

From: [Alison O'Dowd](#)
To: [Wr401program](#)
Subject: Public comment for Lower Klamath Project License Surrender
Date: Wednesday, February 6, 2019 2:29:36 PM

Hello,

I am a River Ecologist and Professor at Humboldt State University. My research area includes the impacts of dams on aquatic ecosystems. I strongly support the full removal of the lower four Klamath River dams.

Ecologically, the lower four Klamath River dams have been disastrous for the aquatic communities in the Klamath River basin. Toxic algal blooms and warmer temperatures in the reservoirs combined with the altered flow regime has reduced salmon populations in particular. Despite the impacts of the dam, the Klamath River is still one of the most productive fisheries on the West Coast and dam removal will only bolster this fishery further. Dam removal is a golden opportunity that should not be passed up, particularly given the imperiled species that are at risk of extirpation (or eventually extinction) if the dams are not removed in the near future.

Dam removal will reopen for 400 miles of spawning and rearing habitat for salmonids and will improve water quality throughout the mainstem Klamath River. In addition to the ecological benefits of the Klamath dams removal, it is my understanding that dam removal will not adversely affect irrigated agriculture because none of the dams slated for removal provide agricultural water supply.

I am currently the faculty director of a place-based learning community called "Klamath Connection" at Humboldt State University. This learning community is for incoming freshmen and we use the Klamath River as a case study to show an example of how people from a variety of backgrounds can come together to solve complex environmental problems. We take 170 freshman each August to the Klamath River mouth during the week of freshman orientation and the experience for the students to be able to put their feet in the river and learn about the issues surrounding the Klamath is truly transformative for them. The beautiful Klamath River makes a difference in the lives of incoming freshmen at Humboldt State University and undoubtedly the lives of countless others throughout Northern California. The intrinsic value of the free-flowing Klamath River cannot be quantified or commodified.

It is my hope that the dam removal process will proceed in a timely manner. I agree with the key findings of the draft EIR that supports dam removal.

Many thanks to the State Water Board for moving this process forward.

Regards,
Dr. Alison O'Dowd

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