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STATE OF WASHINGTON

January 15, 2019

State Legislative Capital Budget Leaders
PO Box 40002
Olympia WA 98504-0002

RE: Chehalis Basin Board's Capital Budget Recommendation for 2019-2021

Dear Washington State Capital Budget Legislative Leaders:

Grays Harbor County has been an active participant on the Chehalis Basin Board and its predecessor Governor's Work Group engaging in a collaborative process with other Chehalis Basin local and tribal governments and stakeholders to aggressively pursue a long-term, integrated strategy to reduce catastrophic flood damage and restore aquatic species habitat in the basin. The Chehalis Basin Strategy has successfully funded and implemented over fifty local flood damage reduction projects, more than twenty five farm pads, and over thirty fish barrier correction projects opening more than ninety miles of river habitat and seven acres of riparian function for multiple steelhead and salmon species.

The Chehalis Basin Board's recommended budget is needed to fund the next phase of priority aquatic species habitat restoration and flood damage reduction projects in the Chehalis River Basin. The priority local flood damage reduction projects located within Grays Harbor County that would be funded include design of the preferred option for reducing flooding on Keys Road, construction of the new Fry Creek pump station, right-of-way acquisition for the North Shore Levee in Aberdeen, and initial work on the west segment of the North Shore Levee in Hoquiam.

The priority aquatic species projects located within Gray Harbor County that would be funded include construction of approximately four to five miles of early action reach restoration projects along the Wynoochee and East Fork Satsop Rivers; and barrier correction projects in tributaries within the Humptulips/Grays Harbor, Olympic Mountain, and lower Chehalis River ecological diversity regions.

The Board's recommended budget is also needed to begin implementation of a basin-wide community flood assistance and resilience program that will provided technical assistance and grant funds to local jurisdictions including Grays Harbor County for priority property protection actions.

Grays Harbor County recognizes the value of the Chehalis Basin Strategy's integrated approach to addressing these complex fish and flood challenges in a collaborative way that allows all voices an opportunity to participate in developing solutions. Grays Harbor County supports the Chehalis Basin Board's recommendation and urges the legislature to approve a \$73.2 million appropriation in the 2019-2021 Capital Budget to continue aggressively pursuing the Chehalis Basin Strategy.

Sincerely,

GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Randy Ross, Chairman, District 2



Vickie L. Raines, Commissioner, District 3