

Dam Removal & the Klamath Basin Integrated Fisheries Restoration and Monitoring Plan

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Now underway, dam removal is the most consequential response to Klamath Basin fish population declines and when completed will allow native species to access an additional 420 miles of historical habitat including cool-water refugia. However, many uncertainties confront what other habitat restoration activities should be paired with dam removal to maximize the benefit of restoring fish passage. Recognizing the need to move beyond “bits and pieces” restoration and a more unified approach, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Pacific States Marine Fisheries’ Commission partnered with ESSA between 2016-2023 to lead the development of an Integrated Fisheries Restoration and Monitoring Plan (IFRMP) for the Klamath Basin in close collaboration with local restoration practitioners. Incredibly, the IFRMP successfully completed the collaborative identification and costing of 146 priority fish habitat restoration and monitoring actions for the entire basin. The cost of implementing all IFRMP recommended activities exceeds \$500 Million USD. The data and mechanics behind the IFRMP’s prioritization process are unified in the web-based Klamath IFRMP Restoration Prioritization Tool that allows users to browse project details, view the individual criteria scores and underlying data that contribute to overall rankings, and explore how rankings change when criteria weights are adjusted to reflect changing restoration priorities. The IFRMP also identifies a workflow for updating every 1-2 years a companion Restoration Action Agenda (RAA) to help guide future restoration related Federal solicitations and related funding. This presentation will showcase a successful example of fisheries restoration at the science-knowledge-policy interface and highlight some of the key factors that enable and hinder large scale restoration implementation.

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