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New Plan to Save Kilarc Fishing

Davis Hydro Releases Its Discussion Draft Plan

Whitmore, CA. The Kilarc Forebay, 30 miles east of Redding, remains a center of controversy. Locals and fishermen from all over the area are concerned that PG&E will close this facility, which provides some of the best trout fishing in Northern California. Davis Hydro, LLC has put forth a new plan that will save the recreational facility for the community and the fishermen. The Davis Hydro plan proposes that Shasta County take over management of the fishing and recreational areas. Davis Hydro will operate the hydroelectric generating facility, and pay the county to deliver the water.

Additionally, the plan calls for a 5-year study period for which Davis Hydro has enlisted the help of local residents and ranchers, to restore habitat for anadromous fish in the area. "Recovery of threatened and endangered fish species is a complicated issue", says Dr. Ely, Principal of Davis Hydro. "Measures to promote recovery of steelhead, and if possible the salmon, will be required, but the best way to do that is not clear – that is why the research period." The fisheries' resource agencies want to have a nice pristine river with the dams removed, because they think that will be the best way to bring back the steelhead. Davis Hydro's plan is to begin habitat restoration immediately, and undertake research and experiments on how to best bring back the fish, based on today's conditions. There are no simple answers, as much of the behavior of the steelhead is not understood.

"Of course a pristine river with no dams would probably be best for the fish, but to get that we would have to remove all the people, water diversions, and ranchers." says Dr. Ely. "Davis Hydro's plan is to work with the local people to develop a better plan that is realistic, given that the people are here to stay".

The Davis Hydro plan includes innovative ideas about using canals and ditches as spawning areas for steelheads, putting radio controls on the diversions to help control the water flow, new screen designs, working with ranchers to reduce runoff, and similar community-related projects. "This is a win-win solution." according to Kelly Sackheim, an environmental consultant working for Davis Hydro. "Under the Davis Hydro alternative plan the trout fishing and recreation will remain, the anadromous fish will be the target of research and enhancement, and the green power will continue to flow."

In the meantime, PG&E continues on its path to remove the facility. PG&E will present its preliminary proposed decommission plan in a public meeting to be held on Wednesday, September 12, 2007, at 7:00 PM, at Foothill High School, 9733 Deschutes Road, Palo Cedro. More information, and a copy of Davis Hydro's fish recovery plan, can be found on Davis Hydro's Project Web site at <http://www.kilarc.info>