

# Klamath River Dam Removal: Real Costs to the Environment, Wildlife, Socioeconomic Impacts and \$-Billions in Tax Dollars

*Klamath River Renewal Corporation; cavalier about damaging the lives of Americans, draining 45-billion of gallons water and subjecting taxpayers to liability*

YREKA, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, August 15, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The non-profit shell corporation, Klamath River Renewal Corporation ('KRRC') was created by the uber-wealthy PacifiCorp (market-cap of \$60-Billion - ticker PPWLM) solely for the purpose of destroying the Klamath River dams.

And even more importantly, KRRC was created as a scheme to shield PacifiCorp from the massive runaway costs and liabilities that they fear will result from the Klamath River dams removal project.



Copco Lake is formed by the Copco 1 dam on the Klamath River and by itself holds 25-Billion gallons of water, provides critical habitat for amazing variety of species of flora & fauna, including numerous endangered & threatened species. Photo by William E. Simpson II

KRRC's Klamath River dams removal project is laden at every turn with unprecedented risks for catastrophic environmental damages, as well as exposure to liabilities from a realm of litigation by thousands of people and entities.

Liability claims can range from property damage, property devaluation and wells going dry, to health issues related to the release of previously sequestered pollutants in lake bottoms that during dry weather will become toxic airborne fine-clay-dust.

The existing county roads that have historically experienced extremely light traffic and virtually no noise, will come under the daily assault of dozens of heavy and light trucks and equipment for years, destroying the tranquility of the region, creating traffic jams and deadly incidents with

wildlife, and crushing the light-duty county roads in the process. These factors alone destroy the 'right to the quiet enjoyment' by residents on their lands and in their homes; also grounds for litigation.

SEE EIN NEWS:

[https://www.einnews.com/pr\\_news/547785001/klamath-river-and-klamath-river-dams-critical-points-regarding-krrc-s-proposal-to-remove-klamath-dams](https://www.einnews.com/pr_news/547785001/klamath-river-and-klamath-river-dams-critical-points-regarding-krrc-s-proposal-to-remove-klamath-dams)

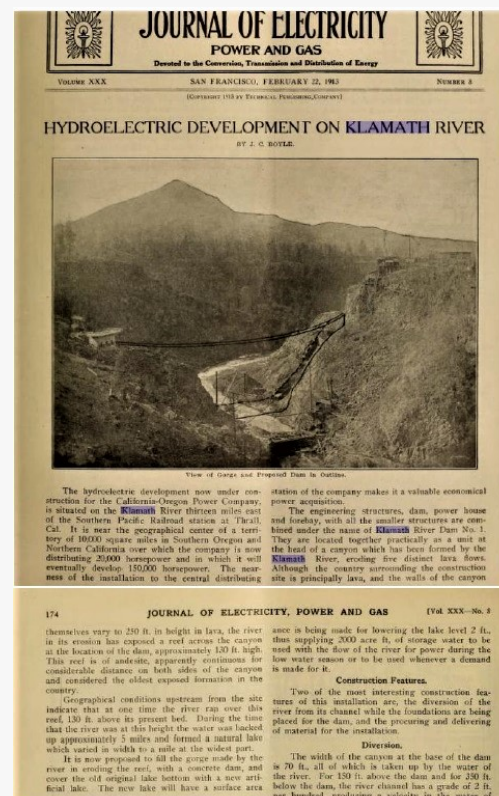
Originally, PacifiCorp charged their electrical consumers a service fee for about a decade, collecting hundreds of \$-millions of dollars to cover the costs of removing the dams themselves. So, by using private capital from ratepayers, PacifiCorp was the only entity on the hook for all the costs and risks.

At that point, Oregon and California taxpayers had no exposure to the costs of removing the Klamath River dams, nor the obscene liability for that reckless endeavor.

