



Spring 2022

Taking Wing

Klamath Wingwatchers, Inc. Newsletter, P.O. Box 251, Klamath Falls, OR 97601-0359

Commentary on Effect of Dam Removal on Klamath Basin Wildlife

The two upper dams, which control much of the water in the upper Klamath Basin, will remain intact so will not be impacted by the dam removals. But as before, the management of the uppermost, the Link River Dam at Klamath Falls, will still be very important though separate from the dam removal project. It is the primary control of Upper Klamath Lake and the primary source of diverted water for farming, ranching, and for several of the best known of the wildlife refuges. The Link River Dam will continue as before and need careful management.

The other dam to remain is the Keno Dam, a short distance downstream from Klamath Falls at Keno. A relatively small amount of water is drawn from the Klamath River above it. It is not expected to be managed significantly different and should also not have much impact on the birdlife or farming activities.

The four lower dams, which are to be removed, are J.C. Boyle, Copco I, Copco II, and Irongate. The reservoirs behind them are not very large compared to the very large waters and wetlands of the upper Klamath Basin. They are mostly in

deep and rugged canyon country, do not have large associated wetlands, but do have some open water birds such as various ducks, grebes, etc. They are not as well known or heavily birded as the more accessible much larger lakes and wetlands in the Klamath Basin above the two dams which are to remain.

The Klamath River in the area where the dams are to be removed will become more like its original rugged, free-flowing, wild river passing uninhibited through the long canyon country below. The river should become significantly cleaner and cooler in summer. Cleaner due to the high natural turbulence with aeration and more closely associated substrates (lots of rocks and riffles) causing the breakdown of organic materials (natural and similar to the very effective processes occurring in the sprinklers systems filled with rocks in sewage treatment plants). The river should also measure cooler than present during the hotter dry months due to the lower amounts of upstream water coming into the canyons, without flowing through sun-warmed pools of the dams in

Please see DAM REMOVAL on page 2

The Importance of Volunteering

We've all heard the saying that it takes a village to raise a child, the same could be true when it comes to maintaining a trail. It takes a great amount of work to maintain the quality of the Wingwatchers Trail. Whether it's clearing out weeds and invasive species, laying down mulch or picking up trash, it all takes time.

Not only does volunteering help the trail, it also helps the volunteers. There have been numerous studies showing the health and psychological benefits of volunteering. If you're interested in reaping some health benefits for yourself and helping us maintain this beautiful trail for our community to enjoy, then we hope you'll **join us for our next maintenance day on Saturday March 26th from 10am to noon**. We'll be meeting in the South Portal Visitor Center parking lot. Bring work gloves and a water bottle.

By Jessie Wilkie





Above: Eagles on the Snag

It takes a team to improve the trail and maintain it.

YOU can help by: volunteering your time, paying your dues, making donations, writing a newsletter article, sharing your trail pictures, picking up trash as you walk, etc.

WANT TO JOIN THE TEAM?

Contact Dave Potter 541-205-3293
 kpottermom@yahoo.com

There are new projects and regular maintenance chores. Every effort helps take care of the trail.

Klamath Wingwatcher Board meetings are now held via phone conference due to Covid. **Our meetings are open to everyone.** They are scheduled at 5:30pm on the fourth Thursday of each month. If you wish to be included in any of our Board meetings, please send your email to inharmony46@charter.net with "Include me in KWW meetings" in the subject line. You will receive a copy of our minutes from the previous meeting and the Agenda, along with the phone number to call to join the meeting. **Please get involved and support the trail you enjoy.**

DAM REMOVAL from page 1

the canyons, and where it will be mixing with the more constant flows of the many cold spring waters entering the river in the canyons. Thus, the river, with less water in dry summer months, will have a higher percentage of clean, cold spring water. Again, the reservoirs to be removed act as sun-warmed pools in summer, encouraging growth of algae and pathogens, and dumping their water downstream mostly from the warm upper surface of the reservoirs.

Expect some shift in bird life below the upper Klamath Basin along the Klamath River away from "lake birds" (but not all) to more riverine species and forest species with an increase in such birds as Eagles, Kingfishers, Herons and Egrets. There may be a more dramatic

change in bird life along the Klamath River where the four dams are proposed to be removed if the projected return of much healthier insect and fish populations there (especially trout, Steelhead, and two species of salmon) becomes a better food source for the birds and attracts more of them to the canyon, including more nesting activity. This is part of the reasons the dams are planned for removal – time will tell, probably as has occurred in other places where dams have been removed, and within a few years if the dams are, indeed, removed. As for fears about the impacts on farming and ranching in the Klamath Basin, the removal of the four lower of the six dams will have virtually no impact on farming and ranching in the Klamath Basin or along Klamath River.

Be aware that Upper Klamath Lake is not totally controlled by the water from the natural rain and snow. The Link River dam definitely affects the level of the lake; it can artificially manipulate the Lake on the order of 14 feet, high to low. Regulations prevent the full manipulations possible, but as many know, a lot is still done affecting irrigation and the refuges, as well as downstream flows in the river.

By Marshal A. Moser, Jr., C.W.B.
 Certified Wildlife Biologist
 EcoServices Ecological Consulting

A HIDDEN GEM

I've often driven on Highway 97 and looked over to see a trail off of the road. Each time I was reminded that there is an option I need to explore the next time I went for a run downtown. One sunny Sunday in early February, that day finally came. What a delightful surprise it was! Who would have known a trail with such sweeping views of the city was so close to our house?!?! I made a point to stop and soak up the nature views and beautiful silence while running on the trail.

With views of Lake Ewauna, the Klamath Wingwatchers (a local non-profit group dedicated to public education in regard to the Klamath Basin wildlife and wetland habitat) 2.5 mile trail on the western shore offers picnic tables, benches, info kiosks, and signage to enhance and explain the local plants that are found there. Wildlife opportunities abound that can include sightings of everything from bald eagles, Peregrine falcons, herons, Osprey, and hawks. It is truly a birdwatcher's paradise!

By Brian Davenport

BE THE WIND BENEATH OUR WINGS

Consider donating to the trail or becoming a Klamath Wingwatchers Member to help support us and all we do. All Donations are tax deductible, including Membership Dues.

An easy way to help us is through Amazon Smile. Sign up at smile.amazon.com/ch/943143814

Every time you buy, Amazon sends 0.05% to Wingwatchers. Or you can also sign up for Fred Meyer Community Rewards program and select Wingwatchers as your charity.

Critter facts

Klamath Wingwatchers, Inc.
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I wish to join the Klamath Wingwatchers. As a charter member, I will begin receiving the Taking Wing Newsletter. All memberships are tax deductible.

MY MEMBERSHIP PLEDGE:

___ Student/Senior...\$10 ___ Individual...\$15 ___ Family...\$25 ___ Business...\$35

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____



SAVE THE DATE

30th Anniversary BBQ Celebration

August 26th, 2022 at 4:30 PM

South Portal Visitor Center

Photo Contest

The Klamath Wingwatchers are running a photo contest in honor of our 30th anniversary. Check out the trail and bring your camera or smartphone to capture photos of the landscape and the wildlife. All submissions must be taken on the trail.

1. **Walk the trail**
2. **Snap a photo**
3. **Email it to**
bluezonesproject@healthyklamath.org
4. **Share it to social media with the hashtag**
#kww30

There will be a first (\$100), second (\$50) and third (\$25) prize for each of the landscape and wildlife categories given on August 26th, 2022.

Judged by Stefan Savides and Jack Noller

