

SALMON RIVER RESTORATION COUNCIL

2006



DECEMBER CALENDAR AND NEWS



PacifiCorp Klamath Hydro- Electric Dams Re-Licensing

left, Copco 1 dam

Since 2000, various tribes, agencies, and non-governmental organizations including the SRRC, have been working

to insure that water quality and the needs of anadromous fish are adequately addressed by PacifiCorp and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in their process to re-license power generation and related facilities in the Klamath River. Spring Chinook salmon and as well as other anadromous fish species have been blocked from accessing their natal spawning and rearing habitats in the Sprague, Williamson, and Wood rivers and other areas in the Upper Klamath Basin since 1917. Traditional fishing for salmon by the Klamath tribes has not occurred since that time.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), released 9/25/06 looks at the impacts and benefits of alternatives ranging from “No Change” to “Retirement of Iron Gate and Copco 1 facilities with Terms and Conditions on the remaining dams.” Managing agencies submitted Terms and Conditions such as ladders, screens, bubblers and flow rates to FERC which facilitate fish passage, wildlife, and other resource needs. At the same time CA and OR are also conducting a Section 401 water quality certification process related to the proposed license.

We are asking FERC to withdraw the current DEIS and develop a Supplement that includes the Facts Determined by Administrative Law Judge McKenna on 9/27/06. This Supplement

continued

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is needed because the Judge’s Opinion provides new and significant information directly related to this process.

The DEIS Identifies:

- ▶ The alternative which examines the removal of Iron Gate and Copco 1, is the least expensive path for PacifiCorp, its shareholders and the electricity rate payers.
- ▶ Removal of these two dams is the most effective alternative for eliminating fish diseases currently occurring downstream of the dams.
- ▶ The alternative which calls for the removal of 2 dams best eliminates the growing Toxic Algae problems in Copco, other reservoirs and in the Klamath.

Rulings on the Facts

Administrative Law Judge McKenna, in a parallel legal action required by the 2005 Energy Policy Act, made several Rulings of Fact on 9/27/06 regarding factual disputes between PacifiCorp and the tribes, agencies and non-governmental organizations participating in the process. These rulings included:

- There is adequate habitat above Iron Gate dam available for anadromous fish to use, including Spring /Fall Chinook, Steelhead, Coho, and Pacific Lamprey.
- Fish coming from the Lower Basin pose a low risk of introducing diseases to fish, particularly Redband Trout currently living above the dams.
- Anadromous fish reintroduced into the Upper Klamath Basin have a low risk of residualizing.
- Current operations by PacifiCorp negatively impact Redband Trout, particularly at the JC Boyle dam. The BLM’s regulation on flows proposed in their River Corridor Management Conditions would improve fishery resources

Additional Points

- PacifiCorp has recognized that these dams and relatively small reservoirs provide little to no flood control in the Klamath River.
- The California Energy Commission has called for the removal of these dams and power facilities because they make so little power yet have a significant impact on the Klamath River and its anadromous fisheries.
- It is essential for the Spring Chinook to access the Upper Basin once again so that the Salmon River run has a larger “meta” population to better insure the survival of this species.
- The Salmon River Spring Chinook are a good candidate to use in the reintroduction of Chinook salmon into the Upper Basin.

The SRRC is also involved in Settlement negotiations with PacifiCorp and several other stakeholders (tribes, agencies, and non-governmental organizations) to see if there are some solutions other than in the FERC process. If you have any questions or would like additional information you can contact Petey Brucker, Program Coordinator for the SRRC and SRRC Klamath FERC coordinator at 530 -462- 4665 or pbrucker@srrc.org.

SALMON RIVER COHO AND CHINOOK SURVEYS- Fall Chinook Surveys are coming to an end Dec. 1st after a successful counting season. Although likely to be below average, the run is better than the last couple of year's record low runs. Coho surveys will take place every Tuesday and most Thursdays in Dec. we will meet at 9am at the forks community club. Call SRRC at 530 462- 4665 for more information.



"Country Roads That Take me Home...."



Many private roads and driveways in the Salmon River were built over a hundred years ago, with little regard for erosion control or minimizing sediment transfer. Undersized culverts and poor ditch or slope usage can be the cause of ongoing problems, especially during heavy storm events. Simple fixes such as low water crossings and outsloping roads, instead of reliance on ditches, can help enormously in reducing sedimentation.


The SRRC/USFS Cooperative Road/Stream Crossing Risk Assessments produced a list of prioritized problem sites. The primary objective of these Assessments was to identify high-risk road stream crossings that pose the greatest threat to aquatic resources, especially sedimentation of anadromous fish habitat. The final analysis produced a prioritized list of mainly large fill crossing on public property. The USFS is engineering, cost estimating and prioritizing fixes on public roads for the Salmon River subbasin based on our cooperative assessment. Private roads were not included in this engineering and prioritization.

