



The Data . . .

The Facts . . .

The Consequences

**Presented by
Defend Lake Almanor Task Force
November 7, 2022**

How the degradation of Lake Almanor will harm Plumas County revenue

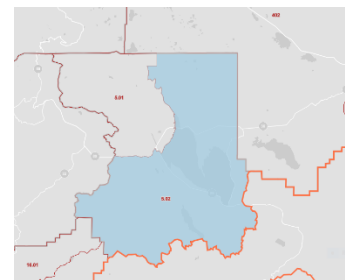
The Data:

- The Lake Almanor basin is Plumas County's "Golden Goose" for current and future tax revenues.
 - 42% of the total value of all assessed secured properties in Plumas County reside in the Lake Almanor basin.
 - Assessed value of \$1.85 BILLION.
 - Residential secured properties represent 93% of this value.
 - The highest median household income in Plumas County is Census Tract 5.02, which is mostly composed of the Lake Almanor basin.
 - Residential and non-residential property value is dependent upon the water quality of Lake Almanor and of its surrounding environment.
- Decrease annual revenues between \$5 to \$6.5 million dollars.
 - Ten percent decrease in annual county revenue.
 - Decrease tax revenues from:
 - Property Taxes
 - Sales and Use Taxes
 - Transient Occupancy Taxes
 - Other Taxes

The Facts:

Research by Seneca Hospital District and information from the Plumas County Assessor's and Tax Collection office, the 2022 assessed valuation of 7,418 residential and non-residential parcels within the Seneca Hospital District, encompassing the Lake Almanor basin including Chester, Canyon Dam and Westwood, is \$1,853,000,000. Ninety-three percent of this valuation, or \$1,723,000,000, is classified as residential. This represents 42% of the total value of all assessed secured properties in Plumas County.

In 2020 the census tract with the **highest median household income in Plumas County was Census Tract 5.02, which is mostly composed of the Lake Almanor basin.** ([Plumas County, CA | Data USA](#)).



Using average Plumas County tax revenue figures from 2019 and 2020 audited financial statements and information from the Plumas County Assessor's office, if property tax revenues decreased between 30% and 40% and tax revenues from business activities driven by fisheries/tourism-related businesses, including transient occupancy taxes, decreased between 40% and 50% due to the degradation of Lake Almanor - it would represent **a decrease of between \$5 to \$6.5 million dollars annually for Plumas County. A ten percent decrease in annual county revenue.**

What are “Reasonable” (Costs) Water Temperature Control Measures?

“As agreed to in the Settlement Agreement and stated in the RCC Project License, Condition 4.D. tasks PG&E to identify “reasonable” control measures that can be implemented as part of the RCC Project to prevent water temperature in the RCC Project reaches from exceeding 20 degrees C.” (From PG&E report Oct. 2022).

Let’s review the costs for the measures proposed by the SWRCB in the Waived Certification Condition No. 6:

Additional releases of 250 cfs from Canyon Dam during June – September:
\$2,375,000 annually*

Install Thermal Curtains at Prattville Intake (Lake Almanor) and Caribou Intake (Butt Lake): **\$5,531,000*

Combined total costs annually: **\$7,906,000**

Annual costs over a 40 year license without escalation: over **\$320,000,000**

NOTES:

“Reasonable” in FERC 2105 EIR is the cost of the “Coldwater Habitat and Fishery Mitigation Fund - \$5,000,000 total. (Page 361)

Costs are from the Stetson Level 3 report commissioned by SERCB and only escalated from 2009 to 2022 using CPI. actual costs will depend on capital cost changes and electricity purchased on the open market to replace Foregone power.

***If the SWRCB considered the increased discharge from Canyon Dam insufficient to meet the RCC Reaches 20 degree C goals they reserved the right to unilaterally impose Thermal Curtains.*

The Economic Consequences

- Employment in the Lake Almanor basin would be devastated if the water quality of Lake Almanor was degraded due to algae blooms caused by loss of cold water.
 - 41% of employed in/around Lake Almanor work in industries directly affected by the quality of the environment and ecology of Lake Almanor.
 - Retail, arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services, construction, real estate, rental, and leasing. Other services (except public administration).
 - Peak employment occurs in July and August.
- Lake Almanor is consistently listed in surveys as the best trophy trout fishing lake in California. Algae blooms and low oxygen levels caused by loss of cold water would damage Lake Almanor's trophy trout fishery.
 - Listed number one:
 - [7 Best Trout Fishing Lakes in Northern California \(thecaliforniaoutdoors.com\)](https://thecaliforniaoutdoors.com)
 - [7 Best Trout Fishing Spots In California! \(anglerscrate.com\)](https://anglerscrate.com)
 - [Trout Fishing in Northern California \(takemefishing.org\)](https://takemefishing.org)
- The resulting unemployment caused by damage to the Lake Almanor environment would increase the county's expenses related to health, welfare, and public assistance, which are already insufficient to cover demand.
 - 39% of the expenses in 2019 and 2020 related to government activities are spent on health, welfare, and public assistance.
 - [Plumas County employees working to provide health and welfare assistance are currently stressed due to lack of funding for staff.](#)

Almanor Economic Impact Report Project 2105

From John Crotty, President Almanor Fishing Association

11-6-22

The Almanor Fishing Association was founded in 1985 to promote and enhance Lake Almanor's cold water fishery, our motto is: if it concerns fishing, we are concerned. Our fish pen program is the longest running most successful fish pen program in the state. As we approach our two millionth trout planted into Almanor we recognize our program is in serious jeopardy. If PG&E is forced to release additional cold water from Almanor through the Canyon Dam intake or via thermal curtains there will not be enough water at Hamilton Branch where our pens are housed and the increased water temperatures at the Branch would be inadequate for trout survival. The one thing all parties to the relicensing agree upon is, the release of additional cold water from Lake Almanor will have a detrimental impact on our cold-water fishery. On behalf of our three hundred and forty-five members and business sponsors "AFA is Concerned" please help us fight for the future of our organization and Lake Almanor's cold water fishery.

On a personal note, as a past lodge owner (Quail Lodge Canyon Dam) and fishing guide on Lake Almanor, my business and future here in Plumas County hinges upon FERC's ruling and Lake Almanor's cold water fishery. While Quail Lodge was a small business it was a microcosm of most small businesses surrounding Lake Almanor where 75% of our business came from fishermen. Fishermen that purchased meals, groceries, fuel and spent their angler dollars in our community. Quite often I have questioned what the economic impact of fishing, trout fishing specifically, is to Plumas County. If FERC approves additional cold-water releases from Lake Almanor, this Board and the residents of the Lake Almanor Community will know the answer to that question, and I fear the results will be far more devastating to Plumas County than COVID or the DIXIE Fire.

