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## **Klamath Riverkeeper Press Release | For Immediate Release**

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### **Klamath Riverkeeper: Dam Removal Agreements are Best Path Forward Grassroots group looks ahead to dam removal legislation, interim conditions**

*Orleans, CA*—As Klamath stakeholders and heads of state sign a historic set of agreements to remove the Klamath dams, Klamath Riverkeeper is looking ahead to the legislative, regulatory and financial issues that must be addressed in order to actually remove the dams.

“The dam removal agreements signed this week are the best shot at dam removal we’ve got right now,” said Riverkeeper Erica Terence, “but they are really just the start of a new chapter.”

“Our job is to keep the process on track, make sure environmental laws are followed, and find funding that does not come at the expense of other watersheds, as in California’s current water bond,” Terence added.

As the primary grassroots group working to restore the Klamath River, Klamath Riverkeeper continues to see citizen involvement as key to the dam removal process, and has not ruled out the use of legal action if necessary. The groups’ lawsuits and grassroots organizing were instrumental in pressuring PacifiCorp toward the settlement signed this week.

“First on our agenda is the Clean Water Act,” Terence said. “Without setting and implementing tough clean water rules, we may see 10 more years of toxic algae and dead salmon on the Klamath, and we’re not sure Klamath salmon can survive that. PacifiCorp must be held accountable for their pollution before the dams are removed.” California is scheduled to adopt pollution rules for the Klamath River March 24<sup>th</sup>, and Oregon has just released its draft pollution clean up plan – known as the Klamath TMDL – this month. “Implementation of interim water quality conditions laid out in the settlement is also essential,” Terence added.

Upholding environmental laws during the legislative process, and ensuring an as-yet-unwritten drought plan passes environmental muster are key pressure points as the agreements move forward. Wrestling funding away from a controversial California water bond will also be a major challenge.

“It’s great to celebrate how far we’ve come,” Terence said, “but the reality is that we’re just getting started. There’s a lot of very difficult and very important work left to do.”

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