STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY
PO Box 47600•Olympia, WA 98504-7600•360-407-6000
TTY 711 or 877-833-6341 (for the speech or hearing impaired)

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON SCOPE OF CHEHALIS RIVER BASIN FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PROPONENT: Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District (District)

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL: The District proposes to construct a flood retention facility and associated temporary reservoir, called a Flood Retention Expandable facility, on the Chehalis River near Pe Ell at river mile 108 to reduce damage from a major flood or larger. A major flood is defined as having a 15% probability of occurrence in any year (a 7-year recurrence interval). As designed, the Chehalis River would normally flow through the low-level outlet works, which would also allow fish to pass both up- and downstream of the facility. During major floods or larger, the structure would temporarily store up to 65,000 acre-feet of water in a pool behind the proposed flood retention facility. Water would be released back to the river system over a period of time and when it is safe to do so. The facility would reduce flood damage from major floods or larger but would not protect communities from all flooding, nor would it stop regular annual flooding from the Chehalis River.

The top of the flood retention facility would be 1,220 feet long with a maximum structural height of 254 feet, including 3 to 5 feet of freeboard as a factor of safety. At maximum inundation, the temporary reservoir would hold floodwaters to reduce damages downriver. It would extend 6.2 miles and inundate 778 acres along the Chehalis River from river mile 108 to 114. The proposed flood retention facility includes a 210-foot-wide emergency spillway that would discharge into a 70-foot stilling basin. The spillway is expected to be used very rarely for major flood events lasting a short duration. A flip bucket would launch flow from the spillway a safe distance downstream of the facility. Upstream of the facility, an anchored log boom would help contain large woody material.

The proposed flood retention facility is considered to be expandable because it would be built with a foundation and hydraulic structure extents capable of supporting the future construction of a larger facility that could expand the water storage from 65,000 acre feet to up to 130,000 acre feet. This expansion may or may not occur and if pursued in the future, it would be subject to a separate environmental review and permitting process.

Fish passage would be provided primarily through five 230-foot long low-level outlets installed along the river bottom at the base of the structure. During flood events when water is impounded in the reservoir, the low-level outlets would be closed and fish passage would be provided via a collection, handling, transport, and release facility (also called a trap-and-haul facility). It would consist of a short fish ladder, a fish lift, holding galleries, sorting stations, and transportation via

trucks to release sites upstream of the reservoir. During construction, a temporary 20-foot diameter diversion tunnel would be constructed for use until the permanent outlets are completed.

In addition to removal of vegetation for the flood retention facility, tree clearing and vegetation removal would occur within the reservoir area. A new power line would be built to construct and operate the power pumps, gates, instruments and other controls for the facility. The proposed facility would require building a bypass road for Forest Road 1000. In addition, constructing the structure includes developing a quarry site, material storage, and materials processing as well as areas for construction offices and equipment storage near the facility site. For construction, a concrete production facility would also be located above and northeast of the facility to produce concrete and concrete aggregate may be mined within the reservoir footprint or nearby.

Along with the flood retention facility, the District also proposes raising the existing 9,511-foot long Chehalis-Centralia Airport levee by 4 to 7 feet as part of its proposal to reduce flood impacts from a catastrophic flood. The project would raise the existing levee by adding earthen materials or floodwalls on top. In addition, 1,700 feet of Airport Road would be raised to meet the airport levee height along the southern extent of the airport. The project would require replacing all utility infrastructure and terminating the West Street overcross approach.

LOCATION OF PROPOSAL: The proposed flood retention facility would be located on Weyerhauser and Panesko Tree Farm property, south of State Route (SR) 6 in Lewis County, on the main-stem Chehalis River at river mile 108, about 1 mile south of (upstream of) the Town of Pe Ell. The property is at: Section 03 Township 12N Range 05W; on Government Lot 13 and a portion of Government Lot 14 (the west half of the southwest quarter and the southeast quarter of the southwest quarter, excluding roads). The Parcel Number is 016392004000. The Airport Levee Improvements would be located at: Section 30 Township 14N Range 02W; on a portion of Sections 19 and 30 between the highway, St. Helens Avenue, and Lawrence Road; on a portion on the highway; and on a portion of Louisiana Street. The Parcel Number is 005605080001.

