

Chelan County Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan Annual Progress Report	2025
---	--------------------

Annual report on evaluating progress toward implementing flood hazard mitigation benefits in unincorporated Chelan County. The progress report must be submitted to the governing body, released to the media, made available to the public and included as part of the community's annual Community Rating System (CRS) recertification.



Chelan County Flood Control Zone District
316 Washington Street, Suite 402 | Wenatchee, WA | 98801 | (509) 667-6415

Prepared By
Jason Detamore | Environmental Manager

Approved By
Eric P. Pierson, P.E. | District Administrator

Reporting Period: *January 2025 – December 2025*

Background: Chelan County developed a Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan (CFHMP) to reduce risk from flooding through identified resources, information and strategies. To prepare the plan, Chelan County organized resources, assessed risks from flooding, developed planning goals and objectives, reviewed mitigation alternatives, and developed an action plan to address probable impacts from floods to public infrastructure. The plan can be viewed online:

<http://www.co.chelan.wa.us/flood-control-zone-district>

Purpose: The purpose of this report is to provide an annual update on the implementation of the action plan identified in the CFHMP. The objective is to ensure there is a continuing and responsive planning process that will keep the floodplain management plan dynamic and responsive to the needs and capabilities of Chelan County and its stakeholders. This report discusses the following:

- Flood events that have occurred within the last year
- Changes in risk exposure within the planning area
- Mitigation success stories
- Changes in capabilities that could impact plan implementation
- Review of the action plan
- Recommendations for changes/enhancements

Flood Events within the Planning Area: Beginning on December 8, 2025, a massive atmospheric river impacted Chelan County, bringing record-breaking rainfall and severe winds. The storm triggered catastrophic flooding, downed trees, and landslides across the county. The disaster left thousands without power, triggered the closure of numerous county roadways, and, on December 10, prompted a state of emergency by both the Governor of Washington and the Board of County Commissioners to quickly utilize local resources for debris removal and road repairs. The Wenatchee and Icicle rivers experienced record-breaking flows. Though this event impacted Chelan County as a whole, the communities of Stehekin and Leavenworth were especially hit hard. Due to the widespread infrastructure impacts, isolation of communications and damage to homes, Chelan County was included in a federal major disaster declaration.

As a result of the major disaster declaration, the majority of the Public Works Department repairs were federally reimbursed and cost-recovery from the FCZD was not requested. The FCZD Board of Supervisors did not have to approve any dollars out of the Emergency Response and Recovery budget.

Changes in Risk Exposure in the Planning Area: Four forest fires occurred in Chelan County in 2025: the Labor Mountain Fire (approx. 43,000 acres), Lower Sugarloaf Fire (approx. 43,000 acres), Apple Acres Fire (approx. 3,400 acres) and the Pomas Fire (approx. 3,500 acres). As with most fires of this nature, fire-damaged soils may have high root mortality and exhibit increased rates of water runoff, sediment transport and erosion. This creates a concern for roads, culverts, bridges, channels and public/private property along the drainage paths of the burned watersheds in that they may plug, be overtopped, washed away or impacted by an increase in runoff/sediment on a more frequent basis than under pre-fire conditions. Many other burn scars exist from past fires, which are still a concern due to the unstable landscape.

Mitigation and other FCZD Success Stories: Chelan County continues its efforts to better understand the exposure to risk due to flooding and to provide outreach material to the public about these risks. In 2024, these efforts included:

- Continued to update Flood Control Zone District webpage
 - Continued the permitting process for development within the floodplain
 - Outreach to homeowners identified in FEMA's Community Assistance Visit who had deficient flood certifications and coordinated correction requirements
 - Began to develop a 2026 FCZD newsletter. It is scheduled for release in the fall
 - Continued to manage seven (7) rain gages as emergency alert systems linked to the National Weather Service
-

-
- Due to the December flooding event, the following occurred:
 - Activated the county's Debris Management Plan
 - Damage assessments/emergency bridge inspections and closures
 - Opened five sandbag distribution locations
 - Emergency environmental permitting
 - Assisted the City of Cashmere in protecting the levee system

Several mitigation projects have begun or have been completed during this reporting period:

- Twenty-Five Mile Creek Culvert Replacement, Phase 1: Chelan County received design work funding from FEMA to investigate replacing an undersized box culvert with a bridge. This effort will be completed in 2026. A benefit-cost analysis will be completed to determine if Phase 2 (construction) is awarded FEMA funding.
- Stemilt Creek Bridge #103 Scour Repair: In 2019, a high-flow event scoured the Stemilt Creek channel and undercut both bridge abutments. The FCZD partnered with Chelan County Public Works Department to fund a project to replace the lost streambed material and protect the bridge abutments. The scour repair work was completed under budget in 2025.
- The FCZD partnered with a local developer and the Icicle Irrigation District to replace a 12-inch culvert with two 24-inch culverts under Titus Road. By completing this project, it should aid in floodwater conveyance and minimize future flooding in this area.

