The Klamath Water Users Association’s mission statement 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.” This mission statement helps keep the board focused on water supply security, affordable power, water quality, Endangered Species Act, tribal trust issues, court cases, adjudication and more. If we ignore these issues we cannot have viable agriculture now or in the future.

The Klamath Project does not lack for significant issues, and we’ve had our fair share of years in which we’ve had to defend or react to some threat to irrigated agriculture. 2018 certainly fits in that category, though in a sense may be in a league of its own. If you took each year for the past three decades and lumped all of the issues, road blocks and difficulties together it might come close to describing what the Klamath Project Irrigators faced in 2018. Honestly I don’t know how to even begin explaining the majority of what KWUA had to tackle on behalf of the Project because frankly most of it just didn’t make sense. Nevertheless, with the utmost devotion the Board and staff of KWUA put forth a tireless effort and were instrumental in minimizing the devastation that could have resulted in 2018.

There’s not much else that I can think of that would be appropriate to recap 2018, so I would like to take this opportunity to share a few personal thoughts. 2018 was my third year as President of KWUA, and it will be my last. I would first like to thank the TID board for allowing me to be their representative in KWUA. Without their confidence and support I would not have had the distinct pleasure of serving as President of this great organization. Next, there are no words that would do justice in describing the appreciation I owe to the board of KWUA. So I will simply state that it has truly been an honor and a privilege. I Thank you.

Sincerely,

Brad C. Kirby

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.
Who We Are

The Klamath Water Users Association (KWUA) is a non-profit corporation that has represented the interests of Klamath Project farmers and ranchers since 1953. The roots of the organization date to the beginning of the Klamath 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; KWUA’s members deliver irrigation water to over 170,000 acres of some of the best farmland in the West.

The mission of the organization 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.

KWUA Staff

Paul Simmons, Executive Director

Paul has served as KWUA’s attorney for water and environmental issues for over 20 years. He is a founder of Somach, Simmons & Dunn, a 23-attorney water and environmental law firm with offices in Sacramento, Boulder, CO and Washington, DC. Paul was raised in northwest Missouri, where his family produced corn and soybeans and livestock. After his graduation with honors from Cornell Law School, he worked for the Department of Agriculture in DC before moving west. Following Scott White’s resignation as KWUA executive director, Paul agreed to fill the spot on an interim basis. Recently he has agreed to occupy the role for good. Paul’s wife Michele is a former commercial real estate attorney whose passion for agriculture led her to become the director of an organization having the mission to conserve agricultural land permanently in their home county.

Mark Johnson, Deputy Director

Mark is KWUA’s Deputy Director. He is a life-long resident of the Klamath Basin and understands the challenges our community faces. He graduated from Oregon State University in 2001 with a bachelor’s in fisheries and wildlife. Mark worked as a fishery biologist for 15 years with the United States Geological Survey in Klamath Falls focusing on the endangered Lost River and shortnose suckers in Upper Klamath Lake. Mark has now immersed himself in all KWUA fishery issues and is striving to maintain the agricultural heritage that the Klamath Basin was founded upon. Mark enjoys spending time outdoors with his wife and two children.

Chelsea Shearer, Executive Assistant/Office Manager

Chelsea manages the day-to-day operations within the office including accounting, initial client interactions and project management. Her particular passion of the job is planning events for the association. Prior to joining KWUA, she completed her Associates of Criminal Justice while raising a family. After nine years in the Criminal Justice system, she turned her focus to business management. Outside of work Chelsea enjoys doing photography for Shearer Images and following her teenage daughter in all things wrestling, track, and livestock, along side her husband of 24 years and her young son.
The only question about 2018 is whether it was the worst, or just the second-worst, water year for KWUA members and their patrons. Due to a very dry winter and a 2017 federal court injunction that required the Project to mitigate for potential disease conditions downstream, supply was extremely limited; compounding the problem, and maybe even worse, there was no significant water from Upper Klamath Lake available until June, thus reducing or eliminating production. The impacts, in many cases difficult to observe on the surface, were severe. KWUA worked ceaselessly during the year to track every drop of water in the watershed to coordinate with Reclamation and try to maximize deliveries within the legal constraints that were in effect.
**Litigation**  **Effects on Irrigation**
KWUA also went to court in March to pursue some relief from the injunction under the conditions of 2018, but the effort was unsuccessful. Later in the year, the Klamath Tribes, in a new lawsuit, requested a preliminary injunction that would have shut down irrigation entirely at the end of July. KWUA immediately intervened on the side of Reclamation, to oppose the injunction, and fortunately the preliminary injunction was denied. That lawsuit has since been dismissed.

