

**From:** [Friends of Fish Creek](#)  
**To:** [Sam Owen](#)  
**Subject:** Eklutna Hydroelectric Project Draft Fish and Wildlife Program  
**Date:** Monday, February 19, 2024 1:20:29 PM

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19 February 2024

To: Eklutna Hydroelectric Project Team

From: Friends of Fish Creek

RE: Eklutna Hydroelectric Project Draft Fish and Wildlife Program

Friends of Fish Creek (FOFC) is an Anchorage-based non-profit with the mission to daylight (restore underground waters of the creek to the surface) and rehabilitate the creek, making it possible for Coho to once again inhabit and spawn in its waters.

We wholeheartedly celebrated the removal of the lower Eklutna dam, accomplished by a partnership of the Native Village of Eklutna and environmental NGOs. It was one step forward in restoring Eklutna River, which has been dammed for 100 years, to the detriment of traditional salmon runs and Eklutna's Dena'ina peoples.

As well, we wholeheartedly support the removal of the upper Eklutna dam and the restoration of its waters, which will have the beneficial effect of welcoming the river's salmon home. We believe dam removal to be the legal obligation of the Utility in order to mitigate the project's negative impacts to fish and wildlife.

The Utility's proposed plan fails to consider removal of the upper dam, which constitutes a fundamental flaw in the plan. As such, FOFC is encouraged by the unanimous resolution passed by the Anchorage Assembly on 2 February of this year to pause the plan for two years in order to address this.

The current proposal will also leave one mile of river without water and releases only 3-4 percent of historic flow, without which, fish passage is impossible without additional infrastructure, such as fish ladders.

Current electrical output is minimal from the dam and can be reasonably replaced by renewables like wind and solar within a decade.

Without dam removal, fully connecting the river and returning water flow, negative impacts to fish will remain and obligations set forth in a 1991 agreement between the Native Village of Eklutna, the State of Alaska, the hydroelectric project owners, and the federal government to address the environmental damage will go unfulfilled.

For these reasons, we stand with the Native Village of Eklutna, the Anchorage Assembly, and the environmental groups who want to see removal of the upper dam. Further, because the proposed plan fails to consider dam removal, we also support a two-year pause and reset.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.

Respectfully,

Karen Button, board president

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Friends of Fish Creek

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Ch'atanaltsegh / Ʒiq'aka Betnu (Fish Creek)

flows through Dena'ina Eʔnena (Dena'ina homelands)