

# State of California, County of Siskiyou

## Board of Supervisors Minutes, January 23, 2024

The Honorable Board of Supervisors of Siskiyou County, California, met in special session this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January 2024; there being present Supervisors Brandon Criss, Ed Valenzuela, Michael N. Kobseff, Nancy Ogren and Ray A. Haupt, County Administrator Angela Davis, County Counsel Natalie E. Reed and County Clerk and ex-Officio Clerk of the Board of Supervisors Laura Bynum by Deputy County Clerk Wendy Winningham.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kobseff. Pursuant to AB23, the Clerk announced that the Board was only meeting as the Board of Supervisors and receive no additional compensation. Supervisor Ogren led in the salute to the flag of the United States of America.

### **Presentations from the Public**

Chair Kobseff recognized Congressman Doug LaMalfa's District Representative Erin Ryan, former County Supervisor Grace Bennett and CalFire Unit Chief/Fire Warden Greg Roath who were in attendance.

Local rancher and Siskiyou Water Users Association President Richard Marshall appeared before the Board and shared concerns regarding the condition of the roads in/around Copco Lake and concerns regarding the Klamath River Renewal Corporation's (KRRC's) lack of consideration for the County during the dam removal process.

In response to Chair Kobseff, County Counsel Natalie E. Reed advised that pursuant to the Brown Act comments made during special Board meetings are limited to items on the agenda, although comments made during a regular Board meeting can be made regarding issues within the Board's jurisdiction.

Local rancher William Simpson appeared before the Board and spoke in opposition of removal of the Klamath River dams and shared concerns regarding the unacceptable condition of the roads being used by KRRC contractors.

Copco Lake resident Dmitriy Vorik appeared before the Board and shared concerns regarding the potential for noisy construction activities happening at night and on the weekends.

Copco Lake resident Rick Dowdy appeared before the Board and shared concerns regarding the potential negative impacts associated with dam removal activities.

Jefferson Resource Company representative Danielle Lindler appeared before the Board and voiced concerns regarding a recent fatal vehicle accident that occurred on Copco Road.

**Public Requests** - CKM Environmental - Discussion and possible direction re presentation of an update regarding the Lower Klamath Dam Decommissioning Project, including current/upcoming activities, use of roads and bridges by contractors, County permitting, coordination with the Klamath River Renewal Corporation and communication with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Presentation and discussion only.

CKM Environmental representative Chelsea Murphy appeared before the Board and provided an overview of recent activities associated with removal of various Klamath River Dams, including pre-drawdown work in 2023 with drawdown of the water level behind Iron Gate already in progress and the anticipated drawdown of JC Boyle and Copco reservoirs happening as well. Ms. Murphy advised that representatives from the Klamath River Renewal Corporation (KRRC) were not in attendance and read a statement from KRRC regarding the drawdown activities, associated timelines, anticipated monitoring and road repair activities and public outreach efforts into the record.

Ms. Murphy additionally advised that KRRC would videotape drawdown activities happening at Copco 1, although the video live stream was not possible due to lack of internet access in the area. Ms. Murphy advised that KRRC would provide a link to the video for public viewing and displayed photos of the water release from Iron Gate reservoir that occurred on January 11, 2024. Ms. Murphy briefly summarized anticipated road repair work on Copco Road that KRRC and their contractors would be performing.

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## **Public Requests - CKM Environmental – (continued)**

Ms. Murphy provided an overview of ongoing and anticipated communications with KRRC, their contractors and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife regarding drawdown and restoration activities and an overview of recent discussions concerning a temporary fence designed to prevent wildlife and livestock from damaging areas around the reservoirs that will be under restoration. Ms. Murphy advised that the temporary fencing would conform to the specifics in the Dam Removal Project environmental documents.

Supervisor Kobseff voiced concerns that the videos of dam removal activities should be accessible by the public in 'real time' versus a taped delay and advocated for sufficient internet access in order for the public to view live stream of dam removal/drawdown activities.

Discussion followed between members of the Board and Ms. Murphy regarding KRRC's rim stability monitoring plan (edge along the reservoirs as water recedes/is drawn down), KRRC's process for providing various reports to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the need for contact numbers to report erosion/sloughing of the reservoir rim, flushing flows anticipated to occur in February, concerns regarding the lengthy delay in the ability to view reports to FERC, emergency dispatch and the notification process related to possible road closures, ongoing activities related to placing fire fighting (i.e. dry hydrants, etc.) in/around the Copco area, concerns regarding the turbidity of the water at the Seiad gauge, the need to contact the US Geological Survey regarding the river gauge that has been off-line, the need to engage and coordinate with the County's Range Advisory Board with regard to the wildlife fencing placement and concerns regarding the locations used for collection of native seeds for the restoration efforts.

In response to Supervisor Haupt, Office of Emergency Services Director Bryan Schenone appeared before the Board and summarized the Department's efforts to review the KRRC's emergency notification protocol plan.

Supervisor Haupt recommended that the County provide periodic updates to FERC regarding the dam removal project and issues being observed by staff.

