

Chehalis Basin Strategy Communications Update

Chehalis Basin Board meeting, April 2022

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PART ONE

Goals & Audiences

Communications Goals

1. **Share the compelling, clear story** of the need and opportunity in the Chehalis Basin.
2. **Inform Basin residents** so they fully understand the Chehalis Basin Strategy, how it is impacting the land and communities around them, and how they can benefit from and engage with it.
3. **Increase transparency** by creating venues for community members to provide input and express concerns.
4. **Proactively address concerns** and correct misinformation about the Strategy.

Priority Audiences

1. **Basin residents and landowners** | Communications goal: Make it easy for residents to find information about how the Strategy can and does currently benefit them, and how they can get involved/access resources.
2. **Strategy partners** | Communications goal: Connect partners to relevant resources and up-to-date information about the Strategy that streamline and simplify their efforts.
3. **Decision-makers** | Communications goal: Clearly and concisely demonstrate the Strategy's impact and importance—locally, regionally, and statewide.

PART TWO

Public Input Summary Q1 2022

Overview

Included is a summary of public input themes about the Chehalis Basin Strategy, received through *email* and *social media* between **January - March 2022**.

Public input, alongside scientific research and stakeholder insights, actively informs thinking and approach for the Chehalis Basin Strategy. This roundup is provided to Office of Chehalis Basin staff and Chehalis Basin Board members to increase visibility into public feedback provided outside of Chehalis Basin Board meetings.

Public Input Themes

1. Frustration about building in flood plains
2. Frustration about general process and perceived lack of flood solutions
3. Requests for resources and support
4. Requests for more information about engagement opportunities

OCB Processes for Public Input

Input received via email is considered official public comment material.

- Reviewed by OCB director Andrea McNamara Doyle
- Added to official public comment archive, which is publicly available by request
- Responded to by Ecology communications manager Curt Hart with answers to questions which have been informed by subject matter experts, if applicable, and/or directions to additional resources

Comments received via social media are elevated and responded to when they ask questions or raise new concerns.

PART THREE

Communications Update

Earned Media

Earned Media Recap

Key Finding: The Chehalis Basin Strategy's various efforts are well-covered in local media, with emphasis on success stories and available resources.

- [Andrea Doyle: Combining Flood Control and Habitat Restoration in Washington's Chehalis Basin](#) (Municipal Water Leader, Jan. 24)
- [Once a Doubter, Adna Property Owner Turns to Conservation and Fish Advocacy](#) (The Chronicle, Jan. 28)
- [Farm Pads Prove Worth in Protecting Livestock in First Big Test Since 2007 Flood](#) (The Chronicle, Feb. 7)
- [Centralia Gets Grant for Flood Supplies](#) (The Chronicle, Feb. 14)
- [Chehalis River Flood Warning System Sees Record Use During January Flooding](#) (The Chronicle, Feb. 14)
- [In Focus: Stream Team Gets to Work](#) (The Chronicle, Feb. 14)

Earned Media Recap

- [Chehalis Basin Officials Advise Creation of Flood Plans to Reduce Damage to Lives and Property](#) (The Chronicle, Feb. 28)
- [Office of Chehalis Basin Program Continues Work to Elevate Homes to Reduce Flood Damage](#) (The Chronicle, Feb. 21)
- [Small Flood Projects vs. Big Floods](#) (TVW The Impact, March 9)
- [House Approves \\$9,950,000 To Support Aberdeen-Hoquiam Flood Protection Project](#) (KXRO Radio News, March 10)
- [Aberdeen and Hoquiam levee projects in line for nearly \\$10 million in federal funding](#) (The Daily World, March 12)
- [Fish Passage and Flood Storage 'Are Not Currently Compatible' at Skookumchuck Dam, Phase One Study Finds](#) (The Chronicle, March 14)
- [Kilmer locks down \\$9.95 million in federal funding for Aberdeen, Hoquiam levee projects](#) (North Coast News, March 18)
- "Let's Talk About It!" - LAND with Brandon Parsons (KELA Radio hosted by Todd Chaput, March 22)

Digital Outreach & Engagement

Total Chehalis Basin Strategy Reach (Q1 2022)

Key Finding: Chehalis Basin Strategy digital channels cumulatively reach a significantly-sized cross-section of Chehalis Basin residents, providing an important information venue to complement earned media and in-person touchpoints.

