

# State of California, County of Siskiyou

## Board of Supervisors Minutes, January 24, 2023

The Honorable Board of Supervisors of Siskiyou County, California, met in special session this 24<sup>th</sup> day of January 2023; there being present Supervisors Brandon Criss, Michael N. Kobseff, Nancy Ogren, Ray A. Haupt and Ed Valenzuela, County Administrator Angela Davis, County Counsel Edward J. Kiernan, and County Clerk and ex-Officio Clerk of the Board of Supervisors Laura Bynum and Deputy County Clerk Taylor Brummett.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Valenzuela. Supervisor Kobseff led in the salute to the flag of the United States of America.

### **Presentations from the Public**

Chair Valenzuela advised to those present and participating via Zoom that public comments should be limited to the agenda items and that these special meetings concerning the dam removal project will be held at the end of each month as needed.

**California Department of Fish & Wildlife** - Presentation regarding the collaborative activities, Lower Klamath Decommissioning Project, grant funding dedicated to the Shasta and Scott Rivers, and other updates related to the Klamath Watershed. Presentation only.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife Director Chuck Bonham appeared before the Board via Zoom. Mr. Bonham advised he would provide an update of milestones made in the last few months, provide detail in collaborative work between the county and agencies on the dam removal project and restoration grant funding opportunities that will be made available within the county.

Mr. Bonham continued providing a general update, referring to the county staff report provided with this agenda item, and milestones made since November 2022 with regard to the project, including the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) order, the delivery of fire protection equipment to the County Fire Chiefs Association.

Mr. Bonham advised of a recent Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the county, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Klamath River Renewal Corporation (KRRRC) and PacifiCorp and summarized topics within the MOA, including funding from PacifiCorp to allow for a Project Manager for the County and funding to upgrade/improve roads within the project area. Mr. Bonham additionally advised of construction of a new hatchery facility in the Spring of 2023 at Fall Creek and updates to the City of Yreka water infrastructure. Mr. Bonham advised of the potential for restoration progress in the tributaries to the Klamath and the need to enhance collaboration in the Scott and Shasta Rivers and that \$20,000,000 had been allocated for projects with the Scott and Shasta Rivers and the availability of federal restoration funding within the basin as well.

Supervisor Kobseff expressed appreciation to the Department of Fish and Wildlife to allow more transparency on this issue than in the past, attempts to identify additional water storage and expressed a need to end conflicts within the watershed. In response to Supervisor Kobseff, Mr. Bonham advised of the feasibility of high mountain lake water supplies and the commitment to conservation with water users, tribes, county, state and federal government to address water issues.

In response to Supervisor Kobseff, Mr. Bonham advised that open conversations will need to be held as the removal project progresses and is implemented with regard to natural barriers within the Klamath River and also provided information regarding the dams not altering a 100-year flood level.

Supervisor Criss advised of impacts to home values in the Copco Lake area since the beginning of this project, sharing concerns to the wells once the dams are removed and inquired how residents could access the mitigation funding. Mr. Bonham advised that the local mitigation funding would be available for the concerns expressed by Supervisor Criss.

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## **California Department of Fish & Wildlife – *continued***

In response to Supervisor Criss, Mr. Bonham advised of the need to address and improve water storage levels to balance across all interests and additionally advised of relocation efforts of some of the sucker fish behind the reservoirs to wildlife refuges.

Supervisor Haupt expressed appreciation to the high mountain lakes project, requesting Mr. Bonham to support the legislation to bring the rest of Siskiyou County into the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, the use of the dams to moderate flood impacts down the Klamath River, the need to keep the Hwy 96 corridor passable and the need for the United States Forest Service (USFS) to keep the Grayback Road maintained year round as an alternate route to those on Hwy 96. Mr. Bonham advised that forest health is an overall dynamic and advised of State efforts to reduce fuels.

In response to Supervisor Ogren's questions with regard to the time frames for erosion and sediment control plans/monitoring and the new fish hatchery, Mr. Bonham advised that templates will be developed for monitoring and it is scheduled through 2030 and based on a contract with Resource Environmental Solutions (RES), that it may be longer based on the results of monitoring. Mr. Bonham advised that with regard to the fish hatchery that construction will be in 2023 and should be a short construction phase. Supervisor Ogren also inquired where the fish would go once released from the hatchery, in which Mr. Bonham advised they would be released into the river for tribal and recreational harvest, similar to current conditions at the current hatchery.

Deputy County Administrator Elizabeth Nielson advised that this is the first meeting on the topic of the dam removal project and provided a summary of her staff report and activities by the county. Discussion followed between Ms. Nielson and members of the Board regarding the webpage and email that have been established regarding this project, concerns regarding Klamath River tributary flows in the event flows on the Klamath are reduced, the need to address issues as a whole within the watershed.

Supervisor Haupt stated the need for a reporting system back from the State as to who has submitted projects for state funding and how and to whom disbursements are/were being made.

### **Presentations from the Public**

Grace Bennett shared concerns regarding the placement of the debris that is generated from the removal of the dams, encourages high mountain water storage, concerns regarding the fish behind the dams and where they will go once dams are removed, funding of the Resource Environmental Solutions (RES), concerns for existing wells, sediment, and encouraging that members of the community be protected.

Kertis Solus shared concerns regarding impacts to water, the carrying capacity for lakes, streams and rivers, suggesting that a better dam be built and used the Shasta Dam as an example to mitigate the temperature of water being release.

Richard Marshall shared concerns regarding the need to provide compensation to those that are having impacts to their rights, property values, loss of income, etc, and requested that additional public hearings with State and Federal agencies to hear the public on the various issues they are or will be facing.

Debbie Bacigalupi shared concerns regarding the impact to private property and adjudicated water rights, and the need to compensate those impacted by dam removal.

Dan Chase shared concerns regarding the impacts to the agricultural community the lack of resources available to the agricultural community and the potential to use flows from the Scott and Shasta Rivers to help with water flows on the Klamath River once the dams are removed.

Theodora Johnson shared concerns regarding projects that have not received funding and impacts to the ranching community to comply with requirements of the State Water Board.

Chrissie Reynolds shared concerns regarding the Federal Good Neighbor Policy, frustrations with accessing information regarding the mitigation fund, and impacts to members of the local communities.

Loy Beardsmore requested additional transparency on the Klamath River Renewal Commission (KRRC), the need for well monitoring and reimbursement to those impacted by the removal project.

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**Presentations from the Public** –Donna Bacigalupi shared concerns for need for farmers and ranchers to be compensated for losses they may experience by the removal project.

Francis Gill, Cope Lake Fire Chief advised of no communications between Copco Lake Fire and the KRRC with regard to the fire mitigation plans for Copco Lake and advised of Copco Fire no longer having drafting spots on the lake for fire suppression efforts.

Supervisors Criss and Ogren thanked those in the audience for attending and their ongoing support.

Supervisor Haupt advised that this was not the end of the dialogue and that he would continue to work on this issue.

Supervisor Kobseff asked that State agency representatives try to influence the KRRC to have more contact availability and transparency to the public. Supervisor Kobseff advised of water issues without the dam removal project in place.

Supervisor Valenzuela advised that the purpose of these meetings is to hear the public and to provide the opportunity to mitigate and move forward as the project progresses.

**County Administration** - Update regarding the Lower Klamath Decommissioning Project. No action or presentation.

No action or presentation was taken regarding this item.

**Adjournment** - There being no further business to come before the Board of Supervisors, the meeting was adjourned.

Attest:  
Laura Bynum, County Clerk

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Ed Valenzuela, Chair

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy