

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF  
SISKIYOU PROCLAIMING A LOCAL EMERGENCY AND REQUESTING THAT THE  
GOVERNOR PROCLAIM A STATE OF EMERGENCY  
(Impacts Resulting from Lower Klamath Dam Removal)**

**WHEREAS**, the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors recognizes that conditions exist that impact the people, wildlife and fisheries, and environment throughout the Klamath Watershed resulting from the removal of JC Boyle, Iron Gate, Copco 1 and Copco 2 dams (Lower Klamath Dams), and;

**WHEREAS**, the drawdown of the three reservoirs along the Klamath River in preparation of dam removal began in January 2024, following the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) approval of the Lower Klamath Dams Decommissioning Project (Project), and;

**WHEREAS**, the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Project estimated that the amount of sediment that has accumulated in the project reservoirs is approximately 15.5 million cubic yards, and;

**WHEREAS**, there was no large-scale assisted sediment removal from the reservoirs ahead of drawdown, and;

**WHEREAS**, the increased turbidity and sediment transport occurring during the drawdown phase of the Project has resulted in public and environmental health concerns related to heavy metals and other undesirable water quality constituents, and;

**WHEREAS**, while the Klamath River Renewal Corporation (KRRC) is responsible for water quality sampling as part of the project's permit conditions, the constituents monitored and analyzed by KRRC are for the protection of the aquatic environment, and not to monitor the effects of the Project on human health, and;

**WHEREAS**, the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors directed the Siskiyou County Environmental Health Division to collect water quality grab samples from the mainstem of the Klamath River for analysis of constituents that may be harmful to public health, and;

**WHEREAS**, samples were collected on January 31 and February 5, 2024, to analyze organic and inorganic constituents, and laboratory results from these collections compare the heavy metal concentrations from the County's sampling efforts to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) drinking water standards and the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's beneficial use standards, and;

**WHEREAS**, results of the County's sampling (*Attachment A, starting at page 10*) demonstrate that, levels of arsenic and lead exceeded the EPA's primary drinking water standard at 4 of the 6 sample locations, and that these levels are also higher than the

pre-project, or baseline sampling results, and levels of aluminum and iron at all 6 sample locations exceeded the EPA's secondary drinking water standards, and the County's sample results show much higher aluminum levels than the baseline, and;

**WHEREAS**, while there are baseline concentrations of heavy metals within the Klamath River system (both in the sediments and water column) the County's sample results indicate that there are higher than baseline concentrations of arsenic, lead, and aluminum, and that the levels of arsenic, aluminum, chromium, and nickel are elevated above the State's beneficial use standards, and;

**WHEREAS**, primary drinking water standards are legally enforceable standards that apply to public drinking water systems and protect public health by limiting the levels of contaminants in drinking water, and the secondary drinking water standards are non-enforceable guidelines that regulate contaminants that may cause cosmetic effects (such as skin or tooth discoloration) or aesthetic effects (i.e., taste, odor, or color) in drinking water, and;

**WHEREAS**, heavy metals suspended in the water column can pose health risks to humans through various exposure pathways (i.e., bioavailability), and understanding the recent water quality results, and how the elevated levels of arsenic, lead, aluminum and iron can be bioavailable to humans, it is crucial to assess public safety and health implications of the Klamath River during drawdown and as sediments are released from the reservoirs, and;

**WHEREAS**, in the case of heavy metal concentrations suspended in the Klamath River water, the bioavailability of these analytes to humans may occur through dermal contact, and ingestion, and therefore it is not safe to consume the Klamath River surface water, and it is advisable to stay out of the Klamath River, and;

**WHEREAS**, the increased sediment has resulted in considerable damage to the economic and ecological capital within Siskiyou County, inundating an already compromised watershed that has been impacted by multiple years of toxic wildfire debris run-off, and;

**WHEREAS**, although unintended, the current impact on the protected watershed will undoubtedly increase the lasting potential of impacts upon the residents, endangered species, and the environment, and brings into question the State's responsibility under the *Porter-Cologne Act § 13392.5. Monitoring and surveillance* and *§ 13392.6. Sediment quality objectives workplan*.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED** that a local emergency now exists throughout Siskiyou County as a result of Lower Klamath Dam Removal and Klamath River water quality, and;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors hereby Proclaims and Orders that during the existence of this local emergency, the powers, functions, and

duties of the Director of Emergency Services and the emergency organizations of this county shall be those prescribed by state law, ordinances and resolutions of this county approved by the Board of Supervisors, and by the Siskiyou Operational Emergency Area Operations Plan, as approved by the Board of Supervisors, and;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this declaration shall be forwarded to the Secretary of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) with a request that the Secretary of Cal OES confirm a Secretaries concurrence, and;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this declaration shall be forwarded to the Governor of California with a request that he proclaim the County of Siskiyou to be in a state of emergency and make available any Federal or State assistance for the recovery from this disaster, and;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this declaration be brought back to the Board at least once every 60 days for review, and revisions as needed until the Board terminates the local emergency.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors on March 19, 2024, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

---

Michael N. Kobseff, Chair  
Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

LAURA BYNUM,  
COUNTY CLERK

By \_\_\_\_\_

Deputy