2017 marked an important transition for KWUA. Recognizing the importance of endangered and threatened species and the critical role that agriculture plays in the Klamath Basin, the Board of Directors is involved and committed and the KWUA staff is developing a comprehensive conservation plan. The plan recognizes the importance of endangered and threatened species (i.e. more water) with nothing to show for it, and it is time for that to be recognized.

Unfortunately, in the Klamath Basin just wouldn’t be the same without something being of is. As I mentioned last year, we have become immersed in litigation on a number of fronts and have been forced to devote precious time and resources into the court room battle ground. We are in a time remaining aware that our success depends on each and every one of us contributing our best efforts to the cause. We can no longer afford to be satisfied with the status quo. We must push forward with renewed vigour and determination.

Essentially, we need to stop the fighting that is tearing all of our communities apart. Stakeholders of the entire Klamath watershed need to band together as partners and actually begin to take action on real solutions, instead of coming to the table as enemies and talking about what we should be doing. Otherwise I am afraid that the simple truth is that all of our futures may be bleak if not nonexistent.

KWUA worked with Reclamation to provide various pulse flows and did not require any additional water beyond the BiOp requirements if the hydrology did not line up to meet the flows under normal BiOp operations. KWUA worked with Reclamation at the beginning of the season to hold off the curtailment, and luckily the hydrology did line up to meet the court ordered flows without needing any additional water called for under the BiOp.

In 2017, four lawsuits were filed in the Federal District Court for the District of Oregon concerning agricultural practices on National Wildlife Refuges associated with the Klamath Project. All four relate to compliance with Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultations, and they demand that Klamath Project leaseholders cease certain agricultural activities that are specific to various types of water rights and prevail upon the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, and the decision is on appeal to the United States Supreme Court.

In March of 2017, the Federal District Court for the Northern District of California issued an injunction in litigation brought by the Hoopa Valley Tribe and the Yurok Tribe with PCFFA and Klamath Riverkeeper. The court ruled that federal agencies had failed to timely re-initiate Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultations on certain “prevalence of infection of juvenile salmon indicators” were exceeded in the Klamath River with additional water above BiOp requirements if the hydrology did not line up to meet the flows under normal BiOp operations. KWUA worked with Reclamation at the beginning of the season to hold off the curtailment, and luckily the hydrology did line up to meet the court ordered flows without needing any additional water called for under the BiOp.

In February of 2018, the Klamath Tribes gave federal agencies notice of intent to sue under the ESA. The tribes have threatened to intervene and oppose the demands. Otherwise I am afraid that the simple truth is that all of our futures may be bleak if not nonexistent.

In 2017, one of the worst years in the past decade or more. On average for a month and a half the threat of potential curtailment to Project deliveries, the rest of the year went off without a hitch. Well, that is in regards to Project operations and deliveries anyway. That threat was due to the possible necessity to meet court ordered irrigation flows in the Klamath River which has caused KWUA and USFWS to work closely together to ensure that the Project has adequate water deliveries to the Project, the KWUA Board of Directors is involved and committed and the KWUA staff is developing a comprehensive conservation plan. The plan recognizes the importance of endangered and threatened species (i.e. more water) with nothing to show for it, and it is time for that to be recognized.
The Klamath Water Users Association (KWUA) is a non-profit corporation that has represented Klamath Project farmers and ranchers in its current form since 1953. However, the roots of the organization date back to the beginning of the Klamath Reclamation Project in 1905. KWUA members include rural and suburban irrigation districts, other public agencies and private individuals who operate on both sides of the California-Oregon border. These entities and individuals typically hold water delivery contracts with the United States Bureau of Reclamation. The Klamath Project is home to over 1200 family farms and ranches and encompasses over 200,000 acres of some of the best farmland in the West.

Our mission is to preserve and enhance the viability of irrigated agriculture for our membership in the Klamath Basin, for the benefit of current and future generations.

KWUA is governed by an 11-member board of directors who are representatives from Klamath Project districts. The association employs an Executive Director and staff to execute the policy decisions made by the board.

We would like to give a special thank you to all the members of the association and to the many individual producers who offer continuous support and vision in seeking solutions for a sustainable future in the Klamath Basin.

We also recognize and acknowledge the many partner businesses and organizations that support us and collaborate with us on a daily basis. Thank you for helping us preserve and enhance the interests of irrigated agriculture.

KWUA Staff & 2018 Board of Directors

Executive Director: Scott White
Deputy Director: Mark Johnson
Executive Assistant/Office Manager: Chelsea Shearer

Board of Director President: Brad Kirby
Secretary: Ben DuVal

Board of Director Vice President: Tricia Hill
Treasurer: Luke Robison

Position 1: P: Brad Kirby~ A: Kraig Beasley
Position 2: P: Jerry Enman~ A: Tyler Martin
Position 3: P: Luther Horsley~ A: Tracey Liskey
Position 4: P: Gary Wright~ A: Mike Byrne
Position 5: P: Rob Unruh~ A: Ryan Hartman

Position 7: P: Marc Staunton~ A: Dave Jensen
Position 8: P: Curt Mullis ~ A: Jason Flowers
Position 9: P: Ryan Kliever~ A: George Ragnus
Position 10: P: Tricia Hill~ A: Steve Vanden
Position 11: P: Ben DuVal ~ A: Bob Gasser

P: Primary member
A: Alternate member

2018 KWUA Board Advisory Committees

Executive Committee, Administration & Budget, Water Quality, Nomination, Governmental Affairs, Operations, Negotiation, Public Relations & Events, Fish Science, Membership Recruitment

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