



Klamath Watershed Partnership

Where land, water and people come together

www.klamathpartnership.org

Fall 2008

Words from Executive Director—Terry Morton

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Settlement

Over the past two decades, we all have witnessed the impacts of not having enough water to go around, with impacts on both the fish and the agricultural communities. In our last newsletter we told you that the Partnership supports the proposed **Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement**. Here I want to tell you why. The core of the KBRA is a series of give-and-takes for all sides, so at the risk of oversimplifying, “Who would get what?”

Fish and Tribes	Project Irrigators	Off-Project Irrigators	And Also
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dam Removal: Restoring salmon and steelhead to the Upper Basin. • More Water: Over 100,000 acre feet of additional water storage around Upper Klamath Lake, which would help later in the season when downstream fish (and the Klamath Project) both need it most; 30,000 acre feet of additional water is left instream in the tributaries to the lake; reducing diversions to the Klamath Project about 100,000 acre feet in dry years • Habitat Restoration: Support for improving habitat, including riparian vegetation, wetlands, stream channel function and fish passage • Economic Revitalization: Investing in various enterprises, including Mazama Tree Farm for the Klamath Tribes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable Water: A predictable supply of water; the Klamath Water and Power Agency (KWAPA) comprised of local irrigators, would decide how they would stay within the limits; compensation for reducing water use; settles adjudication claims with the Tribes, and if Section 16 is successful, with off-Project irrigators as well • Affordable Power: The KBRA advocates for lowering irrigators' electricity costs through several options, including the BPA and investing funds in renewable energy to generate a return to offset electricity bills • Regulatory Protection: Because the restoration and water measures of KBRA would reduce the threat to endangered species, and because federal agencies do not want the reintroduction of salmon to increase risk to Upper Basin landowners, they would develop Conservation Agreements to protect irrigators for “incidental take” of endangered or threatened species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Power: The same as for Project irrigators; eligibility requirements still need to be worked out, but are intended to be broad • Regulatory Protection: The same as for Project irrigators • Potential for Reliable Water: If successfully negotiated, Section 16 of the KBRA offers an opportunity for voluntary settlement of water claims between irrigators and the Tribes, Off-Project Water Settlement (OPWAS). Like the provisions for the Project, this would provide a predictable supply of water for irrigators, settle adjudication, and compensate landowners for allowing an additional 30,000 acre feet to remain instream 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refuges: The Tule Lake and Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuges would receive reliable water supplies, and any power rate offsets achieved by KWAPA • Counties: The KBRA requests funding to offset any property tax losses due to dam removal

We believe the current situation is bad for everyone - very risky, and enormously expensive:

1. Salmon are going to be introduced above Iron Gate Dam, whether or not the dams come out. They're legally protected, we have to ensure they have enough water year-round, and improve the quality of that water as well as other habitat factors. Irrigators who use water from the rivers and rivers are at risk, and we have to be ready to manage that risk.
2. Low power rates from PacifiCorp are a thing of the past, and most irrigators could not make it paying the full rate.
3. Adjudication of water rights is a reality. The State of Oregon will determine how much water goes to the Tribes to be left instream for fish, and assign amounts and dates for everyone else. When there's not enough water for everyone, they'll begin shutting off diversions based on priority dates. The appeals may well continue for decades, along with attorney costs, but enforcement will start in three years. The only choice is whether to litigate, negotiate, or let it run its course and deal with whatever happens.

From what we've seen, the KBRA provides pathways for regularly protection, reduced power costs, and water settlement. That's why we support it. But we recognize early on that much work remains regarding the off-Project:

(continued on Page 2)

1. Water reliability needs to be defined for off-Project irrigations, all of whom have individual water diversions and water claims, most of which are unadjudicated. This is referred to in Section 16 of the KRBA, the Off-Project Water Settlement (OPWAS).
2. Participation of the off-Project in the Klamath Water and Power Association (KWAPA) also needs to be worked out, since there is no single irrigation district that can speak for everyone, although the intent is for broad eligibility.
3. Regulatory protection doesn't violate the ESA, but conservation agreements are the best protection we've seen.

