

Klamath River Dams: KRRC's Proposed Dam Removal Project – Minority Consensus For Environmental And Ecological Disaster

Newly uncovered information and recent statements by a KRRC board member paints a new picture of double-talk and misinformation

YREKA, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, July 22, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Numerous recent proofs now show that the Klamath River Dam removal project as presented to the public, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and to legislators by the non-profit shell-company Klamath River Renewal Corporation ('KRRC') is based upon incomplete, flawed and misrepresented information.

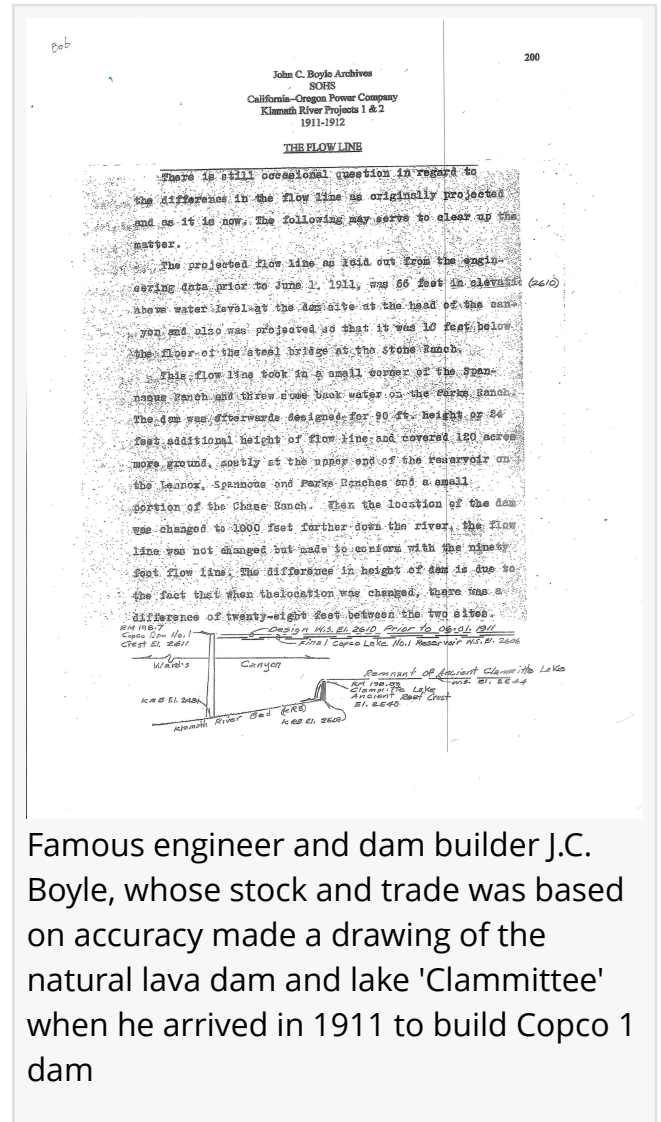
Any one of the following six (6) points is more than reason-enough to halt the current project, setting aside the recent transfer of the license by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) until a comprehensive, top to bottom analysis of KRRC's plan is conducted in consideration of these points, followed by full compliance with NEPA.

Point Number 1:

The Entire Premise ('It's about restoring Salmon') For Klamath River Dam Removal Project by The Minority Consensus of Fishing Zealots and KRRC Is False!

In a July 8, 2021 email to Mr. William E. Simpson II and 100+ other people, including public officials, a member of KRRC's board of directors, Mr. Glen Spain said;

"Ultimately however whether Salmon did or did not exist above the dams is irrelevant to PacifiCorp's decision to remove the dams today."



And near the end of the same email, Mr. Glen Spain reiterates that; “Economics Not Salmon Is the Reason PacifiCorp is Removing the Dams”.

More about the July 8th 2021 email here:

https://www.einnews.com/pr_news/546614530/compelling-facts-condemn-krrc-s-proposed-klamath-river-dam-removal-plan

Point Number 2:

Klamath River Salmon Migration Theory Misrepresented.

Recently Uncovered Facts Show Anadromous Salmon never migrated past the site of current-day Copco 1 dam (Ward Canyon).



Copco (seen in photo) and Iron Gate Lakes hold 45-billion gallons of fresh water that is desperately needed for domestic, agricultural and wildfire suppression uses under the Klamath River Basin Compact Act

The key reason that has been widely promoted as the logic behind the removal of the four Klamath River Dam, is that; the Klamath River Dams are blocking the migration of salmon.

