

# Dam removal deal near

## *Negotiations are expected to conclude today*

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A final draft agreement on removal of four hydroelectric dams on the Klamath River could be available as soon as Wednesday morning.

Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski's office and others involved in negotiations confirmed Monday that final negotiations on the PacifiCorp-owned dams, a key aspect of the broader Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement, are anticipated to conclude today.

"I don't see anything that says that's not going to happen," said Greg Addington, executive director of Klamath Basin Water Users Association, one of the original KBRA stakeholders.

Weeks of review by organizations and governments impacted by the agreement should follow as it is synchronized with the KBRA. The overall agreement affects a large part of the area economy, water rights, irrigation, fisheries, power rates, tribal lands and more.

Those in negotiations said they are optimistic about the dam removal document. One opponent of the KBRA and dam removal criticized the expected outcome.

"It's obvious it's not what the public wants," said Tom Mallams, president of the Klamath Off-Project Water Users. Mallams did not participate in negotiations.

### **Talks took a year**

Irrigators, tribal representatives, the commercial fishing industry and environmentalists met with Portland-based PacifiCorp and state and federal authorities for nearly a year to work out a hydropower agreement.

Those in negotiations originally planned to have a document finished by the end of June, but the deadline was pushed to September.

Jeff Mitchell, Klamath Tribal Council member, was hesitant to say when the hydropower agreement would be released, though he confirmed that negotiators met in Portland Monday and were working toward that goal.

"We'll know tomorrow (Tuesday) afternoon," he said.

PacifiCorp spokesman Art Sasse confirmed in an e-mail that negotiators are hopeful of releasing a draft hydropower agreement to the public early Wednesday, but said that he had nothing to report or confirm beyond that.

### **Concluding talks**

Becky Hyde of the Upper Klamath Water Users Association, Addington and Craig Tucker of the Karuk Tribe said discussions were going well and were optimistic that negotiations should conclude today.

They said, though, that nothing will be signed for a number of weeks. The hydropower agreement will be made public as those involved work to coordinate it with the restoration agreement, and the final package will again be presented to the public.

“This thing will be under a lot of public scrutiny in the coming weeks, which is expected and necessary,” Tucker said.

Mallams said he’s not fully aware of what will be in the hydropower agreement, but he discounted the meetings for not involving everyone who will be impacted by the hydropower and restoration agreements.

“It’s going to doom irrigated agriculture in the Klamath Basin,” he said.

A call for comment to Siskiyou County Supervisor Jim Cook was not immediately returned. Susan Fry, area manager for the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation office in Klamath Falls, declined comment and referred requests to the bureau’s Washington, D.C. office.

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