

Dear Mr. Thaler,

2016 JAN 25 AM 11:15

I am writing in regards to the EIR for the Klamath Hydroelectric Project Relicensing, FERC Project No. 2982. Here are the reasons given for dam removal as opposed to relicensing and my rebuttal arguments based on reality. I am in favor of retaining the dams and relicensing them for the following reasons:

Top 10 Reasons to Remove Klamath Dams

1. Restore fisheries. The Klamath Dams are one of the primary reasons that Klamath fisheries are in steep decline. Dam removal would re-open hundreds of miles of habitat to Chinook and Coho salmon, steelhead, and lamprey whose numbers run dangerously close to extinction.

Reality: Salmon runs have been at historical highs despite the tribes gill netting the entire mouth of the Klamath river. The tribes have gotten their quotas in a matter of hours each day, selling off their surplus of fish to whoever will buy them. If the dams are pulled out, the Iron Gate Fish Hatchery salmon will be eliminated. There is no documentation that the Coho salmon ever ran further up the Klamath River past where the Iron Gate reservoir is located. In fact before these dams were built, there were areas of the Klamath river that were so shallow it made it impossible for salmon to inhabit the river above this area.

2. Improve water quality. Fish need cold, clean water rich in oxygen, but the shallow reservoirs behind the dams warm to temperatures lethal to salmon and are low in oxygen.

Reality: The dams allow for a continual flow of water even in drought years such as we have been experiencing lately. For the past two years water has been released behind the dams, as ordered by the US Bureau of Reclamation, to SAVE the salmon from a massive die off due to parasites. Without this water storage, it would have been devastating to the fish as occurred in 2002!!

3. Save money for power customers. According to dam owner PacifiCorp and the Public Utility Commissions of Oregon and California, dam removal under terms of the Klamath Restoration Agreements is cheaper for PacifiCorp customers than relicensing. That's because the dams make relatively small amounts of power and upgrading the aging dams to meet modern specifications would cost hundreds of millions of dollars.

Reality:

Power rates have already increased. The dams also provide clean hydroelectric power supplying power amounting to about 169 megawatts of power to 75,000 homes in spite of this drought. When Pacificorp was asked where they would get the power to replace the CLEAN hydro-electric power that would be lost if the dams are removed, they said it would be replaced by a coal burning plant in Georgia!! How is that clean, cheaper power that would need to be transported across our aging power grid a viable solution?! How is removal of this power in the public's best interest, when California is not going to meet the 33% legal mandate of electric power sales from renewable sources by 2020?

4. Boost regional economy. Rural communities like those in the Klamath Basin are struggling economically. The Klamath Agreements would breathe new life in these communities by investing in large scale river restoration projects, agricultural infrastructure, and dam demolition. Longer term, restoration in a balanced approach that considers the economic needs of local farmers and ranchers ensures our rural economies will be durable in the long term.

Reality: Siskiyou County, the largest county in California voted 80% in favor of keeping the dams. Property owners around the lake reservoirs, such as Copco Lake, have seen their property values plummet since dam removal has been brought to the forefront. No one wants to invest in a property that will overlook a vast wasteland rather than a lake!

The fallacy that dam removal would create new jobs as well as the restoration project that would follow would be filled by the companies brought in to do the work with their own employees, not those of the surrounding area.

5. Resolve conflict. Fights over water resources have left the Klamath Basin is mired in perpetual crisis and conflict for decades. For the first time ever, a comprehensive solution to this crisis that is supported by a large majority of stakeholders has been developed.

Reality: The Klamath Agreements were the result of local farmers succumbing to extortion by environmental groups and Native American tribes that threatened lawsuits to shut off their water. And obviously the so-called stakeholders don't include the ratepayers and taxpayers who would pay dearly for the loss of these dams.

Not all of the stakeholders have been brought to the negotiation table, specifically, the Siskiyou County Supervisors, representatives of the local government, was left out of the agreements altogether.

6. Protect Human Health. The Klamath Dams trap the nutrient rich waters of the Klamath River in relatively shallow reservoirs which create ideal growing conditions for the highly toxic blue-green algae *Microcystis aeruginosa*. This results in hundreds of miles of shoreline being posted with warnings against contact with the water each summer.

