



Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority

February 2010 Update

Grays Harbor County, Lewis County, Thurston County,
The Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, Aberdeen,
Bucoda, Centralia, Chehalis, Montesano, Oakville, and Pe Ell

The **Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority** is a collaborative basin-wide entity that develops and participates in projects and studies that protect citizens from flooding. The purpose of the Flood Authority is to develop a basin-wide package of cost-effective, long-term and environmentally responsible methods to protect natural resources, commercial industries, private property, and human life during flood events.

FLOOD DISTRICTS

One major goal of the Flood Authority is to form a permanent governance and finance structure for the basin to provide technical assistance and a source of funding for future projects. Major projects, such as the proposed Twin Cities project and upstream storage dams, will require ongoing maintenance and operation funding.

The Flood Authority is considering two different types of Flood Districts, and are considering hiring a legal firm with expertise in the area to help the Flood Authority and other stakeholders (including citizens) come to a decision about what form of governance is best for the basin.

One option the Authority is considering pursuing is a **Flood Control District**, which could be formed by a vote of basin citizens. Changes are required to State legislation to make a Control District suitable to the Chehalis basin.

A second alternative the Authority is considering is a **Flood Control Zone District**, which could be formed by County Commissioners. A Zone District would have a broader set of options in protecting citizens from flooding, but could be more complicated to form at a basin-wide scale.

UPCOMING EVENTS

A Flood Authority Work Session will be held on March 18 at 9:00 AM in the WSU Extension Room of the Lewis County Historic Courthouse.

A Flood Authority Business Meeting will be held on March 18 at 1:30 PM in the Commissioners Hearing Room of the Lewis County Historic Courthouse.

Flood Plan Public Meetings will be held in early April.

OTHER ONGOING EFFORTS

The Authority is developing a basin-wide **Early Warning System** and has hired the firm WEST Consulting to design a system. WEST has been meeting with stakeholders in the basin to identify needs and present recommendations to the Authority.

The Flood Authority has written a draft **Flood Plan** that identifies flood damage reduction projects throughout the basin. The plan also identifies recommended regulatory changes that basin jurisdictions could adopt to provide better protection to its citizens. The Authority is currently revising the plan in anticipation of public meetings this spring.

The Authority has recently approved the next phase of the **Upstream Storage Facilities Feasibility Analysis**. This analysis is taking the first steps in examining the possibility of building dams on the Upper Chehalis. In the next phase, the Lewis County PUD and its consultants will further develop the engineering of the two proposed structures and refine the benefit-cost analysis to determine if the structure is economically feasible.

On January 21, the Flood Authority elected Grays Harbor County Commissioner Terry Willis as its Chair and Lewis County Commissioner Ron Averill as its Vice-Chair.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit the Flood Authority website at:
[www.lewiscountywa.gov/
/communitydevelopment/chehalis-river-basin-flood-authority](http://www.lewiscountywa.gov/communitydevelopment/chehalis-river-basin-flood-authority)

More information can be found at:
www.chehalisbasin.org