The private roads in the Salmon River watershed are the final element in a basin wide prioritization and fix scheme for reducing sediment delivery to anadromous fish streams. The Council now has funding for Crossing, Cross Drain, and other erosion features prioritization, and engineering of high priority sites on private properties. *This will allow us to seek funding for subsequent fixes.* If you want more information on the Private Roads Project or would like to have your road assessed, call Jim at the Watershed Center.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO? GET INVOLVED!!
ATTEND WORKSHOPS AND VOLUNTEER!!
DONATIONS APPRECIATED, TOO!
PROTECTING AND IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF THE RIVER AND FOREST MAY BE THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN SUSTAINING OUR ISOLATED COMMUNITIES.
WE ALL NEED TO WORK TOGETHER TO IMPROVE OUR WATERSHED. WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!**

DEFENSIBLE SPACE AND FUEL REDUCTION

A Defensible Space of 100 feet around your home is required by law. The goal is to protect your home while providing a safe area for fire-fighters.




- ☞ Clearing an area of 30 feet immediately surrounding your home is critical. This area requires the greatest reduction in flammable vegetation, and
- ☞ Clear the fuel reduction zone in the remaining 70 feet or to property line, depending on the steepness of your property and vegetation is very important. Spacing between plants also improves the chance of stopping a wildfire before it destroys your home.

The SRRC currently has funding to reduce fuels on 50 acres of private property in the Salmon River. The Project is targeting 3 properties that are in need of reducing fuels along emergency access routes. One of the properties will also have fuel reduction treatment within the 100 foot defensible space.

We expect to receive separate funding in '07 for completing fuel reduction within the 100 foot defensible space around 25 to 30 residential buildings on the Salmon River. **This is a great opportunity for landowners to get help with this often monumental task.** If you are interested in signing up for this, or just want more information on the 100 foot defensible space, please come by or call the Watershed Center.


MORE SHADING FOR THE SALMON RIVER?



In June of '05 the Salmon River Total Maximum Daily Load study (TMDL) was released. This TMDL determined that the Salmon River is temperature impaired, and that the best way to address the problem is to increase riparian shade. In response to that, the Restoration Council developed a project funded by the Bella Vista Foundation, to locate riparian areas that are deficient in vegetation (including tailing piles). We will then assess the potential for more vegetation at the site.

Restoration of a site will depend on

- benefit to fisheries
- accessibility
- flood risk
- soil type
- cost and other factors



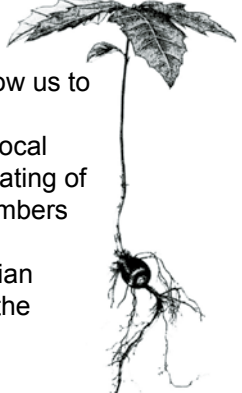
Some sites will be able to be planted by hand; others may require large scale site preparation.

Field survey work is almost complete. Once we have all the data, we will meet with the Forest Service and the Regional Water Quality Control Board to develop a list of priority sites where

revegetation is feasible. We already have funding to complete NEPA documentation and cost estimates for several of the highest priority areas. This will allow us to seek the funds needed to revegetate these areas.

The team will also be collecting and propagating local riparian trees and bushes to be used for the revegetating of selected areas. We are interested in community members helping in this ongoing part of the project.

If you would like to get more involved in the Riparian Revegetation project, please contact Jim or Lyra at the Watershed Center.



THE LEAVE NO JUNKER BEHIND PROJECT is completed. North State Recycling crushed and hauled off 32 semi loads of scrap metal to Redwood City.

The drivers from North State and Buckshot Trucking coped with our local logistical conditions - narrow, winding one lane river roads and the steep climb over the summit which are scary even in a smaller truck. Unfortunately for all involved, the Uncle's Fire added dense smoke and fire traffic into the mix, too.

"It was a real challenge" the North State manager has stated.

The word "Epic" was used to describe it by many of us. Pat Mathews, project coordinator for Siskiyou County Planning Department, was on top of things from early March to the final dump trucks of trash to Yreka Landfill in July. She spent many days and nights here on the river coordinating with the contractors, the Restoration Council, the Tribe and local work crews.

Many thanks to everyone who had a hand in this truly epic project; Pat Mathews and the Karuk Tribe for funding hauling equipment, the USFS for supplying the Sawyers Bar and Windy Bar sites, the folks from the Forks of Salmon LLC for allowing the use of their property, the Bennett family for supplying manpower and the Bennett Bros. Trucking who hauled more than 200 vehicles to all 3 sites, Jessy Boone and Michael O'Hara for taking on major private sites, and the Salmon River Restoration Council for groundwork and filling in all the gaps.

SOME EPIC NUMBERS:

- 332 junk vehicles removed from the Watershed
- 625 tons of scrap no longer lying around
- 32 semi loads of scrap junk gone
- 37 tons of tires no longer harboring mosquitoes and spoiling the view
- 2000 mostly volunteer hours