

Brandon Criss, Siskiyou County Supervisor District 1  
Comments regarding 401 certification for the Klamath River Hydropower  
Dams.

At 10 pm on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014 I received a phone call from Sheriff Lopey advising me that constituents were being evacuated from their homes due to a rapidly spreading fire north of Copco Lake. I drove over to the evacuation center and spent the night their getting feedback of what was happening. Constituents witnessed helicopter bucket load after helicopter bucket load of water being drawn out from behind Copco Dam. The water behind the dam was used to save homes and lives. When you consider this issue, we demand that public health and safety be given priority. Do not take away this fire protection tool that the Dams provide.

We ask that you also consider the health of the migrating salmon. Also in 2014 there was a chance of another fish kill similar to 2002 on the Klamath River. At the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board meeting of October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014 the Karuk Tribal spokesman Craig Tucker stated, that “increasing flows and the velocity of flows disperses disease on the Klamath. ... We averted a fish kill because of Trinity Flows, then the Karuk Tribe observed disease above the Trinity confluence. A lot of credit to PacifiCorp’s collaboration with the Bureau of Reclamation 16,000 acre/ft was released with 1700 cubic feet per second”

In total 20,000 acre/feet was released by these dams. Without the dams this 20,000 acre/ft of water would not have been available to save the salmon.

We find it ironic that some claim these dams impair water for fish, yet a release of an extra 20,000 acre/feet of this same water is credited with being pivotal in helping to prevent a fish kill. Please do not take this tool away from us.

The Bureau of Reclamation struck a deal with PacifiCorp to release this 20,000 acre/feet from behind these dams so this water would not have to be taken from farmers in the Klamath Basin. In the BOR August 8, 2014 press release stated that the water released from behind the lower dams would “assist Reclamation by extending the Klamath Project’s available water supplies from Upper Klamath Lake to help close the irrigation season.” Please for the benefit of those farmers, do not take this tool away from us.

Lastly, do not view agriculture as harming the river, view it as a tool to benefit the river. For example, the State Fish and Game quickly blamed Klamath Basin Agriculture for the 2002 fish kill, yet the National Academy of Sciences made clear in their study that agriculture did not cause the fish kill. It's a proven fact as well that agricultural water run off from the Klamath and Tulelake Basins is cleaner and has less phosphorous loading than natural conditions would give this river. Don't just demand cleaner water, respect and honor that you are already receiving cleaner water due to agriculture.

We request that you allow us to continue to use the dams as a tool, a proven tool to benefit the Klamath River system in whole.

With the dams in place, we are seeing record runs of Klamath River salmon. Tearing out existing hydropower dams that have proven benefits for fish, Klamath and Tulelake Basin agriculture, and firefighting efforts, is no solution, it's instead the start of many problems.