



State Water Resources Control Board

March 15, 2024

Ms. Laura Hazlett
Chief Operating Officer
Klamath River Renewal Corporation
Email: lhazlett@klamathrenewal.org

**Lower Klamath Project License Surrender
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Project No. 14803
Siskiyou County
Klamath River and Associated Tributaries**

APPROVAL OF RESERVOIR AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT TO EXTEND ASSISTED SEDIMENT EVACUATION WORK PERIOD

Dear Ms. Hazlett:

On March 12, 2024, the Klamath River Renewal Corporation (KRRC) submitted a request for review and approval of an amendment to its December 2022 Reservoir Area Management Plan (RAMP) to extend the window for assisted sediment evacuation from March 15, 2024 to April 15, 2024. Per Condition 14 of the water quality certification (certification)¹ for the Lower Klamath Project License Surrender (Project), amendments to the RAMP must be approved by the State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board) Deputy Director of the Division of Water Rights (Deputy Director).

Implementation of the RAMP is required by Condition 14 (Restoration) of the Project certification to ensure habitat restoration is implemented during and following removal of the dams to help with the immediate and long-term protection of water quality and beneficial uses (e.g., seeding of newly exposed reservoir sediments to reduce erosion from exposed reservoir beds and disturbed areas). In part, the RAMP includes a series of assisted sediment evacuation procedures intended to restore tributaries to their historical alignments and maximize the initial sediment discharge to the Klamath River when hydrologic conditions are advantageous for sediment transport and restoration of priority tributaries can be implemented more easily. The December 2022 RAMP requires assisted sediment excavation to be completed by March 15, 2024.

Assisted sediment evacuation procedures began in January 2024 following the initial drawdown of Iron Gate Reservoir but were not completed due to high flows and unstable sediment deposits in the reservoir's footprint. The KRRC is requesting an

¹ The Executive Director of the State Water Board issued the Project certification on April 7, 2020 and amended it on November 3, 2022.

amendment to the RAMP to allow for the continuation of assisted sediment evacuation activities until April 15, 2024. The extension will assist ongoing restoration efforts to align tributaries with their historic channels and improve the long-term success for tributary restoration efforts. Additionally, the sediment that will be evacuated during this period is composed mainly of sand and gravel from tributary deposition that will replenish armored streambanks downstream in the Klamath River. The vast majority of sediment flushing from the former reservoir beds is very fine sediment comprised of dead algal matter that cannot perform this function.

The KRRC provided information demonstrating that active assisted sediment evacuation work has had no measurable effect on water quality at the continuous water quality monitoring gage downstream of Iron Gate Dam. Downstream sediment transport thus far has been within the scope of what was predicted in the Project's state and federal environmental reviews and the requested extension of time is not anticipated to change what was predicted. Additionally, through emails received on March 1 and March 8, 2024, the National Marine Fisheries Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife, respectively, provided support for the extension of the assisted sediment excavation work period through April 15, 2024.

Approval: Extension of the RAMP's assisted sediment evacuation work period to April 15, 2024 is hereby approved. The KRRC shall file this approval letter and the RAMP amendment with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) prior to implementation. Any future modifications to the approved RAMP shall be approved by the Deputy Director and filed with FERC and USACE prior to implementation.

If you have questions regarding this letter, please contact Garrett Long, Project Manager, by email to: Garrett.Long@waterboards.ca.gov. Written correspondence should be directed to:

State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Rights – Water Quality Certification Program
Attn: Garrett Long
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000

Sincerely,



Erik Ekdahl
Deputy Director
Division of Water Rights

ec: Ms. Debbie-Ann Reese, Acting Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Via e-filing for FERC docket P-14803-001

Ms. Matt Robart, Camas LLC
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