Facebook: 5,941 people reached

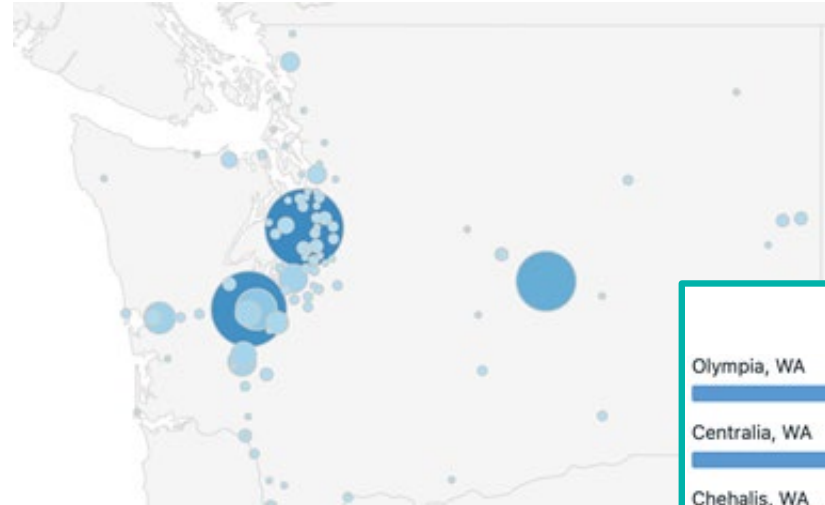
Twitter: 6,750 impressions

ChehalisBasinStrategy.com:
7,406 pageviews

E-Newsletters: 1,008 subscribers

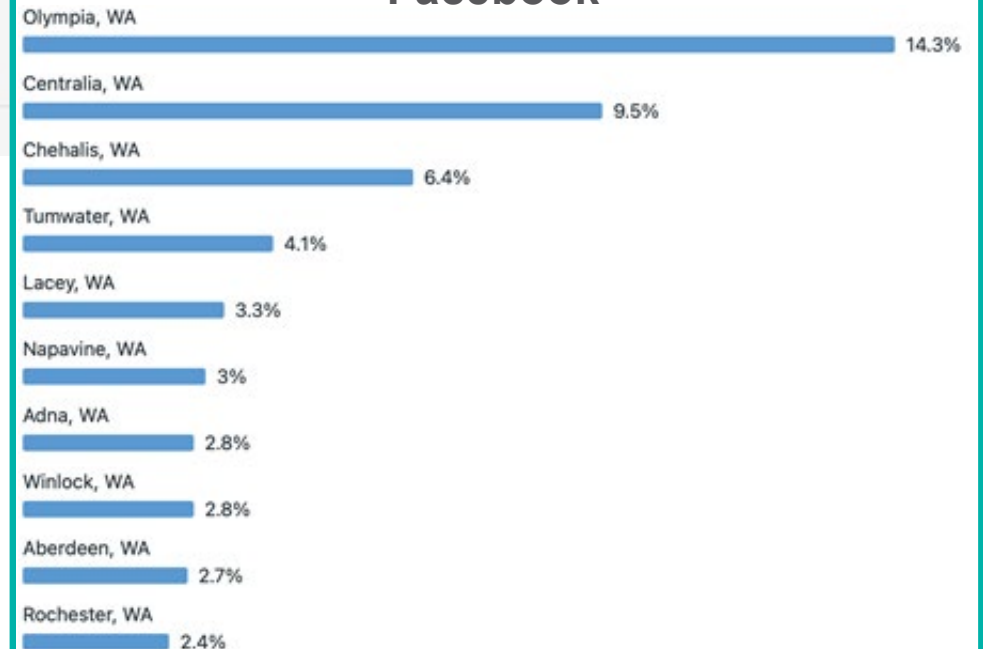
Who's Being Reached? (Q1 2022)

Key Finding: While Basin residents are the most-engaged geography on OCB digital channels, Olympia is also an active audience. There are also pockets of interest from across the state.



