

## Lake Chelan Collaborative Meeting Summary

SEPTEMBER 23, 2026, 1-4 PM

CHELAN FIRE STATION, 232 E WAPATO AVENUE + CALL-IN OPTION

County's website will host meeting materials/meeting information:

<https://www.co.chelan.wa.us/natural-resources/pages/watershed-plan-lake-chelan>

### Attendees:

**In person:** Kelsey Mach (Geosyntec); Elle Robinson (CCNRD); Stephen Lesky (CCNRD); Gretchen Muller (Cascadia); Dan Haller (Geosyntec); Mike Kaputa (CCNRD); Travis Denham (City of Chelan); Sara Peck (CPUD); Phil Long (LCRI); Lucas Lachica (Cascadia CD); Alene Underwood (CPUD); Anna Galipeau (LCRI); Heather Simmons (Ecology); Christopher Kossik (Ecology); Mary Jo Sanborn (CCNRD); Erin McCardle (City of Chelan); Audrey Cooper (City of Chelan Parks); Doug England (Resident)

**Online attendance:** Abby Hendrickson (CCNRD), Alex White (CPUD); Clay Patmont (Anchor QEA); Nate Schmidt (WDFW); Amber Brooks (WDFW); Brad Hawkins (Chelan County Commissioner); Kate Taylor (Chelan PUD); Ginger Wireman (Ecology); Kris Lerdal (Geosyntec); Lloyd Stevens (DOE); Mike Kirk (Mason Community Council); Robin Pittman (Mason Parks); Rodney Cawston (CCT); Steve Nelson (LCRI); Nic (Unknown)

### Action Items:

1. Provide requests for December meeting topics to Kelsey ([kelsey.mach@geosyntec.com](mailto:kelsey.mach@geosyntec.com)) and Gretchen ([gretchen@cascadiaconsulting.com](mailto:gretchen@cascadiaconsulting.com)) by October 21, 2026.
2. Reach out to Elle or Gretchen if you are interested in participating in the new Toxics Subcommittee or Large Woody Debris Subcommittee.
3. Reach out to Stephen or Gretchen if you are interested in being added to the AIS Subcommittee email list to receive an advance copy of the draft AIS management plan. The final AIS management plan and AIS Watercraft Inspection Feasibility Study will be shared with the entire group in advance of the December LCC meeting.

**Decisions Made:** NA

### Upcoming Dates:

Next LCC Meeting:

Date: Wednesday, December 16, 2026

Time: 1-4 PM

Location: Chelan Fire Station + Call-In Option

Next AIS Subcommittee meeting:

Date: Thursday October 29, 2026

Time: 2-4 PM

Location: Chelan Fire Station + Call-In Option

June LCC Meeting Recap

The group received a brief recap of the key topics discussed at the June LCC meeting.

#### Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Subcommittee Update

The watercraft inspection feasibility study is complete. The draft AIS management plan will be shared with the AIS subcommittee the week of October 5<sup>th</sup> for comment and feedback. The hope is for the group to vote to recommend both be adopted by the LCC at the December meeting.

#### Lake Chelan Reserve Overview

Dan Haller of Geosyntec Consultants presented an overview of the Lake Chelan Reserve, including the history of the Chelan Dam hydropower water rights and the Memorandum of Understanding between Chelan PUD and the Washington Department of Ecology that established the 65,000 acre-foot reserve for allocation to non-hydropower uses such as irrigation and domestic supply.

An overview was also provided of the historical reserve accounting efforts conducted collaboratively by Ecology, Chelan PUD, and Chelan County to determine the quantity of reserve water remaining available for allocation. These entities continue to update the reserve accounting annually as new permitted and permit-exempt uses are debited from the reserve. The remaining reserve is currently being allocated through the Lake Chelan Coordinated Cost Reimbursement Program to pending water right applicants. Approximately 5,000 acre-feet remain available for allocation.