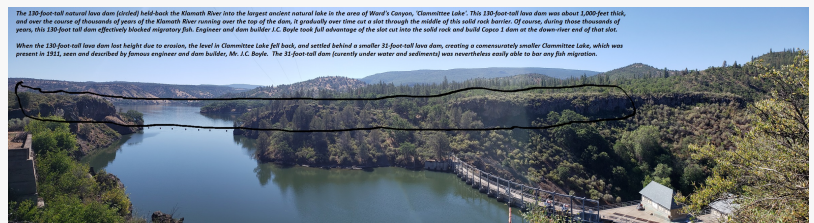
But that all changed as PacifiCorp started to realize the magnitude of the risks and liabilities, which sent fear into even that \$60-Billion dollar company.

Recently, through a questionable back-room deal conjured by KRRC, California governor Gavin Newsom and Oregon governor Kate Brown, have somehow taken PacifiCorp largely off the hook, and made Oregon and California taxpayers responsible for the lion's share of the direct costs of removing these dams, which is arguably going to cost about \$1-Billion dollars.

And shockingly, adding to that massive sum, Oregon and California taxpayers will also be on the hook (according to a recent warning by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission -'FERC') for the staggering costs of any liabilities that would stem from the economic and environmental



The 1913 publication Journal of Electricity cites the existence of the massive 130-tall lava dam that was eroded over time, creating a slot where Copco 1 dam was built



One of five lava dams (aka; 'reefs' or 'dikes' in geology) that blocked the Klamath River at Ward's Canyon and site of Copco 1 dam. J.C. Boyle used the slot that was eroded in the 1,000 ft. wide lava dam to secure Copco 1 dam.

damages that could easily mount to another \$-Billion dollars!

Pursuant to Item number 34 of FERC's 'ORDER APPROVING TRANSFER OF LICENSE' dated June 17, 2021, which states:

"As part of the January 13, 2021 transfer application, the States of Oregon and California have agreed to be co-licensees with the Renewal Corporation; thus, the States will not be shielded from liability. Additionally, the States and PacifiCorp have committed to providing additional funding toward removal, if necessary. With the States as co-licensees, we do not believe the public interest requires that PacifiCorp remain a co-licensee."

FERC's ORDER can be read online here: <https://www.ferc.gov/media/h-1-p-2082-062>

What started as a private enterprise using private capital, has somehow, without the required public oversight, morphed into a public project that could arguably cost taxpayers \$-Billions of dollars!

This is simply outrageous, and must be called into question immediately.

The 'FALSE PREMISE' foisted-upon the public to support the wrong-headed proposal to remove the Klamath River dams and drain 45-Billion gallons of reserve fresh water into the sea:

The premise of allegedly restoring fish migration in exchange for the destruction of the Klamath River Dams is manifestly false.

SEE EIN NEWS: [https://www.einnews.com/pr\\_news/546897224/klamath-river-dams-krrc-s-proposed-dam-removal-project-minority-consensus-for-environmental-and-ecological-disaster](https://www.einnews.com/pr_news/546897224/klamath-river-dams-krrc-s-proposed-dam-removal-project-minority-consensus-for-environmental-and-ecological-disaster)

#### California-Oregon Power Company Plants No. 1 and No. 2

The California-Oregon Power Company incorporated on December 15, 1911, to acquire and consolidate with other properties the holdings of the Siskiyou Power and Light Company. At the time of COPCO's formation, Siskiyou Power had already commenced construction of Klamath River Dam No. 1 (COPCO No. 1). Engineers were compelled to abandon the initial dam site at the head of Ward's Canyon and move it 1,000 feet downstream to gain more solid rock for the north abutment. Work on the new dam started simultaneously at another site farther down the Klamath (Boyle 1976:10, 14).



Figure 59 Construction of COPCO No. 1 in 1917 (Photo courtesy of Siskiyou County Museum, Yreka, California, P13668 OS COPCO 2).