In still-more litigation, KWUA supported efforts of Project farmers and ranchers defending their ability to make a living on land within national wildlife refuges that is designated for farming and ranching purposes. That litigation is not yet resolved.

**Legislation**
Despite the challenging conditions, KWUA also successfully advocated for federal legislation to assist Project irrigators in the long term. Again thanks to the efforts and support of our Congressional delegation from both states, and strong KWUA relationships on Capitol Hill, America’s Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA), signed by President Trump on October, 23 2018, includes Klamath Project specific measures. In particular, section 4308 of the AWIA is intended to provide specific authorization for a “WUMP” or “On-Project Plan” program (subject to required annual appropriations).

It also ensures producers can move non-Project water (such as groundwater) through Project conveyance facilities without any need for federal permits or contracts.

The AWIA also required Reclamation to prepare a report to Congress that: i) identifies a power cost “benchmark” based on achieving parity with other Reclamation projects in the Pacific Northwest; and ii) includes a plan to reach the power cost benchmark. KWUA began meetings with Reclamation soon after the passage of the AWIA in order to keep the work on the report on track and to make sure it meets the needs of members’ patrons.

**Coalition of the Willing**
The KWUA board, staff, and consultants also worked on many other activities and fronts. These include engagement in regulatory processes such as comments and advocacy on changes to regulations implementing the ESA, educating others about our issues and fighting stereotypes, and participation in the “Coalition of the Willing”, the process undertaken under the leadership of Alan Mikkelsen, Senior Adviser to the Secretary of the Interior. KWUA believes that process, and negotiated solutions, are the best path to stability for water users and the basin.

**AWIA:** “(A) to plan, implement, and administer programs to align water supplies and demand for irrigation water users associated with the Klamath Project, with a primary emphasis on programs developed or endorsed by local entities comprised of representatives of those water users;”

“(B) Expenditures under this paragraph shall not exceed $10 million on an average annual basis.”
On March 23rd, 2018 President Trump signed an Omnibus Bill that included $10.3 million in drought funds to the Klamath Project area. This appropriation would have been impossible with the diligent efforts of Congressman Greg Walden and Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden. The Congressional delegation rightly recognized the need for a program in 2018 to support groundwater use and land idling given the limited supply and delay in availability of Project water due to regulatory constraints. With this purpose in mind, Klamath Water Users quickly began discussing and planning the creation and administration of a program that could distribute the drought funds to the irrigators. However, because of change in the way that the Reclamation interprets its legal authorities, the funds could only be made available directly to parties who could specifically furnish quantified amounts of water for a wildlife benefit. This required a new approach.

KWUA board members worked with district managers, legal advisors, Reclamation staff, and engineering firms to create an entity now known as the 2018 Klamath Project Drought Response Agency (DRA). The DRA was formed on June 13, 2018, through the leadership of KWUA and partnership with Klamath Irrigation District, Klamath Drainage District and Tulelake Irrigation District.

KWUA and these districts funded the DRA until the program was able to distribute funds and reimburse the costs advanced. The DRA worked with districts and Reclamation to move water to benefit wildlife, with the ultimate objective to use federal payment to the DRA to accomplish the originally objectives of the funding. Working a program of this magnitude “in arrears” was a difficult task. The DRA board engaged local attorney Nathan Ratliff to ensure it did its work properly, and worked closely with hired engineering firm MBK Engineers to create a land idling and ground water pumping program.

