



PRESS BACKGROUND
November 13, 2007

Contact: Jim McCarthy (503) 283-8396

Klamath Settlement Talks: A History of Unfulfilled Promises

In late 2004, conservationists, commercial fishing groups, Tribes, irrigators and federal, state and county governments came together to discuss a possible deal for the removal of four PacifiCorp-owned dams on the Klamath River. These confidential settlement talks – initiated by PacifiCorp – sought to forge an alternative to the traditional public process under the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

In January 2007, the Bush administration derailed the talks by presenting the participants with a "settlement framework" that contained no commitment from PacifiCorp on dam removal, yet expanded the talks to include measures such as weakened Endangered Species Act protections for bull trout and other fish in and around Upper Klamath Lake, guaranteed water deliveries for Klamath agribusiness without similar commitments for the survival of salmon, and permanent commercial agricultural development on National Wildlife Refuges in the Klamath Basin.

When wildlife advocates Oregon Wild and WaterWatch of Oregon refused to sign this framework, the administration chose to abandon the original dam settlement talks and start a new process without the dissenting groups.

Since early 2006, PacifiCorp has been largely absent from the negotiating table. Meanwhile, the closed-door talks linger on, while some participants have repeatedly claimed that a deal is right around the corner. With no agreement in place after three years and Klamath fish and wildlife still suffering it is time to take a closer look at the broken promises of the Bush administration-run Klamath Settlement Group – and to look elsewhere for solutions to the Klamath's problems.

February 19, 2006: *Eureka Times-Standard*, "Feds give Klamath settlement talks time"

"Federal energy regulators gave more time to agencies, tribes, fishermen, farmers, environmentalists and a power company to resolve issues surrounding dams on the Klamath River, a sign that **a settlement could be close**... The confidential settlement talks have been occurring for months, though recently there has been a buzz that **a deal is close**."

November 17, 2006: *Capital Press*, "**Parties say Klamath settlement close**"

"Troy Fletcher, a biologist by training who worked for Yurok Tribal Fisheries, stepped up to become the tribe's executive director, and is the tribe's consultant for the settlement talks, said in an interview that **solutions are close**.

'Closer than they've ever been,' he said, smiling and holding forefinger and thumb a quarter-inch apart."

November 28, 2006: *Klamath Falls Herald & News*, "Salmon return to Klamath foreseen"

"A summit meeting involving governors of Oregon and California to discuss dam removal and salmon run restoration had been scheduled for December. But it's been pushed back to late January or early February to give stakeholders more time to work on an agreement... Gov. Ted Kulongoski's office indicated that he is still determined to hold a Klamath River Basin summit and for it to be in Klamath Falls, but he is waiting for stakeholders to work through issues."

April 25, 2007: *Klamath Falls Herald & News*, "**Groups closer to water settlement.**"

"[G]roups involved say they expect to release details of a settlement in a few weeks to a few months... [Greg] Addington [of the Klamath Water User's Association] said he hopes to begin rolling out details through a series of public meetings as soon as he is able under the confidentiality agreement. **[Craig] Tucker [of the Karuk Tribe] said he expects a framework to be released in the coming weeks.**"

April 29, 2007: *The Oregonian*, April 29, 2007, "**Klamath River settlement is nearly ready.**"

"[G]roups involved say they expect to release details of a settlement in a few weeks to a few months."

June 9, 2007: *Klamath Falls Herald & News*, "Discussion continues about Klamath dam issue."

"In late April, Greg Addington, executive director of the Klamath Water Users Association, and Craig Tucker, a representative of the Karuk Tribe, indicated talks were making progress and the groups involved were showing increased cooperation and reconciliation... **Tucker said he expected a summary of a settlement framework in coming weeks**, and Addington said he wanted to begin planning a series of public meetings for community members to brief them on pertinent details."

July 25, 2007: *The Eureka Times Standard*, "Klamath talks flow on."

"Tribes, irrigators, fishermen and others released a statement Tuesday saying they have come up with a framework for addressing the wide-ranging issues... For months now, dam owner Pacificorp has not formally been at the bargaining table."

August 13, 2007: *The Oregonian*, "In My Opinion: Untangling a Dispute."

In an op-ed, Troy Fletcher of the Yurok Tribe and Greg Addington of KWUA promised to release an agreement "**later this year.**"

November 10, 2007: *Crescent City Daily Triplicate*, "County missing Klamath talks"

"The settlement talks have participants traveling around the country, taking part in conference calls and meeting in smaller groups. **But the ball is rolling faster than ever, negotiators say...** **"We think the time is now," [Craig] Tucker said. "We're talking about the biggest planned dam removal in the history of man."**