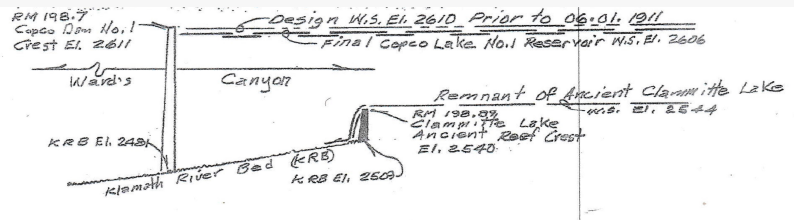
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At COPCO No. 1 the engineers took advantage of the constriction of the Klamath River and a reef of andesite. John C. Boyle explained:

Geological conditions upstream from the site indicated that at one time the river ran over this reef, 130 feet above its present bed. During this time that the river was at this height the water was backed up approximately 5 miles and formed a natural lake which varied in width to a mile at the widest part.

It was proposed to fill this gorge made by the river in eroding the reef, with a concrete dam, and over the old original lake bottom with a new artificial lake. The new lake would have a surface area of 1000 acres and would have a catchment of 77,000 acre feet (Boyle 1976:10-11).

The DOI cites the comments of dam engineers back in 1912 when they started building the Copco 1 dam at the site of natural 130-foot-tall lava dam and lake that existed for millions of years



A 1911 drawing by famous engineer-dam builder J.C. Boyle clearly depicts that a natural 31-foot-tall dam holding back 'Clammittee Lake' was present at the time construction was begun on Copco 1 dam. This dam (and the 130-foot dam) had barred fish migration for millennia



Rock-solid geological records published by the \*Department of Interior in 2006 and other publications during the time of the construction of Copco 1 dam prove that massive lava dams, as tall as 130-feet-tall above the riverbed and 1,000 feet thick, had blocked the Klamath River for millennia, thereby preventing any fish migration

\*See pages 161-162 Historical Landscape Overview of the Upper Klamath River Canyon of Oregon and California at this link:

[https://www.dotcoyote.com/pdfs/sources/beckham\\_klamath.pdf](https://www.dotcoyote.com/pdfs/sources/beckham_klamath.pdf)

\*See IMAGE Journal of Electricity Power and Gas (February 1913)

The REAL COSTS for KRRC's Klamath River Dam removal proposal

## 1. THE MONEY:

California and Oregon Taxpayers will be saddled with what easily could be \$-Billions in direct costs and liabilities. The real costs, based-upon a budget adjusted for inflation and Covid Economics, are in conflict with KRRC's obsolete, grossly insufficient budget of just \$450-million proposed nearly 5-years ago by KRRC.

Since the project started as a privately funded and operated enterprise, and just recently was made into public project via the pledge of tax-dollars, the budget and risk analysis have not had the proper public and legislative oversight and hearings required by law with full disclosure of all the facts.

More on that here: [https://www.einnews.com/pr\\_news/546308904/klamath-river-dams-removal-project-defies-logic-and-common-sense-major-flaws-and-misrepresentations-in-plan-revealed](https://www.einnews.com/pr_news/546308904/klamath-river-dams-removal-project-defies-logic-and-common-sense-major-flaws-and-misrepresentations-in-plan-revealed)

## 2. THE WATER:

KRRC's plan includes the insane concept of draining 45-Billion gallons of reserve fresh water into the sea!

This is water that is desperately needed by Americans just to survive the growing extreme drought that is being driven by Climate Change!

Water that seeps into the aquifer from Copco and Iron Gate Lakes refreshes the aquifer and keeps the hundreds of domestic water wells filled.

If KRCC has their way, hundreds of domestic water wells will go dry, and the families who depend on their wells will no longer have water to drink, let alone for any other purposes. And the property values of homes and lands without water plummets in the process, as do the property tax revenues to Siskiyou County.

The community around Iron Gate and Copco lakes are already disadvantaged by ongoing threats from seasonal wildfires and the potential of not having water from the lakes to fend-off and suppress these now regular wildfires is frightening.

