

## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

### **Karuk Tribe**

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**For more information:**    *Craig Tucker, Natural Resources Policy Consultant, 916.207.8294*

### **TRIBE APPLAUDS GOVERNOR NEWSOM’S EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION**

*California Fish Dependent Communities Face Existential Threat*

*Happy Camp, CA* – Today the Karuk Tribe applauded actions by Governor Gavin Newsom to issue an [emergency proclamation](#) to address severe water shortages in the Klamath Basin and elsewhere in the state.

“These are dire times,” noted Karuk Chairman Russell ‘Buster’ Attebery, “several runs of salmon are hanging on by a thread. We must act decisively if California has any hope of ensuring salmon runs for future generations.”

Among other things, the proclamation gives the state agencies tools for working with agricultural users to enter into voluntary agreements to forgo water use with compensation, and allows “To the extent voluntary actions are not sufficient, the Water Board, in coordination with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, shall consider emergency regulations to establish minimum drought instream flows.”

“We thank the Governor for his leadership on this issue and look forward to working with his administration to get through this year,” says Attebery. “We must maintain a minimal flow in key rivers and streams to preserve the fisheries we have left.”

Increasingly, this kind of water year looks less like a drought and more like a new normal for Northern California. The Klamath Basin has seen drought declarations in 8 of the last 12 years. For many years scientists have warned that climate change would result in weather extremes with critically dry years bookended by floods on a regular basis.

“The weather of the twenty-first century is very different from that of a hundred years ago when our water and irrigation infrastructure was built. Moving forward we must reconsider how we manage and use water resources so fish dependent communities like the Karuk are as high a priority as irrigation dependent communities,” adds Attebery.

Coho salmon are on the state and federal Endangered Species List; the Tribe recently petitioned to add Spring Chinook. Fall Chinook, the staple of Tribal, sport, and commercial salmon fisheries are in steep decline.

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#### **Additional notes for editors:**

The Karuk Tribe recently published a Climate Adaptation Plan to inform policymakers in the age of climate change. It can be found along with other climate change resources [here](#).