“

Economics Not Salmon Is the Reason PacifiCorp is Removing the Dams”

Mr. Glen Spain - Klamath River Renewal Corporation (KRRC) board member

Compelling evidence that has been sequestered until now, showing that conjecture by the minority fishing-zealot consensus is factually incorrect.

In fact, there is no hard evidence of any historic salmon migration past Ward Canyon on the Klamath River, which is

the present-day site of Copco 1 dam.

On the other hand, there is hard, geologic evidence that salmon never made it past Ward Canyon and the location of the present-day Copco 1 dam.

The evidence is literally ‘rock-hard’, as in a naturally-formed 31-foot-tall lava dam that existed for millennia blocking the path of migratory fish. This dam, made by Nature, was present in 1913 and holding back water in a lake called ‘Clammittee Lake’, at the time construction began on the Copco 1 dam, according to a drawing and narrative by famous engineer and dam builder, J.C.

Boyle.

(SEE IMAGE with J.C. Boyle's drawing)

Over the course of the past millions of years, there were also other natural dams, that were even higher (one was 130-foot-tall) formed by lava flows, that also had in fact blocked fish migration on the Klamath River at Ward Canyon. These naturally high dams were impassable by any known salmon.

The area of the Klamath River that is being targeted by the fishery-zealots happens to be the ancestral homeland of the indigenous Shasta Nation.

From The Economist:

“Some argue that lava flows now submerged by the dams have stopped many salmon migrating farther upriver since time immemorial. This is why salmon don't appear in upriver ancestral stories of the Shasta Nation, an indigenous group in the area, says its chief, Roy Hall. He attributes the dwindling salmon more to global warming, and calls the removal of the dams “environmental madness”. Once the lakes are drained, he fears that Shasta burial sites now underwater will be desecrated by pottery hunters.”

This compelling evidence thwarts the entire premise and logic for the dam removal project, just by itself.

And it also proves that the clean energy from the hydro-electric power plants should continue, and that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) should be able to re-license the dams without a requirement for any fish ladders.



A pair of threatened Western Pond Turtles at Copco Lake. Just one of many threatened and endangered species of flora and fauna. Photo: William E. Simpson II



This photo of a Bald Eagle at Copco Lake was taken by 16-year-old Jake Morgan who lives in the Community at Copco Lake

Point Number 3:

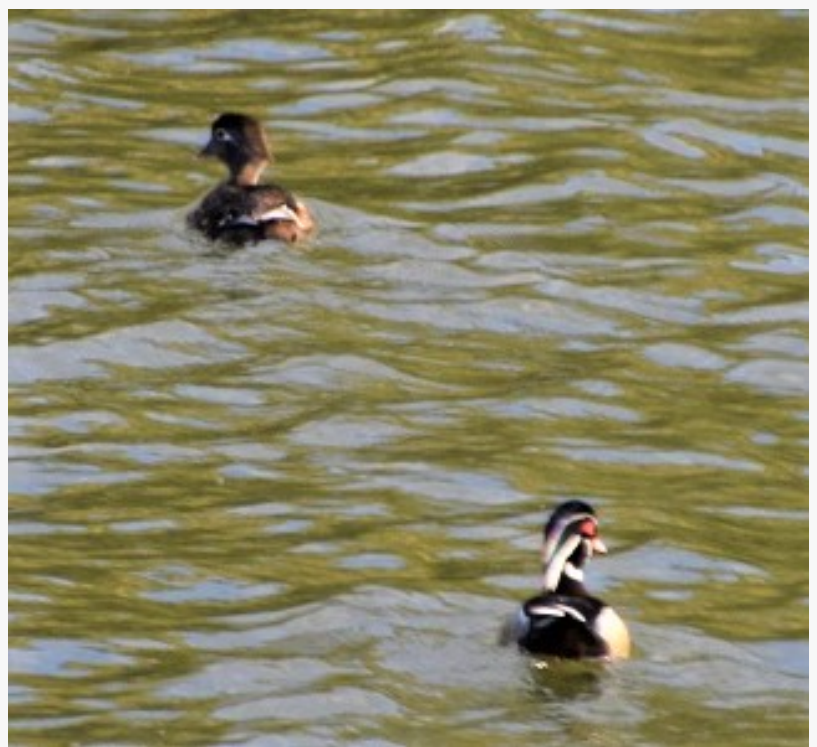
Salmon Runs Failing Due to [Ocean Conditions](#) and Wildfires, Not Klamath River Dams

Science proves that salmon runs are failing due to 'ocean conditions' exacerbated by post-wildfire erosion and sedimentation damaging redds and suffocating salmon eggs:

The culprit in failing salmon runs, along with changing ocean conditions, is the heavy post-wildfire silting-in of the spawning gravels (aka 'redds') in the Klamath river and its tributary stream beds that suffocates the deposited fish eggs in the late fall and early winter.

