

From: [Susan Miller](#)
To: [Wr401program](#)
Subject: Comments in response to SWRCB's public meeting in Yreka on February 5, 2019
Date: Wednesday, February 6, 2019 11:58:04 PM
Attachments: [SWRCB PUBLIC MEETING, Yreka FEB 2019.docx](#)

Ms. Michelle Siebal
State Water Resources Board
PO Box 2000
Sacramento, CA. 9518-2000

The following are my written comments that I request to be forwarded to your engineers and scientists, who were present at the above referenced meeting.

Thank you,

Susan Miller
Retired Environmental Engineer
living in Hornbrook on the Klamath River in Siskiyou County

February 7, 2019

Ms. Michelle Siebal
State Water Resources Board
PO Box 2000
Sacramento, CA. 9518-2000

Re: SWRCB Public meeting at Miner's Inn in Yreka on February 5, 2019

Dear Scientists and Engineers present at the meeting,

I attended the meeting referenced above and listened carefully to all the comments presented. What I noticed is that the commenters who spoke for retaining the dams cited practical reasons and benefits for their retention. Specifically:

1. Clean hydroelectric power to 70,000 homes and businesses in three counties,
2. Electric power independence and lower power rates,
3. Flood control,
4. Fire suppression,
5. Groundwater recharge, especially in the Copco Lake area,
6. Adequate cold water for a large salmon fish hatchery,
7. Recreation and
8. Water retention for discharge during fall fish runs,

while those who were pro dam removal discussed fish and river restoration, **as if dam removal were the panacea for all their ills**, when in reality the poor fish runs have nothing to do with the dams. (The Copco lake dam has been in existence for over 100 years and there is documented evidence that a lake was present before the dam, due to the existence of a basalt reef.) In fact the dams are beneficial to the anadromous fish for the following reasons:

1. Iron Gate dam provides cold water for a much larger fish hatchery than formerly existed on Fall Creek.
2. The dams create a barrier to the transmission of toxic algae downstream.

3. The dams provide a consistent flow of cold water for discharge downstream, as the water is released from the bottom of the dams.
4. The dams release extra water during the critical months of September and October for supporting the fall fish run, without which the river flow would be inadequate in 3 out of 5 years to support a fall fish run, due to low precipitation.

Scientific evidence has shown that the poor fish runs are caused primarily by the following:

1. Less phytoplankton food supply in the oceans due to pollution and ocean oscillating currents.
2. The comeback of marine mammals, such as seals, now that they are protected. It is estimated that one seal can eat 18 lbs of fish/day.
3. Commercial fishing pressure
4. The allowance of gill netting at the mouth of the river by the Yurok tribe.
5. Overfishing in general, both in the river and the ocean.

The environmentalists talk about the “pristine” river and environment of 200 years ago, yet I don’t see any of them living without modern conveniences, such as running water and electricity, made possible by our technological society. In fact they will likely be the first ones to whine when

1. their electric rates double or triple when the dams are removed,
2. the fish hatchery is no longer supplying millions of fry to the river yearly,
3. the spawning holes and the mouth of the river are filled in with sediment for years to come (as has been already demonstrated by the removal of Condit Dam),
4. their fall fish runs are severely impacted by low flows and warm water coming from upstream sources, no longer moderated by the dams and
5. toxic algae are allowed to contaminate the entire river, instead of being held behind the dams.

No, the environmentalists and tribes don’t talk about these facts. They only talk nostalgically about Native American ceremonies and practices from over 100 years ago, as if they are more important than the 79% of Siskiyou County residents who voted to retain the dams.

The dams in question are an integral part of the infrastructure supporting our modern society. As scientists and engineers, please don't get swept away with nostalgia and wishful thinking. Instead, apply your scientific analytical skills to a critical review of the facts and pertinent scientific evidence. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Susan Miller
Environmental Engineer
(and former water board intern)