All of these are important to secure for the off-Project, in exchange for the 30,000 acre feet of additional water left instream. We believe the KBRA offers parties pathways to all of them. We are actively involved in providing technical assistance to the Tribes and irrigators to ensure that something fair and workable is developed, something that ensures reliable irrigation water, affordable power and regulatory protection off-Project as well as on, and also provides the 30,000 acre feet of water for fish.

It's always tempting to demonize the opposition - either as "rabid environmentalists who want to drive farmers and ranchers out of business" or "agribusiness that would sacrifice anything for profit." From what I've seen, those characterizations have driven fear and polarized this community against itself, while supporting a multi-million dollar legal nightmare that has cost all sides dearly and hasn't provided anyone with what they need in the long run.

Is the KBRA a perfect agreement? No way. Settlements are never perfect, because they are all about compromise. And, much work remains, especially for off-Project irrigators and the Klamath Tribes. Is it better than what we have been doing? We sure think so.

If you are interested in knowing more, or just want an opportunity to discuss the issues, feel free to contact me at 850-1717, tmorton@klamathpartnership.org. If I don't know the answer, I'll help you get connected with someone who does.

May the beauty of these snowy days bring you and your families warmth and peace.

Terry

OWEB Holds Quarterly Meeting in Klamath Falls

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) held its quarterly board meeting in Klamath Falls in September. The board visited the Williamson River Delta as well as Chiloquin Dam, where the Partnership had installed alternative irrigation systems with an OWEB grant.

The Partnership board and staff hosted an evening reception for

OWEB and local community members. "The Board came away with a very good feeling about collaboration and accomplishments in the Basin," said Rick Craiger, our Regional Program Representative.

Ken Bierly, OWEB's Deputy Director, suggested we consider applying for a Special Investment Partnership grant with OWEB. Grants target groups of projects

that are considered "extremely important and beneficial," and the Willamette and Deschutes watersheds currently have this designation. We'll keep you posted!



(l to r) Dan Heagerty, OWEB Board Chair, Tom Byler, OWEB Executive Director, and Andrew Stuedli, KWP Board Chair, address the crowd at a KWP reception held at the Ross Ragland.

A Big THANK YOU to Local Donors!

We've been the beneficiaries of some very generous people this fall. Bob Sanders of the Sprague River has allowed us to use some of his property for our RV, which is Dani's "field office" in the summer. He even leveled it so the RV would sit securely, with plenty of space for parking, and it's right on the Sprague River Highway north of town. As you know, we do a lot of projects fending the river. Joe Watkins supervises a crew of local workers, and he customized a truck so we could use it to unroll fencing. This fall, though, we were working in some swampy areas that were too muddy for a truck, and we needed an ATV to haul materials in. Basin Equipment gave us a discounted price, and Floyd A. Boyd Tractor Company and Christina Watkins of State Farm both made generous donations so we could purchase an ATV. If you'd like to help us with other projects like this, check the back of this newsletter.



Working Groups

Upper Williamson

A field trip to the Yamsi and Sand Creek Ranches this fall showcased a variety of successful watershed enhancement projects that have been completed on the two ranches. Twenty people toured the ranches, listened to

I think the tour and discussions will prove to be invaluable for the contacts and expertise we may be able to tap into.

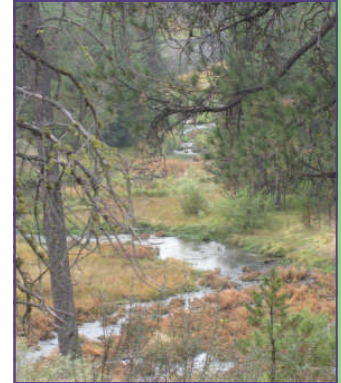
*Gene Sheggeby
Upper Williamson Landowner*

presentations from John Hyde (Yamsi Ranch) and Steve Koon (Sand Creek Ranch), and were treated to one of Gerda Hyde's famous, delicious lunches.