'Excess sediment can profoundly effect the productivity of a salmon or trout stream' (Cordone and Kelly, 1961).

<https://www.krisweb.com/stream/sediment.htm>



A pair of beautiful Wood Ducks at Copco Lake. Copco and Iron Gate lakes provide critical habitats for a myriad of flora and fauna, including migratory and resident birds. Photo by: M. Gough

Abnormally hot catastrophic wildfires destroy all the vegetation and riparian areas, including fire-evolved trees, on the landscape. These abnormally hot wildfires also pasteurize the soils, killing the microbiome in soils and devastating the root systems that are critical in maintaining soil stabilization. This in turn results in catastrophic erosion when the fall and winter rains arrive. The extreme intensity of the catastrophic erosion is demonstrated by how parts of HWY-1 have broken off into the Pacific Ocean as a result of the post wildfire catastrophic erosion.

From GeoEngineer:

“Scientists believe that the ground failure is associated with the wildfires that have devastated California in the past years. The absence of vegetation makes the absorption of rainwater impossible and results in extensive floods and in debris flows like the one that triggered the current failure. The area of the collapse lies near a region that was impacted by the Dolan fire (August 2020) and received more than 15.7 inches of precipitation.”

Point Number 4:

KRRC's Klamath River Dam Removal Budget Grossly Inadequate

Facts prove that the budget that Klamath River Renewal Corporation ('KRRC') has been selling everyone is dangerously insufficient!

The recently formed shell corporation called the Klamath River Renewal Corporation ('KRRC'), was created to shield the profitable Pacific Corp (a Warren Buffet – Berkshire Hathaway company) from what they recognized as an unlimited liability associated with tearing down the dams on the Klamath River.

The removal of the four dams would release approximately 20-million metric yards of clay silt that is laced with hundreds of tons of nitrates and phosphates into the wild and scenic Klamath River.

These nitrates and phosphates have resulted from 6-decades of agricultural runoff that came down-river from Oregon's Klamath basin agri-production into Copco and Iron Gate lakes, where, quite importantly, they have been safely sequestered.

If these 20-million metric yards of polluted clay-silt, or even a fraction of that amount, is allowed into the Klamath River below the dams, it will cause the largest environmental disaster ever seen on the west coast.

These pollutants will cause the eutrophication of the Klamath River between the dams and the mouth of the Klamath River at the Pacific Ocean, and will kill-off virtually all of the aquatic life! And that would cause a collapse of the trophic cascades and the loss of wildlife that is dependent upon the food chain from the life-forms in the Klamath River.

Once the co-evolved life-forms are gone, it will be virtually impossible to restore the Klamath River's ecosystem, and its flora and fauna will be a shadow of what it is today.

There is no doubt that the half-decade-old obsolete \$450-million (so-called "guaranteed budget") budget that KRRC has pitched, is grossly inadequate.

A more realistic budget, is closer to \$900-Million given the inflation over the half-a-decade since the now obsolete budget was calculated, coupled with huge cost increases (doubling) for construction related costs over the past year (2020-2021) due to COVID economics.

There is also no doubt whatsoever that the proposed project is laden with huge unprecedented risks, as never seen before, at every phase. And those risks and massive liabilities are like a hot potato that Pacific Corp wanted to dump. And now it seems they may have; right into the laps of California and Oregon taxpayers.

And, in a recent Decision and Order by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ('FERC'), item number 34 warns that:

“As part of the January 13, 2021 transfer application, the States of Oregon and California have agreed to be co-licensees with the Renewal Corporation; thus, the States will not be shielded from liability.”

We have already seen smaller project outcomes that spell disaster for the massively underfunded KRRC dam removal budget, which puts Oregon and California taxpayers on the hook, for what could be a massive financial liability at a time when state budgets are strained to the max from COVID and wildfire disasters.

History of a much smaller dam removal project cost over-runs; a red flag for the larger more complex Klamath dam removal project.

According to the Peninsula Daily News in Port Angeles Washington:

The estimated cost of removing the Elwha and Glines Canyon dams from the Elwha River has increased from the original cost projection of \$135 million in 2001, to later projected cost of \$308-million.

Another accounting of the ‘projected costs’ regarding removal of the two Elwha dams compared to the actual costs should be a red-flag for the costs of the much larger and far more ambitious project and estimated budget of \$450-million to remove four Klamath River dams:

“Removal of the Elwha Dam began in September 2011 and was finished in spring 2012, ahead of schedule. Removal of the second dam, the Glines Canyon Dam, was completed on August 26, 2014. The dam removal process was originally projected to last two and a half to three years. The estimated cost of removing both dams was \$40 to \$60 million. The total cost of the Elwha River restoration is approximately \$351.4 million.” ~ Wiki

In the foregoing example, the smaller and simpler 2-dam removal project compared to the four dams on the Klamath River, the costs on that project tripled from what was originally projected.

