

Improved Water Quality Benefits Local Communities

Healthy Communities

- People, pets, and wildlife will have access to safer river water
- Tribal Nations will be able to safely resume ceremonies in the Klamath River

Recreation Economy

- Increased opportunities for river recreation, such as fishing for steelhead

Bolster Fish Populations

- Reduce fish disease by limiting habitat for fish parasites and reducing temperatures
- Expand habitat, increase likelihood of survival (temperatures, pH, dissolved oxygen improvements)

Agriculture

- The KRRC project dams store no water for agricultural irrigation, but improved water quality and more fish generally benefit agriculture.

Degrees matter.

Why is water temperature critical for fish habitat and health?

Temperature affects the timing of migration and spawning, egg incubation and hatching, feeding and growth rates, responses to predation, and susceptibility to disease.



Algae in J.C. Boyle Reservoir (Photo: AECOM)

We want to hear from you!

Do you have a question about KRRC's activities or how dam decommissioning and river restoration will impact your community? Would you like to share information with us? Please email info@klamathrenewal.org
Sign up for our e-newsletter at www.klamathrenewal.org/contact/

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Klamath River Renewal Project

Anticipated Water Quality Improvements



How Does Dam Removal Improve Water Quality?

Extensive studies have concluded that removal of the Klamath River dams will improve dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature, and mitigate toxic algae and fish disease.

Dam Removal Water Quality Benefits

Reduces water temperature

The sun warms still reservoir waters. Warm water negatively impacts fish health.

Dam removal will eliminate three warm water reservoirs and provide fish with access to cold water habitat in the mainstem and tributaries above the dams.



Salmon smolts (Photo: Karuk Tribe)

Eliminates toxic reservoir algae

Warm reservoir water creates ideal growth conditions for blue-green algae (cyanobacteria). The algae blooms produce toxic microcystin in the reservoirs and downstream which is dangerous to humans and pets.

Dam removal will eliminate J.C. Boyle, Copco, and Iron Gate reservoirs which foster algae growth.



Algae and water quality sampling (Photo: Karuk Tribe)

Reduces alkalinity (pH)

Large algae blooms in the reservoirs increase alkalinity in the river.

Dam removal would help restore optimal pH levels important to fish health and disease prevention.



Iron Gate Reservoir (Photo: AECOM)

Increases dissolved oxygen

Seasonal warming in the reservoirs reduces the amount of oxygen in water released downstream.

Dam removal will increase dissolved oxygen in the river and create healthier fish habitat.



Iron Gate Reservoir (Photo: AECOM)



Big Springs Creek (Photo: Daniel Nylan)

Removing four dams from the Klamath River is a crucial piece of improving water quality for people and fish in the Klamath Basin. River communities, recreationalists, farmers and ranchers, commercial fishermen, and fish will directly benefit from the improved water quality conditions.

KRRC's work is part of a cooperative effort to re-establish the natural vitality of the Klamath River. On-going work on other water quality projects in the Basin is critical. Dam removal is an important first step to restoring the Klamath River.

Many factors – both natural and human introduced – impact water quality in the Klamath River. The Klamath Basin is an “upside down” river, where water starts out warmer at its headwaters and cools with tributary input as it moves downstream before reaching the Pacific Ocean. Water in an expansive Upper Klamath Lake averages only 8 feet deep, warmed by the hot, dry summers and is nutrient rich due to volcanic soils and farms along its tributaries.

KRRC's project will improve water quality in the Klamath River.