LEAD AGENCY: Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)

ACTION: Ecology is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the State Environmental Policy Act which will assess a project proposed by the District to build and operate a flood retention facility and associated temporary reservoir on the Chehalis River south of Pe Ell, Washington, and to make improvements to the Chehalis-Centralia Airport levee to reduce flood damage during a major or catastrophic flood.

Separately, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is conducting an environmental review under the federal process under the National Environmental Policy Act for the proposed project. Ecology and USACE have agreed to participate in joint scoping to simplify the public comment process for the two Environmental Impact Statements.

EIS REQUIRED: Ecology has determined that this proposal is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030 (2)(c) and will be prepared. Ecology will make notifications related to the environmental review process in accordance with adopted State procedures.

Ecology has identified the following areas for discussion in the EIS:

- Water Resources and Water Quality
- Geology and Geomorphology (Landslides and Earthquakes)
- Wetlands and Vegetation
- Fish and Wildlife
- Tribal Resources
- Cultural Resources (Historic and Archaeological)
- Recreation
- Land Use
- Climate Change
- Transportation
- Public Services and Utilities
- Environmental Health and Safety
- Alternatives, including a No Action Alternative will also be evaluated.

SCOPING: Scoping is an opportunity for interested parties to provide input on the content and emphasis (the scope) of the EIS. Ecology invites agencies, tribal governments, and members of the public to provide input on the EIS scope relating to alternatives, probable significant adverse impacts, potential mitigation measures, and licenses or other approvals that may be required. A description of the proposed project and information on the EIS process is available at http://chehalisbasinstrategy.com/eis.

HOW TO COMMENT: You can provide comments on the scope of the EIS by submitting written comments using the online form or by mail, as well as commenting at the public scoping meetings, as described below. Comments will be accepted September 28, 2018 through October 29, 2018.

MEETING DATES: Scoping meetings will be held at the following communities, dates, and times:

- Montesano City Hall, Banquet Room at 112 North Main Street, Montesano, WA 98563 on October 16, 2018 from 5 pm to 8 pm; 5:15 pm presentation followed by public comment period. An open house will be available 5 pm to 8 pm.
- Centralia College, Bowman Rotary Banquet Rooms A and B at 600 Centralia College Boulevard, Centralia, WA 98531 on October 17, 2018 from 5 pm to 8 pm; 5:15 pm presentation followed by public comment period. An open house will be available 5 pm to 8 pm.

WRITTEN COMMENTS: Submit written scoping comments using the comment form on the website at http://chehalisbasinstrategy.com/comment-form or send by mail to:

Chehalis Flood Damage Reduction Project EIS
c/o Anchor QEA
720 Olive Way, Suite 1900
Seattle, WA 98101

To request ADA accommodation for disabilities or printed materials in a format for the visually impaired, please call 206-219-5900. People with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. People with speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341. Please submit requests for ADA accommodation for disabilities or for translation services at meetings at least 72 hours in advance.

CONNECTION TO THE CHEHALIS BASIN STRATEGY: The State of Washington, local leaders, and Tribes are developing the Chehalis Basin Strategy to improve river habitat and reduce flood damage. The Strategy is a collection of potential actions to address the challenges of increased flooding, declining salmon runs, and degraded river habitat. It includes near-term and long-term actions, as well as small- and large-scale projects. The Governor's Work Group recommended a project level EIS be conducted to identify the potential impacts of a flood retention facility. The Chehalis Basin Board members developing the Chehalis Basin Strategy have not agreed a flood retention facility should be constructed.

A programmatic EIS for the Chehalis Basin Strategy was completed June 2, 2017 and assessed broad program-level issues related to implementing an integrated strategy for reducing damages from catastrophic floods and restoring degraded aquatic species habitat in the Chehalis Basin. The programmatic study evaluated large-scale actions to restore aquatic species. The programmatic study also evaluated types of water retention facilities and levee improvements as potential large-scale actions to reduce flood damage as part of the Strategy. The programmatic EIS evaluated impacts and alternatives broadly. This scoping notice is for a separate project-level EIS that will evaluate the specific proposal from the District described above.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND SCOPING SUMMARY: Comments received during scoping meetings and from comments received during the scoping period will be summarized into a scoping summary document that will be made available at: http://chehalisbasinstrategy.com/eis.

