



Cowlitz County
Washington

Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan

What is a CFHMP?

A Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan (CFHMP) summarizes the risk and exposure to flooding within a community and identifies specific strategies to reduce the impacts of flooding. The plan will benefit residents and businesses in flood prone areas within Cowlitz County and the critical infrastructures that protect them.

Why is Cowlitz County writing a CFHMP?

Cowlitz County sits at the confluence of many beautiful rivers and streams. The rivers and streams provide transportation, recreation, and commerce for the growth of Cowlitz County. These rivers also flood, leaving destruction and disarray as they recede. Approximately 52% of residential addresses in the county are located behind dikes or in floodplains, and flooding is the most prevalent hazard within the County, with a major flood occurring every two to three years.

In 2021, Cowlitz County was awarded a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology to prepare a CFHMP. The planning process brings together various stakeholders within the County to work together and develop common goals and flood risk reduction strategies with multiple benefits. After the planning process is completed, the County and cities will be able to use the plan to guide future decision making and grant applications.

Who is leading this project?

Three County departments are leading this effort: Public Works, Emergency Management, and Building and Planning. Partner agencies include local cities, diking districts, flood districts, restoration agencies, and neighborhood partners. These agencies combine to form a Steering Committee that meets bi-monthly and provides decision making and direction during the planning process. A consultant team is leading the planning process.

How can I get involved?

Public participation is critical to the success of a CFHMP. The more voices that are heard, the better. This fall, the Steering Committee will host public meetings to learn more about your flooding concerns and ideas. To prepare for the discussion, consider these questions:

- How does flooding impact you and your neighborhood?
- What specific actions should the County or cities take to reduce the impact of flooding?
- How should the County communicate and educate the public about the risk of flooding in your area?

Additional opportunities for public involvement will occur in the spring when the draft plan is ready for public review and comment.