Steering Committee deliberations and advancing planning work including developing the ASRP Implementation Supplement document.
- Continue implementing monitoring and data gaps studies that were already funded through the 2019-21 budget.
- Continue implementing and managing Early Action Reach projects that were already funded through the 2019-21 budget.
- Continue implementing and managing ASRP small projects already funded through the 2019-21 budget.
- Continue developing ASRP Project Sponsor RFQ and guidance for qualifications.

WA State Conservation Commission & the county Conservation Districts (WSCC)

I am authorizing up to \$17,500 through September, for WSCC, and county CD staff to:

- Continue attending Chehalis Basin Board meetings, and as requested by OCB staff, support the Board's continued deliberations related to approving a new 2021-2023 budget and spending plan.
- Continue participating in ASRP Steering Committee and CD Coordination Team meetings.
- Continue supporting implementation of Early Action Reach projects already funded through the 2019-21 budget.
- Continue supporting implementation of ASRP small projects already funded through the 2019-21 budget.

Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District (FCZD)

I am authorizing up to \$330,000 through September, for the FCZD to:

- Advance additional cost-reimbursement funds to the USACE for the Corps' work preparing the final NEPA EIS.
- Continue attending Chehalis Basin Board meetings, and as requested by OCB staff, support the Board's continued deliberations related to approving a new 2021-2023 budget and spending plan.
- Continue providing regulatory agencies & Tribes requested information for the development of the SEPA and NEPA FEISs and for the District's ongoing work analyzing the feasibility of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures.

This stop-gap funding is primarily for the limited purpose of avoiding staff/consultant re-assignments or layoffs between now and the end of September, and maintaining the USACE's and Ecology's planned FEIS schedules. To my knowledge, our other partners are not at the point of having to stop work, or re-

assign or layoff personnel (yet). If that changes, I will let you know and consider making similar temporary, stop-gap arrangements.

Some of these items I propose to support are in addition to those in my budget contingency memo that was shared with the Board in July. I believe these additional actions are necessary to preserve the Board's desired work plan and schedule if the Board approves a 2021-2023 budget by September. If the Board approves a 2021-2023 budget and spending plan at the August 16 special meeting, OCB will work expeditiously to obligate 2021-2023 funds for these expenditures instead of relying on 2019-2021 funds. If the Board does not approve a budget by September, I do not propose to continue using unobligated 2019-2021 funds as a source of on-going funding for those actions that are beyond the core functions listed in my budget contingency memo.