October 24, 2019

Klamath Compact Commission

The Klamath Compact Commission has recently become active, having had two meetings in the last 6 months after being dormant for 10 years.  Our association, Siskiyou County Water Users Assoc. (SCWUA) has attended both meetings making presentations. Chrysten Lambert ostensibly the Federal Representative stated in the last meeting that the purpose of the meetings was education of the public.  That being the case, we feel that the information being presented should reflect all sides or viewpoints on a particular issue, rather than strictly being from the environmental agencies’ perspective only.   We asked for equal time to present alternative scientific evidence and viewpoints and were refused.  To our way of thinking, presenting only the environmental agencies’ perspective is NOT public education, but public indoctrination.

One of our members asked the commission at the end of the last meeting where the commission is heading and specifically, how they plan to address the dam removal issue, if at all.  She did not receive an answer.  From our read of the Klamath Compact Commission’s mandate from Congress, the Commission’s purpose is to oversee and protect the Klamath River’s beneficial uses, as well as uphold its Federally recognized Wild and Scenic River designation.  To that end, the Commission needs to be a neutral entity as originally envisioned when formed. As we have pointed out in numerous letters, it is clearly not.  In fact both environmental agencies represented by the two state commissioners are signatories of the Amended KHSA. Additionally, Chrysten Lambert of Trout Unlimited as we have stated previously, has glaring conflicts of interest.  These issues need to be addressed before any further meetings or recommendations by the Commission take place.

In the case of the dam removal project proposed by KRRC, there are numerous omissions and liabilities that have yet to be addressed.  As PacifiCorp has stated in their most recent comments, “they have always considered dam removal on the Klamath River to be an exceptionally risky endeavor”. In such a case, it behooves the Commission to consider alternatives for protecting the fish and water quality on the Klamath, rather than looking only at this drastic measure of removing 4hydropower facilities that are integral to the original design of The Klamath Project and the River’s Wild and Scenic Designation. SCWUA and others have presented several alternative plans and have yet to receive an audience for these proposals.  It seems to us that the Compact Commission should be the forum for voicing these proposals and obtaining public, as well as stakeholder, comment. What is most disturbing to us is that most of the NGO’s and environmentalists supporting dam removal are NOT stakeholders and are NOT among the public living in Siskiyou County and along the sections of river that will be most affected, which leads us to suspect that there is a hidden agenda, not in the best interest of local citizens and taxpayers, driving this nefarious and risky dam removal project.

We look forward to opening up a greater dialogue on the important issues facing all of us, who reside around the Klamath River and benefit from the dams and the clean, inexpensive power they provide.

Submitted by

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