

## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

# **Karuk Tribe • Yurok Tribe • Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations • Trout Unlimited • California Trout • Sustainable Northwest • American Rivers • Save California Salmon • Klamath Riverkeeper • Salmon River Restoration Council**

**For Immediate Release:** February 4, 2019

**For more information:**

Craig Tucker, Karuk Tribe Natural Resources Consultant, 916-207-8294

Steve Rothert, American Rivers, 530-277-0448

Glen Spain, Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, (541) 521-8655

Brian Johnson, Trout Unlimited, (415) 385-0796

Regina Chichizola, Save California Salmon, (541) 951-0126

Matt Mais, Yurok Tribe, (707) 954-0976

### **Communities Line Up to Support Klamath Dam Removal Permit** *-California Considers Water Quality Permit for Nation's Largest Salmon Restoration Project* *- Decades Long Fight over Klamath Dams Nearing final Chapter*

Arcata, CA— This week, the California Water Board will hold public hearings on a draft Environmental Impact Report ([DEIR](#)) for the removal of the lower four Klamath River dams. Tribes, fishermen, and conservation groups are praising the document which calls removal of the lower four dams “the superior alternative.”

“California’s report supports what many of us have said all along - removal of the lower four Klamath River dams is key to restoring one of America’s most valuable salmon fisheries,” commented Glen Spain with the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen’s Associations (PCFFA), the west coast's largest commercial salmon fishing industry trade organization.

An Environmental Impact Report is required by the California Environmental Quality Act before the state can issue the Clean Water Act permit necessary for dam decommissioning.

“This is another deliberate step towards dam removal,” noted Karuk Chairman Russell “Buster” Attebery. “It has been a long fight but the momentum is now on our side.”

Several dozen Karuk, Yurok, Hoopa and Klamath Tribal members traveled to Scotland back in 2004 to protest the shareholders’ meeting of Scottish Power who was then the owner of PacifiCorp who in turn owns the dams. After several years of protest, Scottish Power sold the project to Warren Buffett’s Berkshire Hathaway ([BRK](#)).

This led Tribes and their allies to Omaha, NE. “We confronted Mr. Buffett directly over the dams at his shareholders’ meeting in Omaha,” said Yurok Vice-Chairman Frankie Myers. “It was a long hard battle that took several years but, in the end, we worked out a plan that Mr. Buffett and his executives could support and they have been good partners ever since.”

The plan to implement America's most ambitious salmon restoration project involves \$200 million in financing from PacifiCorp, \$250 million from an existing California water bond, and creation of the non-profit Klamath River Renewal Corporation ([KRRC](#)) to take over the dams and manage the removal effort.

"As we've seen time after time on rivers across the country, dam removal works. The Klamath River is on the verge of rebounding back to life. Thanks to years of hard work by so many in this community, our children and grandchildren will know a healthy, free-flowing Klamath River," said Steve Rothert with American Rivers.

"Two years from now, we will re-unite the Upper and Lower Klamath Basins for the first time in a century," said Brian Johnson, California Director for Trout Unlimited. "Dam removal is the essential first step toward safe and clean water, strong runs of salmon and steelhead, and healthy communities."

Key Findings of the DEIR (which can be found [here](#)) include:

- There are many significant, long-term benefits from the proposed project.
- There are few long-term significant and unavoidable impacts from the project; most negative impacts are short-term and/or can be avoided or reduced through mitigations.
- The proposed project (removal of lower four dams) is superior to the six alternatives analyzed: 1) No Project; 2) Partial Removal; 3) Continued Operations with Fish Passage; 4) Three Dam Removal (removal of Iron Gate, Copco No. 1, and Copco No. 2 dams); 5) Two Dam Removal (removal of Iron Gate and Copco No. 1 dams); and 6) Dam Removal with No Hatcheries.
- Dam removal is the only alternative that achieves the project purpose of restoring a free-flowing river.
- The project complies with water quality objectives of the Clean Water Act.
- Dam removal is the best way to improve water quality for the river.

Dates and locations of public meetings to solicit comments on the DEIR:

-Tuesday, February 5, 2019 (5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.) at the Best Western Miner's in Yreka.

-Wednesday, February 6, 2019 (5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.) at the Neighborhood Center on D street in Arcata

-Thursday, February 7, 2019 (12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.) at the Karuk Tribe Council Chambers in Orleans

-Friday, February 15, 2019 (1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.) at the CalEPA Building, Sierra Hearing Room 1001 I Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor in Sacramento.

More information on the Klamath River dams, can be found at <http://www.klamathrenewal.org/>.

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