Changes that May Impact Implementation of the CFHMP: No significant changes in the planning area in 2025 that would have a profound impact on the implementation of the CFHMP or with public outreach efforts. No technical or financial capabilities identified during the plan's development have changed. The FCZD should continue to work closely with State of Washington Emergency Management and FEMA to seek out additional grant opportunities.

A 2015 Community Assistance Visit (CAV) by the Department of Ecology identified the lack of a Flood Development Permit as a deficiency in the county's flood program and, as a result, is not in compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The FCZD assisted the Chelan County Community Development Department in creating and implementing a Flood Development Permit based upon Chelan County Code Chapter 3.20. On August 1, 2018, the Department of Ecology closed the CAV and found the county in compliance with the NFIP.

Following the Department of Ecology's CAV, FEMA conducted a follow-up CAV in July 2019 and found deficiencies in a number of the county's building permits issued within the special flood hazard area (i.e. 100-year floodplain). As a result of this finding, Chelan County revised internal permitting procedures; began to reach out to homeowners, alerting them of required repairs to adhere to building codes; and kept FEMA apprised of progress made toward correcting these deficiencies. FEMA has indicated it is satisfied with the progress the county is making at this time.

COMPREHENSIVE FLOOD HAZARD MANAGEMENT PLAN PROGRESS

Summary Overview of the Flood Plan's Progress: The performance period for the floodplain management plan became effective on Nov. 13, 2017, with the adoption of the CFHMP by the Chelan County FCZD Board of Supervisors. The FCZD anticipates an update in the near future when the CAV is closed out. The CFHMP has targeted 38 flood hazard mitigation actions to be pursued during the five-year performance period. As of the reporting period, the following overall progress can be reported:

- 22 out of 38 actions reported ongoing action toward completion
- 3 out of 38 actions were reported as being complete
- 13 out of 38 actions reported no action taken

The Floodplain Management Plan Steering Committee: The CFHMP steering committee, made up of stakeholders within the planning area, determined through the plan's development process that a steering committee would remain in service to oversee maintenance of the plan. At a minimum, the Steering Committee will provide technical review and oversight on the

development of the annual progress report. It is anticipated that there will be turnover in the membership annually, which will be documented in the progress reports. For this reporting period, the Steering Committee membership is as indicated in Table 1:

Table 1: Steering Committee Members

Name	Title	Jurisdiction/Agency
Andi Zontek-Backstrum	Public Works Director	City of Leavenworth
Maggie Boles	Community Development Director	City of Leavenworth
Steve Croci	Director of Operations	City of Cashmere
Tom Wachholder	Public Works Director	City of Wenatchee
Jessica Shaw	Deputy Public Works Director - Utilities	City of Wenatchee
	Community Development Director	City of Entiat
Erin McCardle	Mayor	City of Chelan
Jake Youngren	Public Works Director	City of Chelan
Deanna Walter	Director	Chelan County Community Development Department
Christina Wollman	Consulting Floodplain Administrator	Chelan County Community Development Department
Mike Kaputa	Director	Chelan County Natural Resource Department
Jason Reinfeld	Sergeant	Chelan County Emergency Management
Eric Pierson	FCZD Administrator	Chelan County FCZD / Public Works
Jason Detamore	Environmental Manager	Chelan County FCZD / Public Works
Sandra Floyd	Floodplain Management Specialist	Department of Ecology
Ryan Williams	Director	Cascadia Conservation District
Sam Jordan	Trails Program Manager	Chelan-Douglas Land Trust
Keith Kusler	Hydraulics Engineer	WSDOT
Charlotte Dewey	Service Hydrologist	National Weather Service

Erica Taecker	Forest Engineer	U.S. Forest Service
Jennifer Burns	Environmental Coordinator	Chelan County PUD
Bob Whitehall / Aaron Young / Phylisha Olin		Citizens

Review of the Action Plan: Table 2 reviews the action plan, reporting the status of each initiative. Reviewers of this report should refer to the CFHMP for more detailed descriptions of each initiative and the prioritization process.

Table 2: Action Plan Matrix

Action Taken (Yes/No)	Description	Priority	Timeline	Status (X, O, ✓)
1	Define regional flood hazard management consistency pursuant to RCW 86.12 for the planning area. This definition will strive to exceed minimum National Flood Insurance Program standards and will be developed through a facilitated planning effort with all cities within Chelan County.			
Yes	Chapter 5 of Chelan County's Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan details regional consistency and is further expanded upon within the policies (Chapter 12). Cities within Chelan County should review regional consistencies to ensure compliance.	High	Ongoing	O
2	Chelan County will continue with the Community Rating System (CRS) application and classification process and will mentor Chelan County cities that show interest in CRS participation.			
Yes	The Insurance Service Office (ISO) conducted a CRS verification visit on August 1, 2018. Joining the CRS program is anticipated to occur in future years once all deficiencies are addressed.	High	Ongoing	O
3	Define floodplain mapping criteria that take into account future flood hazard conditions and/or expected worst-case conditions to be applied to all future flood studies within the planning area.			
No	This action item has yet to begin.	Medium	Unknown	X
4	Identify alternative sources of funding to leverage Flood Control Zone District funding to perform new flood studies in identified areas of need based on risk.			

Action Taken (Yes/No)	Description	Priority	Timeline	Status (X, O, ✓)
Yes	The FCZD continually seeks alternative sources of funding through agencies such as FEMA, Department of Ecology, Army Corps of Engineers, Chelan County Public Works Department and the Surface and Stormwater Management Utility.	High	Ongoing	O
5	Inform all future mapping by maintaining a database on known flood risk that tracks historical flood conditions to include, but not be limited to: high water marks, recorded damages, photos, observed flood conditions, etc.			
No	The FCZD anticipates developing a protocol for mapping and maintaining a database on known flood risks.	Medium	Ongoing	X
6	Continue to implement the Stormwater Management Program, which includes facility identification, design, construction and maintenance within the stormwater utility jurisdictional authority.			
Yes	Chelan County's Stormwater Management Program was updated in 2018 and will be updated again in the near future. The County continues to improve upon asset management tracking within the utility boundary. Stormwater infrastructure continues to be added to a new GIS tracking system.	High	Ongoing	O
7	For areas outside the Stormwater Utility, clearly define the stormwater management program based on existing programs and capabilities.			
Yes	Chelan County Code Chapter 13.16 – Stormwater Management for Chelan County provides stormwater guidance on development projects throughout the county. Stormwater infrastructure data is gathered as time allows and entered into GIS as a means for asset management.	Medium	Ongoing	O
8	Develop a facility maintenance operation and maintenance protocol for Flood Control Zone District-funded facilities as they are developed.			
Yes	Since 2017, operation and maintenance protocols have been developed for all new facilities under the Flood Control Zone District purview.	Medium	Ongoing	O
9	Investigate solutions to issues associated with modifications to the landscape that increase runoff, including sediment, to adjacent properties and infrastructure.			

Action Taken (Yes/No)	Description	Priority	Timeline	Status (X, O, ✓)
No	A type of land use modification tracking system combined with new regulations may be considered in the near future to minimize sediment-laden runoff leaving properties.	Medium	Unknown	X
10	When requested, the Flood Control Zone District may act as the applicant agent for mitigation grant opportunities for private property owners requesting to participate in the grant program.			
No	At this time, there hasn't been an opportunity to act as the applicant agent for a private property mitigation grant. If the opportunity presents itself, the District Administrator and Board of Supervisors may consider this opportunity.	Medium	Not Applicable	X
11	Develop a flood informational website on the Flood Control Zone District web page.			
Yes	In 2025, the FCZD webpage continued to be updated to provide useful information to the citizens of Chelan County. It can be accessed at www.co.chelan.wa.us/flood-control-zone-district	High	Ongoing	O
12	Deploy public information and outreach programs targeting at-risk properties within the planning area.			
Yes	The County continues to disseminate flood risk information through its website; support direct mailings to properties within the special flood hazard area (100-year floodplain); produce an online newsletter and press releases to local media; and provide personal interaction through phone calls, permit counter inquiries and during the permit application and/or review process.	High	Ongoing	O
13	Coordinate with FEMA Region X on deploying flood insurance workshops for agents, lenders and citizens within the performance period for this plan.			
No	At this time, coordination with FEMA Region X has not occurred. The County is attempting to correct deficiencies as a result of the CAV. Once complete, opportunities may change.	High	Not Applicable	X
14	Investigate feasible, cost-effective solutions to flood issues within No. 1 Canyon.			
Yes	Construction of four new debris basins within the drainway is complete. Replacement and/or adding culverts is being investigated to improve flood conveyance.	Low	Ongoing	O

