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Reclamation Project begins charging the system

Klamath Falls, OR – Yesterday, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Klamath Basin Area Office announced that water is available to begin charging the Klamath Project canal system. PacifiCorp, has committed 10,500 acre-feet from its hydroelectric project to help get the Project started. This water will not impact river flows required under the 2013 Biological Opinion for coho salmon.

The timing and amount of Project water availability after this initial diversion remains uncertain. Currently, until June, Reclamation must have a reserve of 50,000 acre-feet through early June to release for dilution flows if triggered under the criteria in a court injunction. Although currently Project supply during May is very uncertain, charging the system now can provide some adaptability and flexibility including managing groundwater where possible.

The federal district court for the northern district of California, which issued the injunction, is currently considering whether to modify the injunction this year, and asked for supplemental briefing on this issue. The supplemental briefs were filed yesterday. This decision will have very significant consequences. KWUA is hopeful that the court will rule very soon.

The decision to charge canals comes after yesterday's C. Shasta spore analysis that resulted in the court's injunctive flow regime not being triggered at this time. This analysis is conducted every week and could determine whether additional flows are required to dilute the disease in the Klamath River assuming the injunction remain in effect.

Charging the Klamath Reclamation Project began yesterday.

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