Reality: Not until dam removal was already on the table were there any concerns over blue-green algae. There have been no documented cases of anyone who came in contact with the water getting sick or having adverse health problems. In fact, for years blue green algae has been marketed and sold as a health supplement in stores.

7. Protect Native Cultures. The Klamath's Native People have been using and managing the Klamath's fisheries and other natural resources for countless generations. Tribal cultures are intimately and intrinsically tied to the river and fisheries. The Klamath's cultural diversity is an asset to the region and the world and we all have a moral obligation to preserve and protect it.

Reality: The Shasta Native American, tribe which precedes the other Klamath tribes, is against dam removal. They have sacred burial grounds which lie beneath the water reservoirs and lakes. They do not want these burial grounds exposed. The Shasta tribe was not a signatory to the KBRA or KHSA agreements and therefore have not been represented.

The tribes that did sign these agreements stand to gain more land and millions of dollars as a result of dam removal as opposed to relicensing.

8. Protect rural agricultural communities. Agriculture is a key part of the local economy in the Klamath Basin. Any successful restoration plan must address economics as well as ecology. That's why the Klamath Agreements seek to balance restoration with economic stability.

Reality: If this plan would be so great for the economic stability and growth of the area, why are the Siskiyou County Supervisors unanimously against the project as well as 80% of the county voters and have threatened to sue if dam removal moves forward?

Also, another concern is that the dams provide flood control to

many towns along the Klamath River that, before the dams were there, were subject to flooding.

The lakes also provide a water resource for fire suppression. During the past two fire seasons, the reservoir water provided water resources for firefighters saving homes and lives!!

The lakes provide boating, camping, fishing, and other recreational activities that would be lost as a result of dam removal.

9. Restore the Klamath Wildlife Refuges. The Klamath Refuges are major feeding grounds on the Pacific Flyway. Under current management, the refuges suffer drought like conditions in 8 out of 10 years. Implementation of the KBRA would create new assurances for water deliveries for the refuges resulting in sufficient water deliveries in 9 out of 10 years.

Reality: The lakes and reservoirs behind these dams are home to many migratory, native birds, and many other wildlife. Bald Eagles, Osprey, White Pelicans, Blue Heron, and countless other fowl can be seen around the reservoirs. Every year these lakes provide a stopping point and home to Canadian Geese.

10. Maintain west coast salmon fisheries. The Klamath is one of the three major river systems support the West Coast commercial salmon fishing fleet (the Sacramento and the Columbia). In years of low abundance of Klamath stocks, commercial fishermen are not allowed to fish and make a living along hundreds of miles of the west coast creating economic risk for hundreds of rural communities.

Reality: As stated earlier, the Iron Gate Fish Hatchery would be eliminated if dam removal is allowed to proceed. The Iron Gate Fish Hatchery produces five million salmon smolts each year – 17,000 of which return annually as fully grown adults to spawn. The problem is, they don't include them in the population count!

The past few years have been record breaking salmon runs despite rising ocean temperatures, a fact that was never taken into consideration when looking at the environmental effects of the west coast salmon fisheries.

The above reality based rebuttals do NOT include the issues below and should also be considered as to why relicensing

the dams is essential for the common good:

1. The secretary of the Interior conducted a flawed and biased study. A federal agency's former scientific integrity adviser has filed a whistle-blower complaint saying he was fired from his job after he began questioning top officials about "spinning" evidence to tout the removal of Klamath River dams.

"The bottom line is they need to be honest about the science and the decision making," stated Paul R. Houser, an associate hydrology professor at George Mason University. He says there have been a number of scientific studies that showed dam removal comes with some risks or wouldn't be nearly as beneficial to threatened Coho salmon habitat as Interior Secretary Ken Salazar's staff made it seem.

2. These dams on the Klamath river hold approximately 136,000 acre feet of fresh water or about 44 billion gallons. Governor Brown has stated that we need MORE water storage, not LESS!

3. These dams were originally created to solve such problems as flooding, and storing water for use by growing populations and agriculture. Some of these are the very reasons that Governor Brown is proposing that we need MORE dams and why he pushed to pass Proposition One!

In light of ALL of the above facts, how is dam removal, as opposed to dam relicensing, going to benefit the PEOPLE of California and the United States at a cost to taxpayers of over one billion dollars and growing in a time of growing state and national debt?

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STATE WATER RESOURCES
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