

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

**Karuk Tribe • Klamath Tribes of Oregon • American Rivers
Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations
Trout Unlimited • Institute for Fisheries Resources • California Trout
Salmon River Restoration Council
Northern California Council of the Federation of Flyfishers**

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FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT RECOMMENDS REMOVING KLAMATH DAMS

9,000 Pages of Triple Peer Reviewed Analysis Concludes that Klamath Dam Removal is Safe, Affordable, and Beneficial to Salmon

Washington, D.C. – Today the Department of Interior released its Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on what would be the largest dam removal and river restoration effort in US history on Northern California's Klamath River. The FEIS concludes that dam removal under terms of the 2010 Klamath Restoration Agreements is safe, cost-effective, and will lead to improved fisheries and water quality. In addition, the report predicts that implementation of the Klamath Agreements would lead to the creation of an estimated 4,600 new regional jobs. The analysis concludes by recommending full removal of PacifiCorp's lower four Klamath dams.

Three years ago, Klamath River tribes, farmers, ranchers, fishermen, and conservationists agreed to remove four Klamath River dams as part of a larger plan to restore fisheries and improve water quality while providing greater water and power security for local farmers and ranchers. The plan was embodied in two agreements: the Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement (KBRA) and the Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement (KHSA).

The KBRA focuses on better balancing water use in the Klamath Basin to assure fisheries restoration while addressing the power and water needs of Klamath Irrigation Project farmers. The KHSA lays out a clear plan to remove the lower four Klamath River dams in a manner that ensures the lowest possible power rates for PacifiCorp customers.

According to Congressman Jared Huffman (D-San Rafael), "Every previous study from a wide range of sources informed this report and the scientific and common sense conclusion is clear: we should tear down these dams."

Glen Spain of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations (PCFFA), a commercial fishermen's group adds, "This final report confirms that dam removal is both feasible and cheaper

than any other option. None of the many scare stories spread by dam removal opponents were found to have any factual basis.”

The FEIS is a large document drawing on the expertise of hundreds of scientific experts from a wide range of disciplines including fisheries biology, economics, and civil engineering. In addition, the FEIS considers and addresses over four thousand citizen comments.

Two key hurdles remain before Klamath River tribes, farmers, and fishermen can enact the Klamath Restoration Agreements. First, Congress must authorize the plan and second, the Secretary of Interior must deem implementation of dam removal to be in the public interest.

“We are encouraged by the signals we are getting from Washington,” explains Josh Saxon of the Salmon River Restoration Council. “During Ms. Jewell’s confirmation hearings, Senator Wyden’s first question focused on the Klamath. This tells us that both Congress and the Administration are aware of the need to solve the Klamath Crisis.”ⁱ

Parties to the Agreements believe time is of the essence for Klamath communities. This year’s drought will mean water shortages for irrigators, ESA listed salmon and suckers, as well as the Klamath National Wildlife Refuges, an important stopping-place for three-quarters of the waterfowl on the Pacific Flyway. The Settlement Agreements provide the means to avoid or mitigate such problems in the future – but must first be fully implemented.

“We need to act fast and implement the solutions to these problems that the Agreements provide, otherwise our community is headed for real train wreck,” explains Jeff Mitchell, Klamath Tribes council member.

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Editor’s Notes

Link to the Executive Summary of the FEIS can be found here: www.klamathrestoration.gov

Key Klamath Dam Facts

- The Klamath River hydroelectric dams were built between 1916 and 1962, without any provisions, such as ladders, for salmon to reach upstream spawning areas – a practice that would be illegal under today’s laws.
- The Klamath Dams produce a very small amount of electricity – only about 82 MW on average over the past 50-year operating license. This is less than 1.5 percent of the power that PacifiCorp produces.
- The lower four older Klamath dams also provide no irrigation benefits, no significant flood control, and were not designed for either of those two purposes.
- The Klamath River once produced an estimated average run of 880,000 adult salmon each year, the third largest salmon run in the US outside of Alaska. Today that run averages less than 15% of its historical size. Once abundant Klamath coho salmon are at about 2 % of historic numbers, and listed under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA).

- Poor river conditions can cause Klamath salmon runs to fluctuate wildly. In 2002 the Klamath River suffered the worst adult fish kill in U.S. history, with more than 70,000 otherwise healthy salmon spawners dying in the river before they could reach their spawning grounds. As recently as 2006, depressed Klamath salmon runs forced closures of all ocean commercial salmon fishing from Monterey, CA to the Oregon-Washington border, costing coastal salmon-fishing dependent communities more than \$100 million in economic losses.
- Both the California and Oregon Public Utilities Commissions have already approved dam removal under terms of the KHSA as the least costly alternative for the company's power customers, as compared to expensive retrofitting and relicensing.
- PacifiCorp is a major U.S. public utilities company with operations in six western states, including Oregon and northern California. The company is already committed to bringing more than 17 times more renewable "green" power generation capacity on-line by 2015 (1,400 MW) than the very small amount of power (82 MW) that would be lost from Klamath dam removal. This was a condition of PUC approval of the purchase of PacifiCorp by MidAmerican Energy Holding Company in 2005. See Final Order in CPUC Docket No. A05-07-010, Measure 41

ⁱ First written Question at Jewell Confirmation Hearing, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, March 7, 2013

Chairman Wyden: I have a strong interest in seeing the difficult water resource issues in the Klamath Basin resolved, and I know the Department of the Interior has been working on these issues. Will you, and the Department under your leadership, support us in our efforts in the Klamath Basin?

Ms. Jewell's Response: It is my understanding that the Klamath issue is long-standing and very complex, involving two states, several Indian tribes, and numerous interested parties. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and other interested parties in the Klamath Basin to ensure that any future determination concerning the Klamath Basin is made in an open and transparent manner and is informed by the best available science.