

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Karuk Tribe • Yurok Tribe • Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations • Institute of Fisheries Resources • Trout Unlimited • OTHER?

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CALIFORNIA SALMON FISHERY FACES CLOSURE

Near Total Closure of CA's Salmon Fishery Linked to Klamath River Dams and Diversions; Central Valley Stocks Suffer Similar Woes

Sacramento, CA – California and Oregon salmon fishermen are waiting for a final decision on this year's salmon quotas but everyone knows that a near total closure of California's coast is inevitable.

"This is the worst year in history for Klamath salmon," says Amy Cordalis, staff attorney and member of the Yurok Tribe. "There is no mystery as to why. The effects of an unprecedented drought were exacerbated by dams and diversions. This year, Yurok, Karuk and Hoopa people will have little to no salmon for the first time since creation."

The disaster stems from a crash of Klamath salmon stocks, but in order to protect the few Klamath fish that are in the ocean, fisheries regulators have little choice but to close or nearly close the economically valuable commercial and sport fishing seasons along the length of the California coast.

"We expect many family fishermen to lose their boats this year," says **Dave/Noah** representing the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations (PCFFA). "Even if Klamath stocks were healthier, we would likely see restrictions due to lower than average returns to the Sacramento River. Dams and excessive diversions during the worst drought in history are to blame."

Although the outlook for 2017 is grim, Tribal and commercial fishermen do have some cause for optimism. Last year, Klamath Basin stakeholders, California, Oregon, and federal agencies signed an agreement with Klamath Dam owner Berkshire Energy (operating locally as PacifiCorp) that proposes an ambitious plan to remove the lower four Klamath River Dams. Many consider this the largest salmon restoration project in history.

“The fact of the matter is that this agreement is in the best economic interests of PacifiCorp and their customers,” explains Trout Unlimited California Director Brian Johnson. “These dams make very little energy relative to their environmental impacts, this means that dam removal under terms of the Agreement is cheaper than the upgrades necessary to relicense the dams.”

The dam removal plan requires no federal spending; PacifiCorp is contributing \$200 million and California’s Proposition 1 can be tapped for up to \$250 million in additional funds as needed. The dam removal proposal is awaiting approval from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. If all goes as planned, dam removal would occur in 2020.

A final decision regarding this year’s fishery closures will likely be revealed Monday. “We hope to get a few holiday weekends to make enough money to keep the boat in the water,” said XXXX, a sportfishing guide out of Eureka. “We we don’t don’t do something soon to improve our salmon runs, this will be the last generation of salmon fishermen in California.”

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About the Pacific Fisheries Management Council: The Pacific Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional fishery management councils established by Congress in 1976. The Council is made up of 14 voting representatives from Oregon, Washington, California, and Idaho; many advisory bodies; and 16 staff members located in Portland, Oregon. Some Council members represent state or tribal fish and wildlife agencies, and some are private citizens who are knowledgeable about recreational or commercial fishing or marine conservation. Apart from state and tribal representatives, Council members are chosen by the governors of the four states within the Council region, in conjunction with the Secretary of Commerce. Management measures developed by the Council are recommended to the Secretary of Commerce through the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

Link to photos and videos: XXXXX

More information on Klamath dam removal: [Klamath River Renewal Corporation](#)
[Karuk Dam Removal FAQ](#)
[Trout Unlimited](#)
[Dam Removal Studies](#)

More information on California Commercial Fishing Industry: <http://pcffa.org/>

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