And in the case of Elwha River dams, the potential for environmental, ecological and private property damages were far less.

The budget for the removal of the four (4) dams on the Klamath River was calculated using economic costs and metrics that were already many years old prior to the beginning of COVID economics, which began in 2020.

Of course, anyone in business knows that if you projected costs are based on a ‘best case’ outcome, and a mediocre, or worse yet, a bad outcome evolves, costs, damages and liabilities can escalate very quickly and steeply.

There's no doubt that dam construction, and dam destruction requires road construction, bridges, trucking, heavy equipment, materials, labor, fuels and insurance. Therefore, the following comparison is valid.

[The Associated General Contractors of America](#) has issued a new report and graph-analyses showing the huge impacts that COVID economics (period April 2020 thru February 2021) has had on skyrocketing costs related to construction projects.

The Associated General Contractors of America study exemplifies the huge cost increases and long delays that have only recently occurred, and certainly years-after KRRC's budget projections for their dam removal project were calculated.

For the purpose of cost-impact analyses, the COVID economics study began in April 2020 thru February 2021. (https://www.agc.org/sites/default/files/AGC_2021_Inflation_Alert_-_Ver1.1.pdf).

The Q-1 2021 Associated General Contractors of America report stated:

"The construction industry is currently experiencing an unprecedented mix of steeply rising materials prices, snarled supply chains, and staffing difficulties, combined with slumping demand that is keeping many contractors from passing on their added costs".

This brand-new report from the Associated General Contractors of America report spells financial disaster for KRRC's project.

And the burden of that disaster will surely fall upon the weary shoulders of California and Oregon taxpayers.

All things considered, and based upon what we do know, a budget in the realm of \$900-million dollars would be in line with proper updates and adjustments to the old budget of only \$450-million.

Point number 5:

If consensus minority groups can work-around obtaining Congressional approval for nullifying the effect of the Klamath River Basin Compact Act, what Congressional act will fall prey to such shenanigans in the future?

If the destruction of the Klamath River dams and lakes created by the Klamath River Basin Compact Act ('Act') is allowed to happen, it sets a dangerous legal precedent that erodes the American democratic process and the power of the U.S. Congress.

The proposed destruction of the water related resources created under that Act, would deprive Americans of the Congressionally enacted 'beneficial uses' stemming from the 45-billion gallons

of fresh water stored in Copco and Iron Gate Lakes. That reserve of water, which is precious to human survival during the current extreme drought and wildfire conditions, was provided under the auspices of the Klamath River Basin Compact Act, which states:

“The provisions of said Klamath River Basin Compact are as follows:

Article I. Purposes

The major purposes of this compact are, with respect to the water resources of the Klamath River Basin:

A. To facilitate and promote the orderly, integrated and comprehensive development, use, conservation and control thereof for various purposes, including, among others: the use of water for domestic purposes; the development of lands by irrigation and other means; the protection and enhancement of fish, wildlife and recreational resources; the use of water for industrial purposes and hydroelectric power production; and the use and control of water for navigation and flood prevention.

B. To further intergovernmental co-operation and comity with respect to these resources and programs for their use and development and to remove causes of present and future controversies by providing (1) for equitable distribution and use of water among the two states and the Federal Government, (2) for preferential rights to the use of water after the effective date of this compact for the anticipated ultimate requirements for domestic and irrigation purposes in the Upper Klamath River Basin in Oregon and California, and (3) for prescribed relationships between beneficial uses of water as a practicable means of accomplishing such distribution and use.”

Point number 6:

The intentional destruction of habitat critical to the survival of numerous species of flora and fauna, including threatened and endangered species, as well as the ‘incidental take’ of certain protect birds during the proposed dam removal project is an ecological and environmental travesty and illegal.

Both Copco and Iron Gate Lakes are critical seasonal habitats for numerous migratory birds, both game birds and non-game birds, as well as the habitat for numerous resident species of birds. And during the growing drought and ‘water crises’, these fresh water lakes are becoming far and few between, forming an oasis of life.

The newly passed bill, [Assembly Bill 454](#), changes sections of California statues that may defer to the MBTA on the incidental killing of birds and makes it clear that the incidental but avoidable killing of native birds is still against state law.

The National Audubon Society endorsed the AB-454 measure.

California Attorney General Xavier Becerra and the state Department of Fish & Wildlife, stating that incidental take remained illegal in California regardless of federal policy.

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