Many people know how critical the water from Iron Gate and Copco lakes was during the deadly Klamathon Wildfire, that claimed lives and incinerated 38,000 acres, threatening to devastate the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument and along with it, its forests, wildlife and the nearby college town of Ashland Oregon. The college town of Ashland Oregon and the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument were saved thanks to over 1-Million gallons of water drafted from Iron Gate and Copco Lakes by tankers, helicopters and scoop planes.

WATCH THIS INTERVIEW with a CAL-FIRE Battalion Chief:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLcfJ1crUH0&t=2s>

Wildfires are growing more severe year after year and they require millions of gallons of water to fight. Draining these lakes is simply insane!

KRRC's ill-conceived plans must be halted immediately by our legislators, lest they too accept culpability for the monumental disaster that will unfold should these invaluable dams be removed.

Draining 45-Billion gallons of water from Iron Gate and Copco Lakes into the sea is the same as emptying the water tanks of fire-trucks during our growing wildfire crisis!

FIREFIGHTING - The Most Advanced firefighting aircraft requires lakes!

Moreover, the newest and most effective fire-attack and suppression weapons are the amphibious scoop-airplanes that require about 1-mile of open lake to scoop up the 1,600 gallons of water they hold for bombing wildfire.

Without Copco and Iron Gate lakes, this most effective firefighting tool will be rendered useless!

VIDEO about the Canada Air CL-415 firefighting aircraft here: WATCH:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68ZFhaWC-tM>

Here is another VIDEO of the CL-415 amphibious water-bomber seen in the prior video, actually scooping water from Copco Lake and fighting the Klamathon Fire that was threatening the priceless Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument and its heritage forest, wildlife and the city of Ashland Oregon:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CopcoLake/permalink/10165444706275858/>

What also kept quiet by pro-dam removal surrogates is that the only cold water available to flush the Klamath River during the hot summer months comes from Iron Gate dam. Without that source of stored reserve of clean cold water, when the Klamath River upstream is running low, the fish disease C. Shasta would be far worse than it has been.

### 3. THE WILDLIFE – Endangered and Threatened Species In Ward's Canyon At Grave Risk:

What KRRRC and its minority-consensus surrogates, many of whom are fishing-zealots, keeps very quiet about, are the many threatened, endangered species, as well as 'species of concern' and resident and migratory birds that would be wiped-out if the lakes are drained!

These and other wildlife are all totally dependent upon habitats in and around Copco and Iron Gate Lakes and the area of Ward's Canyon.

The present-day Copco Lake sits in the footprint of the historic lake that was called 'Clammittee Lake', which was present when work on the Copco 1 dam began in 1911.

Clammittee Lake had existed for millennia behind naturally formed lava dams, sometimes called 'reefs' or 'dikes' by geologists.

And numerous unique species of flora and fauna have evolved in and around Copco and Iron Gate Lakes over thousands of years.

To lose these lakes now is to lose numerous species of rare flora and fauna that have co-evolved and are absolutely dependent upon the habitat provided by the lakes.

Today, the eleven-miles of the Klamath River Canyon around Copco and Iron Gate lakes contain an amazing diversity of wildlife, including 89 species of birds, dozens of reptiles and amphibians, several species of fish and 71 species of plants including trees, grasses and forbs. Some species of this localized flora and fauna are threatened or endangered.

AMAZING VIDEO of wildlife at Copco Lake: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrickRh\\_WF4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrickRh_WF4)

There are also numerous species of resident and migratory birds that are strictly protected by California law (AB-454) against any incidental taking!

More about that law here: <https://ca.audubon.org/news/victory-audubon-sponsored-bill-protecting-californias-migratory-birds-signed-law>

Many resident and migratory birds that Audubon wants to protect are placed at risk because of the 'bums rush' method for dam removal being pursued by KRRRC and apparently the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) who recently went against settled NEPA law to rush the transfer of operating license for the Klamath dams, instead of conducting full compliance under NEPA beforehand, as they had ruled in a similar case.

