

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Karuk Tribe

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 4, 2013

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FEDERAL KLAMATH DAM REMOVAL REPORT FINALIZED
-After extensive Peer Review, Report to Secretary Complete
-Independent Expert Reviewers Satisfied by Thoroughness and Quality of Science

Washington, DC – The Department of Interior has just released the final *Klamath Dam Removal Overview Report for the Secretary of the Interior: An Assessment of Science and Technical Information*. The Overview Report is a key document that the Secretary will rely on when considering whether or not removing Klamath River dams is in the Public Interest, a determination required by the Klamath Agreements as a prerequisite for their implementation. However, under terms of the Agreements, the Secretary is precluded from issuing such a determination until congress acts. Over 6,000 pages of peer reviewed scientific analyses informed the report.

The Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement (KBRA) and the Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement (KHSA) are products of years of negotiation and research by Klamath River Tribes, farmers, ranchers, fishermen, conservation groups, state and local governments. The Agreements address a century or more of conflict over water use in the Klamath Basin that has often pitted neighbor versus neighbor in the most hotly contested water war in the West.

According to a February 1, 2013 letter issued by Dennis Lynch, Klamath Secretarial Determination Project Manager, “The peer review of this Overview Report was completed in 2012 by a panel of six subject-matter experts from across the nation. This panel identified several areas where the report could be improved. Since then, members of a multi-agency Federal team considered and responded to each of the peer review comments and made appropriate changes to the final report.”

The Peer Review released last March stated, “the [Draft] Overview Report connects to the sound science that underlies its conclusions, provides a depth of coverage suitable for the anticipated audience, and provides clearly stated concepts and conclusions.” The review goes on to highlight specific areas where the Overview Report could be improved upon including greater details on sediment transport and more thorough explanation of potential risks associated with dam removal.

These issues were addressed in the Final Overview report. However; changes made to the Final Overview Report did not alter any major conclusions, such as dam removal costs, likely long-term or short term changes to fish populations and fisheries, effects on economics, tribal resources, jobs, or real estate.

“In other words, the revised report overwhelmingly argues that dam removal and the implementation of the Klamath Agreements is in the public interest,” said Leaf Hillman, Director of the Karuk Tribe Department of Natural Resources.

The peer review report, the Federal team’s response to the peer review report, all 50 underlying Secretarial Determination reports, are all available at www.KlamathRestoration.gov.

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