

## **Barnes, Peter@Waterboards**

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**From:** Philip B. Price <philpblaw@sunset.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 24, 2015 9:44 AM  
**To:** Barnes, Peter@Waterboards  
**Subject:** Upper North Fork Feather River Hydroelectric Project - FERC Project 2105 - Draft EIR

Mr. Barnes:

We are property owners at Lake Almanor. Admittedly, from our property location we cannot see either the Canyon Dam or the Prattville intake areas. However, we can when we boat on the lake including when we boat to Prattville for Sunday Brunch. We are concerned with any project that affects any part of the lake.

The two matters that concern us relating to this proposed project are the impact on the fisheries and the impact on the aesthetics.

If the proposed project was an attempt to get the Feather River back into its pre-lake condition that would be one thing I could understand, whether or not I agreed with it. The fact is that Lake Almanor has been in existence in one form or another since 1910, over 100 years. Prior to its existence, the flow of the North Fork of the Feather River depended primarily on snow melt on Mt. Lassen flowing through Big Valley (in the sun). As the snow melt ended, usually in late July or early August, the flow of the river slowed down. And the water warmed. What this project is trying to do is lower the temperature of the river, which was not its natural condition, at least after mid-summer, pre-lake.

The project is reducing the summer cold water layer in the lake without sufficient study of the effect of such reduction on the cold water fish in the lake. Particularly in low water (drought) years, as we are having now. There does not seem to be any mechanism in place to stop the taking of cold water when the cold water pool in the lake drops below a level necessary to sustain the native cold water fish. There needs to be some protection of a cold water pool in the lake.

The aesthetic effect on the lake is serious. The aesthetic element of the EIR concedes that the project would have an aesthetic impact that is significant and unavoidable. The photograph attached to the aesthetic element as Figure 6.9-2 clearly demonstrates how significant the impact will be (see below). So does the thermal curtain in Whiskeytown Lake, west of Redding. The aesthetic element of the EIR suggests that buoys might need to have lights on them at night, for safety. Yes they would. There is significant boating on the lake at night. People go to dinner at Plumas Pines. Then there are the many boats out for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks. We recognize that there are occasions when the public need can override an unavoidable significant impact. But attempting to create a condition, which never existed in the river, is not one of the. The unavoidable aesthetic impact should be sufficient to block this project.



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