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ANOTHER KLAMATH RIVER ISSUE

by John Clayson Spencer

As I write this, I am looking out the window at the Pass Riffle a location where I generally catch steelhead and trout. However the Klamath River is quite silty and is running high and cold. I fished yesterday but never hooked a fish and only had one strike. A little early yet and many of the residents are semi dormant perhaps. So, I cannot report that it is great fishing. It has been intermittently very cold and blustery. Spring however is showing up as I can observe some Red Wing Blackbirds taking up territory. The buzzards are migrating up to the Rogue Valley and the Canadian Honkers on river are nesting. The pulse of the river continues in its seasonal natural beauty. It appears that some serious problems have emerged with regards to dam removal studies by government agencies.

Apparently Scientists from the Department of the Interior have filed complaints that study reports on the Klamath River were being altered. Also it was reported that information raising serious questions about dam removal was being edited out of their reports. The details in question have not been released. There are many many issues about this fine river besides fishing.

After fighting for years over its water, farmers, Indians, and fishermen have joined forces to let the troubled river run wild again. One could say at the present, it is a wild river from John C. Boyle Dam

down to Copco and Iron Gate Lakes. From Iron Gate Dam, it virtually ^{is a} wild river all the way to the Pacific near 200 miles. National Geographic reported that the Klamath "upended". Most rivers begin pristine and wind up filthy. The Klamath gets "dirty" at its outset and becomes cleaner as it goes along. As it flows downstream it is cooled by numerous tributaries such as Bogus Creek, Shasta River, Scott River, Beaver Creek, Salmon River, Trinity River, and many smaller streams.

Accordingly the wild section of the river from Iron Gate downstream becomes much cleaner water.

I think perhaps the information of the scientists suppressed about dam removals will eventually emerge and I hope to report back on that issue. The primary importance it seems is the salvation of the salmon runs. I have heard many comments from very skillful anglers who indicate that the Fish and Game Commission should close off angling for salmon after they enter the rivers for a given period of years. This would allow perhaps an increase in populations without all the hassle and expense of fighting over this fine river. An alternative worth exploring.


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