As the program concluded, MBK engineers worked tirelessly with DRA and KWUA members to get applicants for the program and ultimately distribute $7,226,960.96. An additional $800,000 of the Drought Funds were allocated the east side of the Project. On December 14, 2018, the DRA established 2018 Land Idling Program, compensation would be provided at $400 per acre of idled irrigable land. For the 2018 Groundwater Program, reimbursement would be the power costs incurred for pumping groundwater, plus an additional 60 percent. On January 9, 2019 the DRA approved final amounts of payment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acres participating in Land Idling</th>
<th>Total Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14,497,416</td>
<td>$5,798,966.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>@ $400 per acre</td>
<td>Distributed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groundwater Pumping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Power Costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$948,646.60 paid value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Power x 160%)=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,517,834.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2018 Klamath Reclamation Project Operations

Irrigation deliveries in 2018 were characterized by uncertainty and frustration. The start of irrigation was delayed due to a court injunction requiring water to be withheld for disease mitigation and due to Upper Klamath elevation “thresholds” that were treated as operational minimums. Through some creative thinking, very limited diversions started April 26th with total amounts around 16,000 acre-feet before June 1st.

Overall deliveries to the west side of the Project were approximately 244,000 acre-feet from Upper Klamath Lake and 31,000 acre-feet from the Lost River Diversion Channel, totaling 275,000 acre-feet which is about 115,000 acre-feet less than what the 2013 biological opinions treat as being the full supply, 390,000 acre-feet.

Many Project irrigators pumped groundwater or idled land in the good faith understanding that assistance would be forthcoming since appropriations had been made by Congress for relief funding. However, the terms to receive that funding were complicated and there was delay, increasing the fear and anxiety amongst the Project patrons. Fortunately, a program was ultimately put in place, allowing many irrigators to receive compensation.
2013 Estimated Total Average Annual Economic Activity as a result of Upper Klamath Basin Agriculture including Tulelake CA (amount reflects the 1.9 IMPLAN multiplier). Economic reports for 2014–2015 are not available at this time through the Oregon State Extension.

≈ $670 MILLION & 5,200 JOBS

Klamath County

- One Acre Yields 2.5 tons (5,000 lbs.) Wheat → 63 bushels per acre → 60 bushels per ton → 70 License Bread per bushel → 5,810 license bread per year → Feeds 44 people per year

- One Acre Yields 45,000 lbs. Potatoes → 112 lbs. Potatoes per person → Feeds 402 people per year

- One Acre Yields 450 lbs. Beef → 56 lbs. Beef per person → Feeds 41 people per year

- One Dairy Cow Yields 6 Gallons Milk Per Year from 2500 Gallons Milk Per Year → 20,000 Pints Milk Per Year → Feeds 480 people per year

References
- Potato Nutrition Council, 2017 statistics
- http://www.nationalpotatostore.com/potato-facts

Developed by: Rhonda Martini, SNAP-Ed Extension Program Assistant and Willie Hopp, Director, Klamath Basin Research/Extension Center.
The Klamath Basin has one of the most productive agriculture economies in Southern Oregon and Northern California. The diverse agricultural sector includes crop production, livestock production and processing. Farming and ranching helped build the economy and attracted early World War veterans to the Klamath Basin. Klamath Water Users Association hosted nearly 60 people for the 2019 Fall Harvest Tour. Participants discovered how agriculture has shaped the Basin and contributed to it being a part of the Basin Strong economy, all while taking in the beauty of the land.

The first harvest tours focused more on infrastructure, such as the complex network of canals and ditches that deliver water to the Klamath Project. Through the years the focus changed, and tour organizers now strive to put a face on the farming industry and to give people an up-close-and-personal look at why water certainty is so crucial for Basin agriculture.

I think people just really in awe then they connect the food on their plates with the fields they drive past everyday to work. Farmers need water, and you can’t do any of these other things without that. There are a lot of business that are not an ag producer, however our goal is to show the participants that they wouldn’t be there without water in the ditches.

Several years ago KWUA joined a partnership with the Chamber of Commerce’s Leadership Klamath program. Through the program, students learn about the region become involved in political, social and business decision-making in Klamath County. This partnership has allowed business minded students to see a side of agriculture that normally one would not see simply driving by or reading in a text book.

Given the success of this partnership, KWUA has extended that partnership with local High School FFA students. Our future is in the hands of these producers and students.

Harvest Tour Showcases Klamath Ag
By: Brian Gailey

THANK YOU!
Being able to give the community members a valuable first-hand opportunity to see how agriculture impacts our local and regional economies and communities has always been a goal of the Klamath Water Users Association. In sharing our same vision, KWUA would like to thank these sponsors for their annual sponsorship which helps us share this phenomenal way of life.

