

Klamath River Dams-KRRC Sediment Plan: A Ticking Time Bomb?

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The Klamath River Renewal Corporation (KRRC) has been misinforming everyone. And when everything goes wrong, they claim it's "as planned."

The 15 million cubic yards of remaining toxic lake bottom sediments pose a very real and significant threat to the ongoing health and recovery of the Klamath River.

Genuine Advocates for River restoration might actually be interested in WHY the forgoing is true. And when dam removal Advocates learn the scientifically supported truth, they should be very alarmed and upset with Klamath River Renewal Corporation and its staff.

There is already arguable evidence that KRRC likely knew that there were toxins and heavy metals in the sediments that would impact human health, safety and welfare as well as the lifeforms in the Klamath River.

As a result of the sediments dumped into the main-stem of the Klamath River by KRRC, the Siskiyou County Health Department has had to issue a press release warning people to stay out of the Klamath River!

First off, in order to actually understand the exigent threat that remaining sediments present to the proper restoration of the Klamath River, we need to understand the nature and quantity of the sediments remaining in the now exposed canyon lake bottoms of the lakes that existed behind Iron Gate Dam, Copco 1 Dam and Boyle Dam.

According to a published 2006 Study of the Lake bottom sediments behind the Klamath River dams by GATHARD ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS of Seattle, “ approximately 20.4 million cubic yards of sediments is trapped in the four lower most reservoirs of the Klamath River Project. Most of the sediment, 78 percent of the total of all dams is smaller than silt sized material.”

The study highlighted dangers posed:

Fish will be impacted by the fine sediments. Fish are happier with greater channel complexity.”

Soil Erosion and Sediment Pollution.

Excess eroded sediment degrades habitat. Suspended sediment decreases the generation of light into the water, affecting fish feeding and schooling practices. Sediment particles reduces the amount of light, depriving the plants of sunlight needed for photosynthesis. Excess sediment from eroding soils contains organic matter that contributes to oxygen depletion.

It is a plain fact that just the 5-7 million yards dumped into the Klamath River, January 23, over the course of the next few days, killed the Klamath River.

Many people are aware that even floods over wide flat valleys will strip-off cover crops and the underlying soils, move boulders and dislodge trees. Leaving these sediments in the line of the next flood is a ticking time bomb.

As responsible citizens who care about the health of the Klamath and its recovery, we must now demand KRRC remove all remaining polluted sediments, as soon as possible.