Siskiyou County's law firm, Nossaman, LLP has filed for a 'REHEARING' and in that filing, outline how FERC has gone against its own prior ruling!

READ HERE:

<http://www.klamathbasincrisis.org/ferc/2021/SiskiyouRequestForRehearingFERCJune17DamLicenseTransfer071621.htm>

Nature, not man, ordained that migratory fish did not pass the high lava dams at Ward's Canyon, the present-day site of Copco 1 dam.

Historical reports by the Department of Interior and other published observations of the area indicate that for time immemorial several natural lava dams, which are referred to as a 'dikes' or 'reefs' by geologists in historical reports and modern published geology studies, prevented anadromous fish from migrating upstream in the Klamath River past Ward's Canyon.

The largest natural rock dam was massive and was made of volcanic andesite. It was over 130-feet tall above the riverbed and about 1,000 feet thick, and is the oldest exposed rock in the area, estimated to be 10-20-million years old.

This massive natural dam formed a large lake on the Klamath River that was 5-miles long and 1-mile wide called 'Clammittee Lake', which is within the footprint of present-day Copco Lake.

Over a period of thousands of years, this high-dam (and others) separated the ocean-going fish from the Upper Klamath Basin species, such as Red Band Trout (Salmon, aka Salmon Trout in the historical record).

Over millennia, a uniquely complex ecosystem evolved in and around Ward's Canyon and the waters of Lake Clammittee, containing a myriad of flora and fauna, that today includes threatened and endangered species, where the indigenous Shasta peoples had established permanent villages.

In 1911, as J.C. Boyle initiated the construction of Copco 1 dam, he recorded that the massive 130-foot-tall andesite dam had been eroded over time, and the waters in Clammittee Lake ultimately settled behind a 31-foot-tall basalt dam that was about two-tenths of a mile up-river from the larger andesite dam, forming a smaller version of Clammittee Lake. Even so, it continued to provide the key habitat required by the evolved species of Ward's Canyon. SEE IMAGE 'Journal of Electricity'.

Science indicates the most robust of the salmonoid species can only jump 10'-12'.

It would have been impossible for any ocean-going fish to have migratory access into the waters of the Upper Klamath Basin due to Nature's natural lava dams.

As we now know, the 31-foot-tall lava dam blocking the Klamath River, and the lake behind this natural dam, Clammittee Lake, were present when the famous engineer-dam-builder J.C. Boyle arrived at Ward's Canyon to begin work on the Copco 1 dam.

J.C. Boyle was a man whose trade was based-upon extreme accuracy, and he made a drawing of the 31-foot-tall lava dam and Clammittee lake that was present when he arrived at Ward's Canyon to begin building Copco 1 dam.

SEE IMAGE of J.C. Boyle's drawing of the Lava dams ('reefs') and Clammittee Lake

Removing Copco 1 Dam will merely allow Copco Lake to once again settle down behind the remaining 31-foot-tall lava dam that is currently underwater in Copco Lake.

And quite troubling, the Klamath River Renewal Corporation (KRRRC is also planning on removing this natural rock dam by contouring the river bottom of the wild and scenic Klamath River. Talk about destroying what Nature had created, it seems these people will stop at nothing to achieve their financial goals.

By following the bread crumbs, it becomes clear, this who kabuki show is about a massive water grab! Read more here: [https://www.einnews.com/pr\\_news/548631511/klamath-river-dams-fish-migration-myth-and-other-misinformation-camouflaging-massive-water-grab](https://www.einnews.com/pr_news/548631511/klamath-river-dams-fish-migration-myth-and-other-misinformation-camouflaging-massive-water-grab)

Richard Marshall  
Siskiyou County Water Users Association  
+1 530-468-4204  
[email us here](#)

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