Action Taken (Yes/No)	Description	Priority	Timeline	Status (X, O, ✓)
15	Identify a feasible, cost-effective solution to Slide Ridge debris flow issues.			
Yes	In 2022, the FCZD completed construction to improve Slide Ridge and to correct debris flow issues.	Low	Complete	✓
16	Investigate feasible, cost-effective solutions to flood issues within No. 2 Canyon.			
Yes	The FCZD received a Department of Ecology Flood Control Assistance Account Program (FCAAP) grant for this project and it was completed in 2023. This mitigation strategy summarized the hydrology in the canyon, developed capital improvements and produced a homeowner handbook.	High	Ongoing	O
17	Investigate feasible, cost-effective solutions to flood issues within Dry Gulch (south of City of Wenatchee).			
No	Work has not begun on this action item.	Low	Unknown	X
18	Investigate feasible, cost-effective solutions to flood issues within Mission Creek.			
No	Work has not begun on this action item. The FCZD may begin the process of conducting an inventory of bridge/culvert crossings within the Mission Creek drainage.	Medium	Unknown	X
19	Investigate feasible solutions to flood issues within Ski Hill Basin.			
Yes	The analysis is complete and outlines a number of solutions to minimize flooding within the Ski Hill Basin. The FCZD is determining the phasing of projects.	High	Ongoing	O
20	Coordinate with City of Cashmere on options for the maintenance and management of the levee system within the City and County.			
No	The Cashmere Levee Management Plan was completed in May 2018 and environmental permitting is complete.	Low	Complete	✓
21	Maintain a database of flood control needs within the planning area as needs become identified for incorporation into future updates and progress reporting to this plan.			

Action Taken (Yes/No)	Description	Priority	Timeline	Status (X, O, ✓)
Yes	The FCZD attempts to investigate flood control needs throughout Chelan County when needed. If warranted, new information will be added to future updates and progress reporting.	High	Ongoing	O
22	Mitigate flood-related risk to publicly owned county bridges.			
Yes	Chelan County maintains a robust bridge management program that includes inspection and a maintenance schedule on necessary bridges. Mitigating flood risk to county bridges is part of this program and is undertaken as funding allows. Design work for 25-Mile Creek in the Lake Chelan basin is ongoing.	Medium	Ongoing	O
23	Maintain the county Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) pursuant to the requirements of the State Growth Management Act.			
Yes	Chelan County's Critical Area Ordinance, found in Title 11 of the county code, is currently in compliance with the State Growth Management Act.	High	Ongoing	O
24	Identify feasible opportunities with like goals for natural resource protection within identified flood-risk areas based on available funding.			
No	This opportunity has not presented itself.	Medium	Unknown	X
25	Coordinate with watershed planning and program implementation to identify opportunities to leverage available funding for like goals between watershed and Flood Control Zone District plans and programs.			
No	In 2025, opportunities were lacking to coordinate with watershed planning units to leverage funding.	Low	Unknown	X
26	Utilizing the best available data, science and technology, enhance the existing flood notification program, striving to identify a notification protocol within systems with real-time flood threat recognition capability.			
Yes	Chelan County continues to maintain a series of rain gages that provide the National Weather Service with real-time data to issue emergency alerts. A stream gage was added to the Mad River drainage as a result of the Cougar Creek Fire, and a rain gage was relocated to Grouse Mountain as a result of the Twenty-Five Mile Fire. All are connected to the National Weather Service.	Medium	Ongoing	O