#### Water Supply Panel

The group heard updates from key water supply managers within the Lake Chelan Basin, including representatives from the City of Chelan (Travis Denham), Chelan County (Mike Kaputa), the Washington Department of Ecology (Heather Simmons and Chris Kossik), Chelan PUD (Alene Underwood), and the Lake Chelan Reclamation District (represented by Dan Haller).

#### **Department of Ecology**

Chris Kossik and Heather Simmons provided an update on the Lake Chelan Coordinated Cost Reimbursement Program. Ecology intends to begin processing the next batch of nine water right applications in early 2027. The total demand associated with pending applications exceeds the volume of water remaining in the Reserve.

#### **Chelan County**

Mike Kaputa, Chelan County Natural Resources Director, provided an overview of the County's involvement in water supply management within the Lake Chelan Basin, including the County's water mitigation program and how rural water use is accounted for against both the Reserve and the County's previously acquired water rights.

Mike also highlighted several collaborative initiatives developed with basin partners, including Ecology. These included the Coordinated Certification Program, which helped subsidize the cost of certifying water right permits, and the Large Area Permit Program, which supported historical Lake Chelan water users in achieving regulatory compliance through funding provided by a Washington State Department of Commerce legislative grant. Mike also discussed the County's pending water right applications.

#### **City of Chelan**

Travis Denham, City Engineer for the City of Chelan, provided an overview of the City's water service area, water supply infrastructure, water rights portfolio, anticipated future demands, and water conservation and efficiency initiatives. He also discussed water supply challenges, including turbidity and the City's reliance on a single potable water source.

Travis discussed the City's pending water right application and noted that current growth projections indicate sufficient water rights to meet anticipated demand for approximately 50 years. Updated growth projections are currently being developed as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan update.

### **Lake Chelan Reclamation District**

Dan Haller presented on behalf of Rod Anderson and the Lake Chelan Reclamation District (LCRD). Dan described how LCRD's current contract with the Bureau of Reclamation limits both the acreage and types of water use the District can serve. Upon completion of the District's final contract payments, LCRD expects additional flexibility to expand service. The District's pending water right applications are intended to support frost and heat protection, improve drought resilience, and expand service to additional agricultural acreage.

### Planning Horizon

Dan Haller and Kelsey Mach facilitated a discussion on planning horizon options for future basin water supply planning efforts. The group generally agreed that significant water supply shortages are not anticipated within a 20-year planning horizon. However, participants acknowledged the value of evaluating water supply needs beyond that timeframe.

Potential strategies discussed included:

- Continued water conservation and efficiency improvements.
- Refinement of water rights and reserve accounting methodologies.
- Evaluation of water storage opportunities and other supply augmentation measures.

The group supported a hybrid planning approach that focuses on achievable projects and goals within a 10- to 20-year planning horizon while also considering long-term water supply needs beyond 20 years. Participants also recommended documenting longer-term projects and opportunities to provide continuity and direction for future planning efforts.

### **Return Flows and Basin Hydrology**

The group discussed how return flows are treated within the Lake Chelan Basin. Dan Haller clarified that water resources within the basin are managed based on total water use rather than consumptive use.

Phil of LCRI noted that groundwater inflows to Lake Chelan remain poorly understood and represent an area where additional study could improve understanding of the basin's overall water budget.

### Lake Chelan Toxics DDT

Elle Robinson (CCNRD) provided a brief reminder of the Lake Chelan Toxics/DDT work that has been completed, and the plans for the Phase 2 effort for 2026/2027. Elle is seeking interest in participation in a new subcommittee for informing the Phase 2 work which will evaluate options for proactive DDT management.

### Woody Debris Waterway Assessment

Elle Robinson (CCNRD) and Kelsey Mach (Geosyntec) provided an overview of the earlier Large Woody Debris subcommittee meeting and requested additional participation from key stakeholders and other LCC members. The goal of this effort is to develop a Woody Debris Waterway Assessment document by June 2027. The assessment will aim to inform management of existing wood in the lake, and proactive management for future events.