

## HABITAT COMMITTEE PROPOSED ACTION FORM

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**HC Sponsor:** Mr. Michael Rode

**Title of Issue:** Letter on 2003 Klamath Flow Management

**Deadline (if any):** April 2003 Council meeting

**Proposed Action:** Letter for Council signature

**Addressed To:** Secretary Gale Norton  
Secretary of the Interior

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**Description of Issue:**

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is proposing to operate the Klamath Project under "dry water year" criteria that will result in lower flows in the Klamath River in 2003 than occurred in 2002. Last year, near record low flows were implicated as a major factor resulting in the largest adult salmon fish kill ever recorded on the Klamath River. This letter requests that the U.S. Department of Interior reconsider the Klamath Project 2003 Operations Plan and provide flows in 2003 that will support all life history phases of all anadromous fish species. The Council approved a detailed letter to Secretary Norton at the November 2002 meeting in which it made a number of recommendations to remedy the ongoing Klamath flow crisis. To date, none of the recommendations have been implemented. Previous letters have been sent by the Council on June 1, 2000 (Lone to Babbitt) regarding Klamath River flows and on January 10, 2000 (Lone to Babbitt) regarding Trinity River flow issues.

**Description of Regional Significance:**

Low flows in the Klamath and Trinity Rivers have been major factors in reducing the quality and quantity of anadromous fish habitat in the Klamath River Basin and have contributed greatly to the depressed status of its coho and chinook salmon populations. These depleted populations have been a constraining factor in the management of ocean fisheries from Cape Falcon, Oregon to south of San Francisco and tribal and recreational fisheries of the Klamath Basin.

**Potential Adverse Impacts to EFH?**

Yes

No

**For Which Species?** All anadromous species, including Southern Oregon/Northern California Coastal coho and Klamath chinook salmon. [any specific species of concern?]

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**Potential Benefits of Proposed Action:**

The letter will ensure the Council's opinions on the 2003 Klamath Project Operations Plan and the Hardy Phase II flow study are presented to the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Draft

8, 2003

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The Council on the Klamath River, established in 2002, (the Council) is a  
joint venture of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the  
Bureau of Reclamation. The Council is responsible for developing and  
implementing a long-term operations plan for the Klamath Project.

1. Reinitiate ESA, Section 7 consultation as soon as possible (DOI and DOC)
2. Reinitiate coho and Chinook salmon EFH consultation (DOI and DOC)
3. Establish a flow management advisory committee as soon as possible (DOI)
4. Complete the SEIS and implement the Trinity River ROD in a timely fashion (DOI)
5. Provide the Council opportunity to comment on the EIS for the Klamath Project Long-Term Operations Plan (DOI)
6. Finalize the Hardy Phase II Report and incorporate its flow recommendations in future consultation and Klamath Project operations plans (DOI).

Thus far, we are unaware of any progress that has been made towards accomplishment of these recommendations.

In summary, the Council recommends that the Klamath Project be operated to provide the flows necessary to support all life history stages of all anadromous fish species of the Klamath River. While relief for the lower Klamath may be provided in the form of augmented Trinity River flows, the potential for disastrous fish kills extends to the middle and upper reaches of the Klamath, well above the confluence of these two rivers. Please provide for our review a copy of the final Klamath Project 2003 Operations Plan.

Sincerely,

Hans Radtke, Ph.D.  
Chair

cc: Secretary of Commerce  
Senator Feinstein  
Senator Boxer  
Senator Wyden  
Senator Smith  
Congressman Thompson  
Congressman Herger  
Congressman DeFazio  
Congressman Walden  
Governor Gray Davis  
Governor Ted Kulongoski  
Sue Ellen Wooldridge  
William T. Hogarth  
California Secretary for Resources Mary Nichols  
CDFG Director Robert Hight  
Mr. Kirk Rodgers