Action Taken (Yes/No)	Description	Priority	Timeline	Status (X, O, ✓)
27	Update the County emergency response plan to reflect any changes to flood notification protocol within the County.			
No	Once Chelan County Emergency Management updates the county's emergency response plan, flood notification protocols will be added.	High	Unknown	X
28	Conduct annual exercises of the County Emergency Operations Plan in compliance with National Incident Management System standards, such that flood response actions of the County are reviewed, evaluated and adapted based on observations from the exercises.			
Yes	The FCZD and its partner, the county's Public Works Department, cooperatively coordinate with Emergency Management and the Sheriff's Office in an annual tabletop exercise.	High	Ongoing	O
29	Draft a prioritized list of road segments and bridges that should be elevated above the 100-year flood hazard area and culverts that will fail under flood flow. Upgrade these structures if funding becomes available.			
No	Chelan County Public Works needs to complete a prioritized list of culverts, road segments and bridges that should be elevated above the 100-year floodplain. Once this list is complete, prioritization needs to occur to determine where funding should be obligated. The County should also continue to work with FEMA, under RiskMAP program, for assistance on flood mapping.	Medium	Unknown	X
30	Integrate the Chelan County Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan into other appropriate plans and programs that can support or enhance the County's efforts to reduce flood risk as these plans and programs are updated. Examples of such plans/programs include, but are not limited to: Chelan County Hazard Mitigation Plan, Chelan County Comprehensive Plan and Chelan County Shorelines Master Plan.			
Yes	In 2024, Chelan County completed the Hazard Mitigation Plan, which utilized information found within the Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan. The FCZD is an official annex or partner in the Hazard Mitigation Plan.	Medium	Ongoing	O
31	Utilizing the best available data, science and technology, maintain and enhance, as data becomes available, the Level 2, user-defined HAZUS-MH model that was constructed to support this planning effort.			
No	At this time, this action item has not been addressed.	Medium	Unknown	X

Action Taken (Yes/No)	Description	Priority	Timeline	Status (X, O, ✓)
32	Establish a sediment management program that includes expanded channel monitoring, establishment of thresholds to trigger actions and analysis of sediment management action alternatives.			
No	The FCZD has not begun to address this action item.	High	Unknown	X
33	As Flood Control Zone District projects are constructed, monitor projects using identified performance measures and adaptive management to track the effectiveness of completed projects to inform the design and implementation of future projects.			
Yes	Since the FCZD inception in 2014 and the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 2017, two capital construction projects funded by the FCZD have been completed.	Low	Ongoing	O
34	Respond to inquiries and complaints from citizens and other public and private agencies and track per Community Rating System requirements.			
Yes	The county's Community Development and Public Works departments, in coordination with the FCZD, field and respond to questions/complaints from other public and private agencies. A standard countywide tracking system per CRS requirements will continue to be implemented.	High	Ongoing	O
35	Maximize federal, state and local funding opportunities through grant application submittals in support of capital improvement projects, technical studies and other flood-hazard management activities.			
Yes	Chelan County's FCZD staff continually seeks applicable grant opportunities.	High	Ongoing	O
36	Continue to provide flood-hazard management technical support to all Chelan County departments and cities proposing activities or projects that affect floodplain functions.			
Yes	The FCZD proactively coordinates with the necessary departments within Chelan County to provide the necessary flood hazard management technical support. Cities can contact the FCZD when activities or projects arise that may affect floodplain functions.	High	Ongoing	O

Action Taken (Yes/No)	Description	Priority	Timeline	Status (X, O, ✓)
37	Continue to maintain good standing under the National Flood Insurance Program by implementing programs meeting or exceeding the minimum National Flood Insurance Program requirements. Such programs include enforcing an adopted flood damage prevention ordinance, participating in floodplain mapping updates, and providing public assistance and information on flood hazard requirements and impacts.			
Yes	Chelan County continues to meet the NFIP requirements and will work to maintain compliance.	High	Ongoing	O
38	Develop and implement a stand-alone floodplain development permit for all new development and/or substantial improvements within the unincorporated County-regulated floodplain.			
Yes	Chelan County's Flood Development Permit was implemented August 1, 2018, and is overseen by the Floodplain Administrator in the Community Development Department, with engineering support provided by the FCZD.	Low	Completed	✓

Completion Status Legend:

✓ = Project completed

O = Action ongoing towards completion (These are actions that have continuing oversight, management, or are a specific task to be accomplished).

X = No progress at this time

Recommendations for Changes or Enhancements: Based on the review of this report by the floodplain management plan Steering Committee, the following recommendations will be noted for future updates or revisions to the plan:

- CFHMP expired in 2022. FCZD will investigate update requirements with FEMA once the CAV is complete.

PUBLIC REVIEW NOTICE

The contents of this report are considered to be public knowledge and have been prepared for public disclosure. Copies of the report have been provided to the FCZD Board of Supervisors and to local media outlets and the report is posted on the FCZD website. Any questions or comments regarding the contents of this report should be directed to:

Chelan County Flood Control Zone District

C/O Chelan County Public Works Department

316 Washington St., Suite 402

Wenatchee, WA 98801

(509) 667-6415

FCZD@co.chelan.wa.us