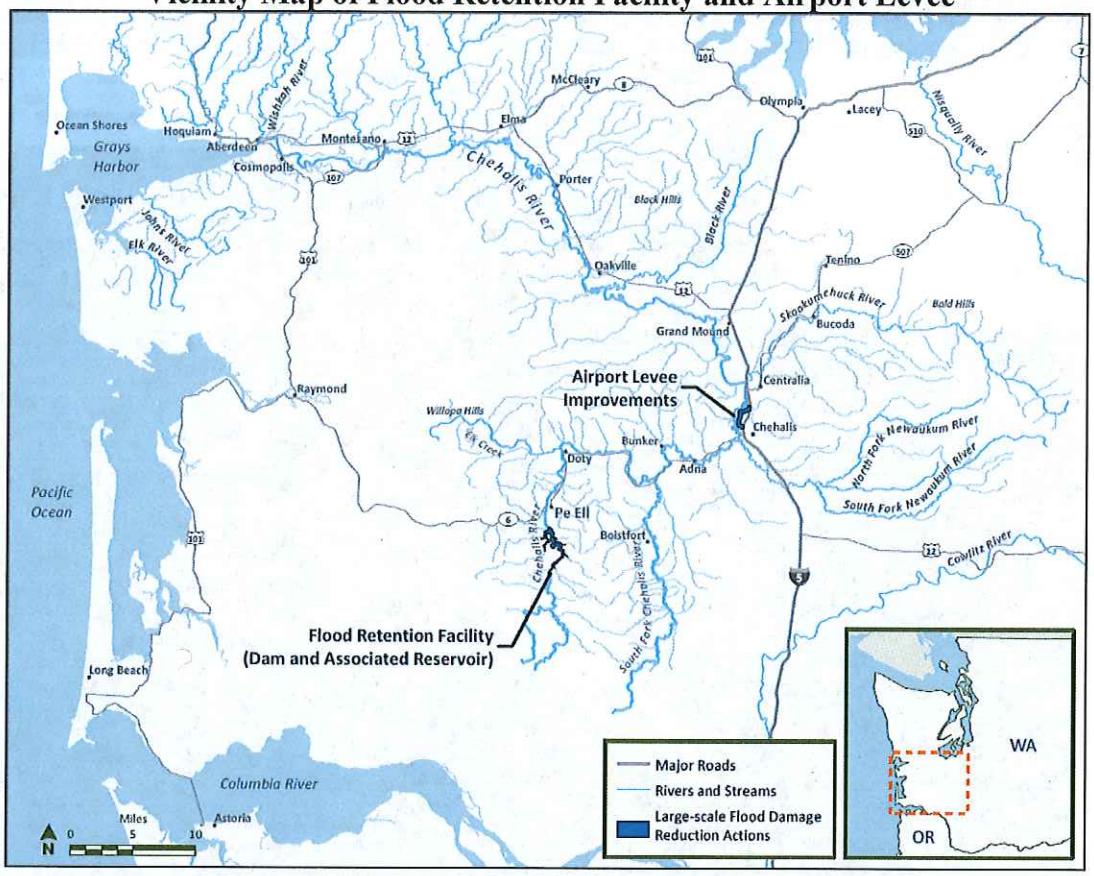
PUBLIC DISCLOSURE: Before including your name, address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, please be aware that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While you may request in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, anonymity is not guaranteed.