In response to Supervisor Valenzuela, Deputy County Administrator Elizabeth Nielsen advised that she would follow-up regarding information from the Karuk Tribe with regards to river flows and turbidity with other members of the Board and staff.

Supervisor Ogren shared concerns regarding the lengthy time for completion of dam removal activities to provide a report to FERC and for the County to be able to view/review the reports.

In response to Supervisor Criss, Ms. Murphy advised that she would follow-up and bring back before the Board, the anticipated contractors' work time frame, including potential nighttime construction activities.

Brief discussion followed regarding the need to inform FERC of the condition/issues with Copco Road, the need for additional information regarding plans associated with a possible natural barrier to fish passage following the reservoirs drawdown.

**County Road Commissioner/Sheriff** - Presentation of an update re Copco Road and public safety during the 2024 Lower Klamath Dams Decommissioning Project activities. Presentation and discussion only.

Chair Kobseff recognized California State Senator Brian Dahle's representative Anthony Gorman who was in attendance.

County Road Commissioner Tom Deany appeared before the Board, providing a powerpoint presentation including various photos taken along Copco Road on February 7, 2023 and on December 12, 2023. Mr. Deany shared concerns regarding the deteriorating condition of the roadway due to the multiple heavy truck loads being driven on the road. Mr. Deany additionally presented a photo and video of sloughing (portions of the roadway and reservoir rim falling away) occurring on Copco Road at Mile Post 13. Mr. Deany outlined Public Works' efforts to monitor the issue, as the Klamath River Renewal Corporation (KRRC) and their contractor Kiewit would be making repairs to the roadway.

Discussion followed between members of the Board and Mr. Deany regarding the inability for Public Works to use 'hot mix' to repair the road due to colder, winter weather, the need to information regarding the original roadway design (i.e. support for certain weight loads), options for repairing or replacing the roadway and additional locations along the reservoir rim where sloughing could occur.

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## **County Road Commissioner/Sheriff – (continued)**

Supervisor Valenzuela requested information regarding the road system rating for Copco Road and spoke in support of the County researching potential funding opportunities to fund rebuilding the roadway.

Further discussion followed, including CKM Environmental representative Chelsea Murphy regarding the possibility of future erosion/sloughing events, potential liability associated with the failing roadway, the dam removal project's Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) permit that requires that one lane of the road is to be open at all times during the removal project activities, the current status and monitoring of the bridges (permanent and temporary) in Copco Lake, the signage and the process utilized to notify heavy truck drivers of the approved routes to/from the project area and the recent fatal vehicle accident that took place outside of the project/construction zone at Copco.

Supervisor Haupt advised of the need for an engineer to review/research the conditions in/around Copco Lake as the project progresses.

**Public Requests** - California Department of Fish and Wildlife - Presentation of an update re the Lower Klamath Dams Decommissioning Project, including Parcel B Lands and fish hatchery. Presentation and discussion only.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife representative Michael Harris appeared before the Board, advising that Eric Jones would be presenting.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife representative Eric Jones presented a powerpoint presentation on the Fall Creek Hatchery (FCH). Mr. Jones provided a history of Siskiyou Power Company that became the California Oregon Power Company (COPCO) and the FCH that was originally built in 1919. Mr. Jones summarized the various operations that took place at the FCH during operations from 1919-1948, and the intermittent fish production that took place from 1948-2022. Mr. Jones provided a history of the Iron Gate dam and fish hatchery (IGH) construction starting in 1962 and an overview of the ongoing construction of a new FCH facility, including the various fish species that would be reared at the facility.

Discussion followed between members of the Board, Mr. Jones and Mr. Harris regarding a possible tour of the facility by the Board and County staff, historical fish species statistics for the FCH, the need for additional information regarding the timeframe in which Coho were present at the FCH and the need for information regarding possible blasting of any natural fish barriers following dam removal, the possible disposition and/or ownership of Parcel B lands under the lake and plans for restoration following drawdown of the reservoir waters.

Further discussion followed regarding the eight-years that the FCH operation would be funded by Pacificorp, possible plans to seed nutrients (fish from the hatchery operations) in the river system, the FCH annual operating costs, the anticipated plans for placing temporary wildlife-friendly fencing within the areas being restored (after the water recedes) and anticipated natural fish recolonization into the areas above the dams.

Supervisor Haupt shared concerns regarding the potential for activity on the Klamath River to impact water users in the Scott Valley. Supervisor Haupt requested information regarding the efforts to streamline irrigation permitting for those along the Klamath.

Additional discussion followed, including CKM Environmental representative Chelsea Murphy regarding the need for information from CDFW related to Klamath fishing regulations and possible flow curtailments, support for the County posting the information once received, monitoring for possible fish losses related to sediment flowing down the river, possible Klamath River flow (for mitigation measures) associated with Shasta and Scott system flow petitions, efforts being made related to exclude the Scott and Shasta systems should there be a loss of fish eggs (in salmon nest/redds) due to the condition of the Klamath following the drawdown and the sediment in the river, the need to discuss abatement of construction/deconstruction noise impacts (at night in particular) and the potential method(s) for formalizing the County's concerns (related to the dam removal project impacts) to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

**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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Michael N. Kobseff, Chair

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