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Klamath Riverkeeper Press Release

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## **Klamath Dams Aren't Out Yet!** **Dam Removal Advocates Optimistic, but Holding Out for Final Agreement**

Klamath Riverkeeper is cautiously optimistic about a tentative, non-binding Agreement in Principle to remove four of PacifiCorp's Klamath dams by 2020. While the Agreement in Principle does provide a path toward dam removal, a Final Agreement has not yet been signed and several important issues have not been resolved. Klamath Riverkeeper has served as a watchdog over PacifiCorp's water quality and environmental justice issues over the last several years, and will continue pressuring PacifiCorp to comply with clean water laws until the dams are removed.

"After all the work we've put in advocating for removal of these dams, it feels good to hear the words 'dam removal' come out of PacifiCorp headquarters, and we applaud the bold stance stakeholders and policy makers have taken. However, we won't throw our party until we see the Final Agreement, and we're satisfied the terms of that agreement will keep fish alive until 2020 on the Klamath River," said Malena Marvin of Klamath Riverkeeper.

"Tribal members, fishermen, conservationists, and local people have logged a lot of miles fighting for this river. We're not about to stop until we see the water flowing free again," added Marvin.

In addition to blocking salmon from half the Klamath River for the last 90 years, PacifiCorp's Klamath dams produce devastating water quality conditions for fish, as well as the worst toxic algae problem in America. The dams are currently being evaluated by California for a Clean Water Act Section 401 pollution discharge permit, a process that could block a new operating license from FERC given the dams' exceedingly poor water quality. "We expect California's regulatory process to continue until we have a Final Agreement, and Klamath Riverkeeper will be there every step of the way making sure clean water law is enforced," said Scott Harding of Klamath Riverkeeper.

Klamath Riverkeeper was not party to the settlement negotiations, and has instead focused heavily on holding PacifiCorp accountable for clean water violations on the Klamath River, including a lawsuit forcing the 2007 listing of the Klamath as impaired by the algal toxin *microcystin* by the United States EPA. This listing has presented a serious challenge to PacifiCorp's ability to obtain licenses needed to continue operating the dams. Klamath Riverkeeper has also brought suits against PacifiCorp directly, as well as California's State and Regional Water Boards. Along with a coalition of Tribes and fishermen, Klamath Riverkeeper has organized strategic grassroots actions at PacifiCorp's offices in Portland as well as subsidiary-owner Warren Buffett's Berkshire Shareholders' meeting in Omaha, Nebraska.

"We're particularly interested in the interim mitigation measures that will be in place until 2020. From our perspective, a lot rests on the Final Agreement's ability to make PacifiCorp take action for the environmental and public health problems their dams have created for people who live downstream," added Marvin.