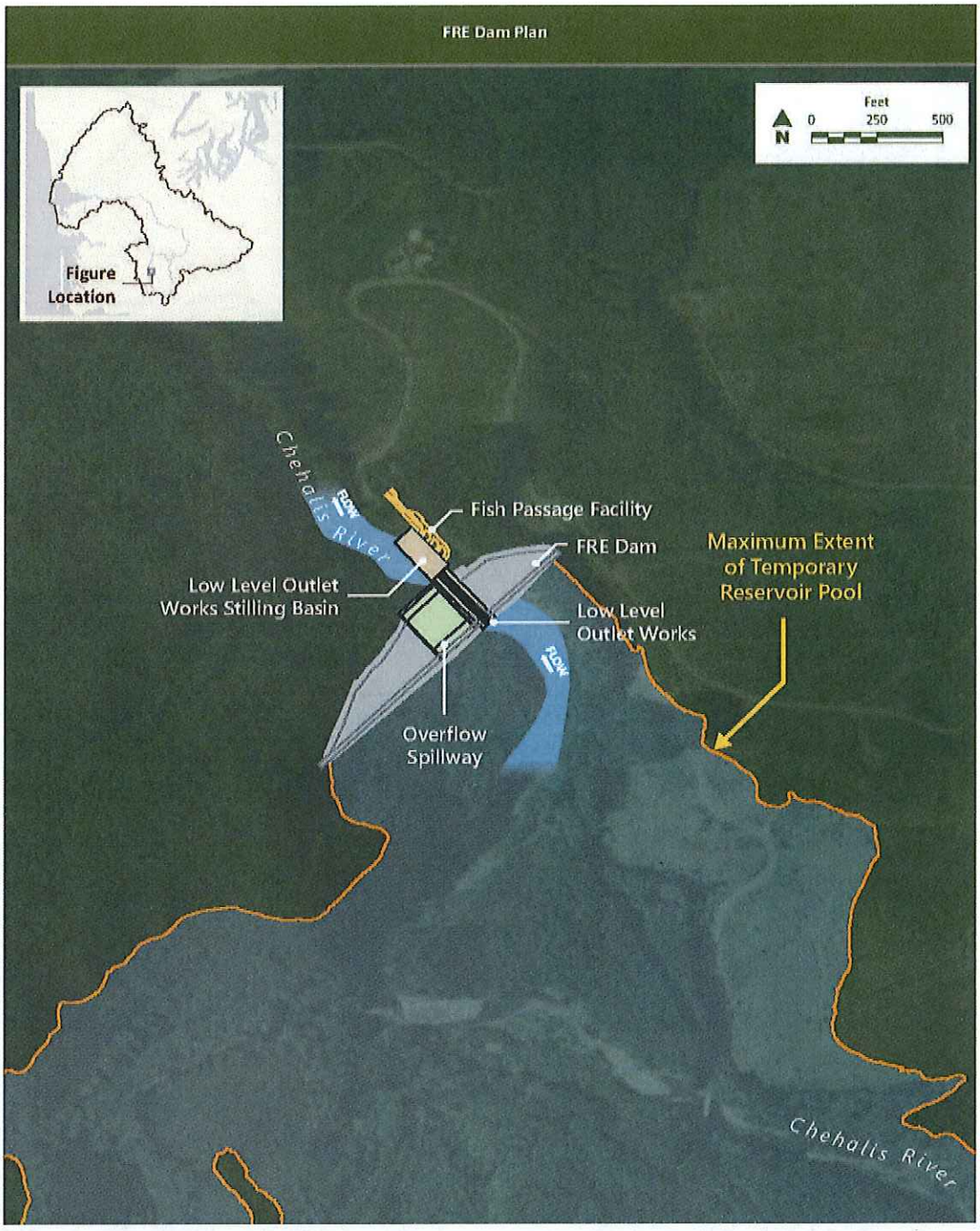
CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Diane Butorac, Ecology, at diane.butorac@ecy.wa.gov or (360) 407- 6573. TTY users may dial 711 to obtain a toll free TTY relay.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: Gordon White, Program Manager
Shorelands and Environmental Assistance Program

SIGNATURE: Gordon White **DATE:** 9/24/18

Vicinity Map of Flood Retention Facility and Airport Levee




FRE Dam Plan
Figure Location
N
Feet
0
250
500
Chehalis River
FLOW
Fish Passage Facility
FRE Dam
Maximum Extent of Temporary Reservoir Pool
Low Level Outlet Works Stilling Basin
Low Level Outlet Works
FLOW
Overflow Spillway
Chehalis River