

SITES
RESERVOIR
PROJECT

**CERTIFIED
ORIGINAL**

**RDEIR/SDEIS
VIRTUAL
PUBLIC MEETING**

Thursday, December 16, 2021

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A P P E A R A N C E S

Sara Katz,
Meeting Moderator

Aly Forsythe,
Sites Environmental Planning and Permitting
Manager

Vanessa King,
Bureau of Reclamation

Sarah Rossetto,
Q&A Monitor

Mike Hendrick,
Fisheries Biologist

1 SARA KATZ: Thank you, Danielle.

2 Our next speak every will be Benjamin Lord.

3 Benjamin, if you could spell your name, any organization
4 you may be representing, and you can unmute yourself.

5 BENJAMIN LORD: Hi. Can you hear me?

6 SARA KATZ: We can.

7 BENJAMIN LORD: Great. My name is Benjamin
8 Lord, B-e-n-j-a-m-i-n, space, L-o-r-d. I'm gonna be
9 brief. I'm not a water scientist or a -- a Sacramento
10 bureaucrat or -- or, you know, a farmer. I'm just
11 someone who loves visiting the Trinity. I go there
12 every year. It's one of my favorite places on earth. I
13 think it's an incredibly special place, the Trinity and
14 the -- the Middle Klamath Watershed. And this project
15 gives me real pause, because it affects almost certainly
16 a place that is incredibly dear to me.

17 I look at the history of the Klamath Dam
18 removal fight and how it has dragged on and on and on
19 and these kinds of projects, once they're done -- I
20 appreciate that a lot of hard work has gone into this.
21 A lot of staff members have worked very, very hard on
22 putting this proposal together. As hard as it is to do,
23 it's even harder to undo, and we should think about that
24 in the event that we realize years down the line that
25 there was some kind of mistake in our calculations, that

1 our knowledge of ecology grows, our knowledge of fishery
2 science grows. How would we undo something like this,
3 right? What is -- what is the undo strategy? And I
4 think history shows that it's incredibly hard to undo
5 these things. And the -- the bar for necessity of
6 something like this happening, should thus be set just
7 incredibly high, because it is nearly impossible to
8 reverse once it happens.

9 I would -- like the previous speaker -- like
10 to see, for a project like this, hard, explicit, legal,
11 enforceable guarantees for tribes in the Trinity and the
12 Klamath. As she said, the history of discrimination is
13 just terrible in this -- in this region. If you look at
14 photos from 100 years ago of the Klamath, people
15 described the river flowing backwards from the amount of
16 fish in it. And every year since, you know, white
17 people came, the situation gets worse. The overall
18 trajectory is catastrophic.

19 My grandfather saw things that my father would
20 not be able to see. My father saw things that I won't
21 be able to see. I see things that I'm pretty sure my
22 son is not gonna be able to see. I understand the
23 allocation issues are very complex here. I understand
24 that we need farms. I understand that farms need water.

25 But I would like to see -- and I know this is

1 way beyond the province of the decisions that this group
2 makes -- but I would like to see a push for
3 conservation. When I see the amount of money that it
4 costs to build something like this, why are -- do we not
5 have state-wide fines for wasting water? Why do we not
6 have a state-wide increase in the cost of water with tax
7 credits, so that it's not regressive for poor people?
8 Why do we not have public-needed campaigns about
9 conservation awareness?

10 The cheapest water is the water that we
11 already have. And if we just conserved it a little
12 more, we could, you know, continue to have the, you
13 know, water flowing to residential customers and
14 agricultural customers, and everyone who needs it
15 without destroying the way of life of the people who've
16 been on this river for millennium.

17 Thank you.

18 SARA KATZ: Thank you, Benjamin.

19 Our next speaker will be Shannon Wittgen.

20 Shannon, if you could spell your name for the
21 record, any organization you might represent, and you
22 can unmute yourself now.

23 Shannon, it looks like you're still muted.
24 Shannon, if you can hear me, you show to me unmuted --
25 I'm sorry, you show to me muted.