

Hoop Valley Tribe • Karuk Tribe • Klamath Tribes • Yurok Tribe
Friends of the River • Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations
Klamath River Inter-Tribal Fish and Water Commission

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Klamath River Tribes Return to Scotland to Demand Dam Removal Tribes, Fishermen and Conservationists continue Struggle to Bring Salmon Home to the Klamath River

Happy Camp, CA – Tribes from Northern California and Southern Oregon will return to Scotland later this month to attend Scottish Power's (*NYSE – SPI*) shareholder meeting. Tribal leaders will demand dam removal on the Klamath River as part of the company's dam relicensing agreement. The six Klamath River dams block over 350 miles of salmon spawning habitat.

Extending from south eastern Oregon to north western California, the Klamath was once the third most productive salmon river in America, with an average of 880,000 salmon returning to spawn annually. Since the first dam was built in 1917, salmon runs have plummeted. Only 1/10 as many fish return today. Some runs of salmon have been lost altogether while others, such as the once dominant spring-run Chinook, are on the brink of extinction.

For Tribes, salmon represent more than economic opportunity, they are the centerpiece of their culture. In addition, Tribal members, many of whom live in poverty, rely on subsistence fishing to feed their families. For these people, the dams deny access to healthy traditional food sources. Traditional Karuk Fishermen Ron Reed puts it bluntly, "These dams literally take food from the mouths of our children."

The current dam license expires March of 2006. Federal dam licenses typically last 30-50 years.

According to Mike Belchik, fisheries biologist with the Yurok Tribe, "relicensing provides us a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to restore the river and bring the salmon home. If we don't remove dams now, there won't be any salmon left the next time the dams are relicensed."

The Klamath dams are owned and operated by Oregon's largest power provider, PacifiCorp. PacifiCorp is a subsidiary of the multinational energy giant Scottish Power.

The Tribes, along with their allies in the commercial fishing and conservation communities hope to convince Scottish Power shareholders that by working together, an economically acceptable plan for dam removal can be found. Last year, the Tribes' visit to Scotland resulted in face to face meetings with Scottish Power CEO Ian Russell who said that he was committed to "finding the right solutions." In addition, PacifiCorp CEO Judi Johansen stated on Scottish Television that "all options are on the table, including dam removal."

However, the company's license application filed with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission does not address dam removal or any other form of fish passage.

Tribal leaders were recently surprised to learn that Scottish Power intends to sell PacifiCorp to another large corporation, Mid-American Energy Holding Company, owned mostly by Billionaire Warren Buffet's Berkshire-Hathaway, Inc. Mid-American is based in Des Moines, Iowa.

According to Merv George, Jr., who attended last year's meeting with Ian Russell, "Mr. Russell told us last year that we could trust him to resolve this issue. We want to know that he is committed to solving the Klamath problem, not selling it to someone else."

Merv George is the Director of the Klamath River Inter-Tribal Fish and Water Commission. The Commission is comprised of the Karuk, Klamath, Hoopa, and Yurok Tribes.

The Tribes hope to resolve the fate of the Klamath dams before they are forced to deal with another energy corporation. If necessary, they are willing to intervene in the regulatory proceedings governing the sale.

However, with their livelihoods, culture, and the health of their children at stake, Tribal leaders are intent on restoring their fishery no matter who owns the dams.

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