



Chehalis Basin Bulletin

Quinault Indian Nation

August 2019

Chehalis Basin Strategy tops \$200 million in funding from Washington State

(The Chehalis Basin Bulletin is a series of topical reports about the Chehalis Basin Strategy and proposed dam on the Upper Chehalis River)

State funding for the [Chehalis Basin Strategy](#) topped \$200 million with the 2019-21 Capital Budget appropriation of \$73.2 million. The new funding is a substantial increase over the \$50 million appropriated in each of the prior two state budget cycles and the \$28.2 million for the 2013-15 biennium.

By way of comparison, the State has also spent approximately \$200 million since 2013 on another major water-related project in the State – the Yakima River Basin Integrated Plan – according to an October 2018 [funding plan and cost estimate](#). The estimate pegs the full 30-year buildout cost for the Yakima effort at \$4.1 billion, including \$990 million for the 10-year Initial Development Phase with “\$639.7 million (65 percent) expected to come from federal and other funding sources, with the State contributing approximately \$351.2 million (35 percent).”

The Chehalis Basin Strategy (Strategy) does not yet have a long-term cost estimate or detailed funding plan beyond continued biennial appropriations from the State. The full cost of the Strategy, however, will also be in the billions of dollars based on initial cost estimates of the two biggest initiatives of the Strategy – the proposed dam on the Upper Chehalis River and the Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP). Find more on those costs in the Quinault Indian Nation’s [FAQs](#) on the dam and Strategy.

A significant difference over prior appropriations is that the majority (\$49.5M) of the money is earmarked for on-the-ground actions, including \$32.65 million for implementation of the ASRP and \$10 million to begin construction work on the Aberdeen/Hoquiam North Shore Levee. The [estimated](#) total price tag for the levee is \$75-80 million.

The rest of the funding (\$23.7 million) for the 2019-21 biennium is earmarked for “Long-Term Strategy.” Of that, the largest share, \$12.5 million, will pay for development of the two Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) for the proposed dam on the Upper Chehalis River and the Chehalis-Centralia Airport Levee. The EIS funding will pay for participation, study and analysis by the myriad state agencies involved in the State EIS being led by the WA Dept. of Ecology and the separate EIS by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The EIS funding will also pay for the contract services of [Anchor QEA](#) which will author both EIS’s and do some of the technical analysis for them.

The Long-Term Strategy funding will also pay for ongoing participation in the Strategy by state and local agencies and tribal staff, operations and staff of the Office of Chehalis Basin, and continued development and planning for the overall strategy and the ASRP. For a detailed budget report memo by the Office of the Chehalis Basin click [here](#), and look for “CBB 2019-2021 Budget Spending Plan_071119.pdf” under documents posted for the July 11, 2019 Chehalis Basin Board meeting.

Upcoming Quinault Indian Nation reports on the Strategy and proposed dam will include:

- projections of the impact of climate change on future flooding in the Basin from modelling by the University of Washington; and
- how the ASRP will work and restoration action priorities for the next 2 years.

For more information, if you have questions or comments, or ideas for future bulletins, please contact Mark Glyde, QIN Communications, at mrglyde@gmail.com.