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News Release

NEC Hosts Klamath Settlement Presentation at Wharfinger Oct. 8

For Immediate Release Contact: Greg King, Executive Director 707-822-6918

ARCATA — The Northcoast Environmental Center will host a public presentation of the complex and controversial Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement (KBRA) on Wednesday, Oct. 8, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Wharfinger Building in Eureka.

The KBRA is a 256-page document created by 28 parties over a two-year period. It has been more than six months since the Klamath Settlement Group has met to finalize the Agreement, owing to the absence of an agreement with PacifiCorp to decommission four hydroelectric dams on the Klamath River mainstem.

The NEC had preferred to wait for release of a dam agreement before offering a public presentation on the Restoration Agreement. However, with the "hydro agreement" now nearly one year overdue, the NEC has chosen to move forward without it.

"We really can't wait any longer for the dam deal," said Greg King, executive director of the NEC. "There's a chance we will see such a deal by the end of this month, but negotiators have promised us a hydro agreement several times during the past year and each deadline has been announced and then passed with no result. So whereas the two agreements are linked — the Restoration Agreement dies on the vine unless negotiators strike a deal to remove the four dams — it's time for the public to hear our thoughts on the water deal."

Last March the NEC rejected the KBRA as written because "it puts all the risk on the fish," said King. "Farmers in the upper basin are the only ones who receive a guarantee of water in the deal. The fish get what's left over."

That month the NEC recommended several changes to Draft 11 of the Restoration Agreement that would allow the organization to "sign on" and support the deal through legislation and implementation. However, the Settlement Group drafting committee has yet to produce a twelfth draft of the Agreement owing to the absence of measures to remove the four dams.

The NEC's recommended changes, the reasons for them, and the Restoration Agreement as a whole will be the focus of the Oct. 8 presentation. After the presentation the public will be invited to comment and ask questions.

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