After the tour there was a good discussion amongst the group about next steps for the Working Group. The Scott Creek area landowners who were in attendance have scheduled a meeting to outline a plan for restoration projects in their area, which will be presented at their annual

meeting next summer. They asked for staff participation from Klamath Watershed Partnership, US Fish and Wildlife and US Forest Service.

If you are a landowner in the Upper Williamson area and would like to learn more about the Working Group or about implementing watershed enhancement projects on your property, feel free to contact the Klamath Watershed Partnership at (541) 850-1717 or at info@klamathpartnership.org.



Headwaters of the Williamson River on Yamsi Ranch

Klamath Urban Area

The Klamath Urban Issues Working Group is making great progress with the strategic plan.

The group has been working on a two year Action Plan to:

- (1) Protect, restore, and create habitat;
- (2) Educate ourselves and the public regarding watershed issues in the urban area, and establish a clearinghouse for watershed information and resources; and
- (3) Develop a trail system that

connects new and existing trails.

At a recent meeting, Ken Hay, of the City of Klamath Falls, made a presentation on the City's work to develop the trail system along Timber Mill Shores. The group will work with the City to focus on developing the trail system. Todd Kepple, Klamath County Museums Manager, has volunteered to take the lead on this project.

If you are interested in joining the Klamath Urban Issues Working

Group, you can contact Ginny Monroe at the Klamath Watershed Partnership, (541) 850-1717, gmonroe@klamathpartnership.org, and we will provide you with information on upcoming meetings and how you can get involved.

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Sprague River

Landowners and guests spent a beautiful fall day touring the Sycan Marsh. Craig Bienz of the Nature Conservancy explained how managers are researching compatible grazing practices that provide economic benefit while preserving habitats for fish and wildlife.

The name Sycan Marsh comes from a Klamath Indian phrase meaning "level, grassy place." The Nature Conservancy first acquired property at Sycan

Marsh in 1980 and today owns over 30,000 acres - including most of the 36-square-mile marsh and portions of the surrounding forest.

The tour provided a great overview of what practices are being implemented at the Marsh to help preserve the many thousands of birds migrating through the Pacific Flyway, bull trout and redband trout that frequent the creeks that flow into the marsh and, more recently, new species of

mollusks that have been discovered in the area.

The Sprague River Working Group meets every third Thursday at noon at the Sprague River Community Center to learn about water issues and watershed restoration options in their area.

If you would like to be a part of this Working Group, contact the Klamath Watershed Partnership at 541-850-1717.



Matt Walter and his son Niles help Craig Bienz from The Nature Conservancy check the age and condition of a tree in the Sycan Marsh.

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MISSION: To conserve, enhance and restore the natural resources of the Klamath Basin, while ensuring the long-term sustainability of the regional economy and local communities.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

We depend on donations to help cover the cost of running this organization – everything other than doing the on-the-ground project work that's largely supported by state and federal agencies. Special thanks to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board for their ongoing Council Support grant, and US Fish & Wildlife Service for their capacity-building grant that got us through the first 18 months after the merger.

Now we turn to you. Every dollar you give will support our ability to restore the watershed, and will count as matching funds demonstrating local support for the grants we apply for.

The Klamath Watershed Partnership is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, and donations are tax-deductible.

JOIN KLAMATH WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP

YES, I want to be a KWP member.

I want to support the work of the Partnership by making an additional donation.

Friend: \$50/yr

Partner: \$100/yr

Patron: \$250/yr

Fellow: \$500/yr

Other: \$ _____

Title (Mr., Ms., Mrs., Dr.) _____ Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ Phone (____) _____

Indicate the amount of your support: (Checks payable to Klamath Watershed Partnership)

Send to: 700 Main Street, Suite 202, Klamath Falls, OR 97601