Heat map of
ChehalisBasinStrategy.com
visitors during Q1

Facebook



What Are People Most Interested In? (Q1 2022)

Key Finding: Live-time flood safety resources, as well as retroactive recovery resources, were shared widely from Chehalis Basin Strategy channels.



Left: I-5 Chehalis at the SR 6 / Main St. interchange. Right: Chehalis Tribe gas station and mini-mart (credit: Scaffer Creek Aerials)

How Chehalis Basin Strategy projects performed during flooding

The Chehalis Basin Strategy is designed to operate on multiple scales—from small to large. Here's some of what we know about flood protection projects already on the ground and the role they played in mitigating flood damage:

- **Flood Warning System:** Nearly 35,000 individuals and households logged in and utilized the [Chehalis River Basin Flood Warning System](#) during the event to receive emergency updates, and the flood inundation maps available on that site received almost 75,000 hits.
- **Numerous farm pads** were used to protect livestock and farming equipment. There was no notable livestock loss reported during this flood event, compared to widespread losses during the 2007 and 2009 floods.

E-newsletter | Read 1,000 times

Our latest e-newsletter contains the need-to-know information regarding recent flooding and recovery resources for Basin residents. Stay safe, stay well.
<https://mailchi.mp/cb51f212901c/ocb-update-13469644>



Facebook | 5,341 people reached

⚠ Water levels are continuing to rise, affecting highway closures across the state. Follow the [@wsdot](#) blog for live updates:



wsdotblog.blogspot.com

Extreme weather affecting highways across the state
The WSDOT Blog

Twitter | 2,044 impressions

What Are People Most Interested In? (Q1 2022)

Key Finding: Habitat restoration content is popular among website visitors, along with information on both the proposed Chehalis River dam and Skookumchuck dam study.

Resources & publications continue to be of interest to Strategy audiences.

1. Chehalis Basin Strategy - Reducing flood damage, restoring salmon habitat
2. Implementing Habitat Projects - Chehalis Basin Strategy
3. Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP) - Chehalis Basin Strategy
4. Resources & Publications - Chehalis Basin Strategy
5. Chehalis River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Project - Chehalis Basin Strategy
6. The Office of Chehalis Basin - Chehalis Basin Strategy
7. Habitat restoration for salmon & aquatic species - Chehalis Basin Strategy
8. The Skookumchuck Dam Study - Chehalis Basin Strategy
9. About the Chehalis Basin Strategy - Chehalis Basin Strategy
10. Completed projects - Chehalis Basin Strategy

Top Website Pages

Communications Priorities In Progress

In Progress

- **ChehalisBasinStrategy.com website** | Restructuring and redrafting content to center Chehalis Basin residents as Strategy partners, making it easy to learn about success stories to-date and how to access resources and support.
- **Partners' toolkit** | Developing a centralized place for Strategy partners to access leave-behinds, FAQs, contact information, and more to support their work with landowners and other residents. Includes a simplistic Strategy logo.
- **Public webinar series** | Following up on the well-attended Skookumchuck Dam webinar with additional informational webinars, informed by elected officials' interests.

In Progress

- **Project stories template** | Developing and circulating an internal-facing template for project partners to share back project successes; will be used to standardize available information and inform communications materials.
- **Ongoing communications support** | Drafting e-newsletters, social media, as well as providing ad hoc support for earned media and other activities.
- **Community outreach** | Developed list of local organizations, with support from Edna and Vickie, to visit with as pandemic restrictions ease and groups return to in-person.
 - **Next step:** Board member volunteers to visit with local organizations and share about resources and opportunities available through the Strategy and partners.

THANK YOU