2018 Sponsors Include:
* Basin Fertilizer & Chemical
* MBK Engineers
* Northwest Farm Credit
* Monte Johnson Insurance Services
* American AG Credit
* Great Basin Insurance
* Somach Simmons & Dunn
* Liskey Farms
* Horsley Farms
* Frank & Linda Hammerich
* J.W Kern, INC

2018 ANNUAL REPORT
**Gone Fishing**

The sucker fish assisted rearing facility, Gone Fishing, was the first stop on the tour. After a presentation by Ron Barnes, property owner & project manager and Dan Blake, US Fish & Wildlife participants were able to tour the facility.

Barnes spoke about the need and purpose for the facility. “What we are doing here is trying to raise the endangered sucker fish from Upper Klamath Lake,” said Barnes. “Millions of larvae move down the river but do not survive through that first year to recruit into the adult population.” Barnes continues, “We just don’t see young fish in the lake. So, the idea is, let’s just gently remove some of the fish and grow them here until they are big enough that we can circumvent that mortality event. It’s an experiment for us in a sense as to what size that is put back in the lake so that they don’t die.”

**FF Pumping Station – Straights Drain**

The second stop of the tour was along Highway 97 south of Midland was the FF pumping station. This facility marks the end location of the Klamath Project – where all the irrigation canals drain to.

KWUA Board Member, Steve Kandra provided a tour and explained the history and purpose of the pumping facility.

Irrigation water begins its journey through the Klamath Project at the head gate located at the southern end of Upper Klamath Lake. Water not consumed by the project eventually finds its way to this pumping station where it can either be pumped back into the project for use or returned to the Klamath River.

“Water is tighter and tighter in the Klamath Project,” says Kandra. “If there is any water left in the Klamath Project it ends up here, but these pumps run less and less all the time. We don’t want any water coming into the Klamath Project unless we can consume it. We are
Skyline Brewing
The third stop of the Harvest Tour was also the lunch stop of the day, Skyline Brewing. “What better place to hold it than at a local brewery,” said one of the attendees.

As attendees were enjoying lunch and a sampling of the beer - brothers, Ty and Ryan Kliewer began to tell their story.

The Kliewer’s have been homebrewing for years. In 2017 after much encouragement from friends & family coupled with the uncertainty in the Ag business, the pair opened Skyline Brewing housed inside a former milking parlor on their farm. The brothers discussed the trials and tribulations of owning a small family farm and added the brewery to help diversify the farm.

“We knew it was going to be a tough year,” said Ty Kliewer. “So, if we were to keep everyone around here we had to incorporate something different. So last year the week before Thanksgiving we started gutting the building. We put everything together in there reasonably, there is a lot more labor than there is cash in there.”

Horseradish Field & Processing
The fourth stop of the harvest tour included a horseradish field that was not quite ready for harvest and a horseradish trimming shed operated on Seus Family Farms. At the field, Scott Seus explained how horseradish is grown and cultivated as a 2-year crop and will have roots 18” deep into the ground. Requiring highly specialized and custom-built machines to harvest.

At the trimming shed the tour attendees were able to witness a recently harvested truck load of horseradish being unloaded and sorted. Attendees also sampled fresh horseradish.

“Because the roots are so unique in shape and size no machinery can trim the horseradish,” says Seus. “We employ dozens of people to trim the horseradish by hand, separating the larger roots from the smaller. Larger roots are kept whole, and smaller roots are sent to a grinder and turned in to what you see at the store.”

Mint Harvest
The tour of Seus Family Farms and fifth stop of the tour continued with a mint harvest. Seus explained...
how the harvest operates and where the crop goes following harvest.

Harvest is conducted with special built machinery, similar in appearance to a wheat combine. The machinery separates the leaf from the stem, keeping the leaf and discarding the stem back to the field.

The mint is then shipped to a processor where it is destined for tea in the European Union and extracted for mint oil used in flavoring foods such as gum.

**Wong’s Potatoes**
The final stop on the Harvest Tour was Wong’s Potatoes located right along Highway 39 halfway between Merrill and Henley. Wong’s is a family owned business that has been growing, packing and shipping potatoes in the United States for nearly 90 years. Wong’s distributes product throughout the USA, Mexico, Canada and Pacific Rim countries.

75% of the Wong’s product is organic and can be found locally at Sherms. Wongs has recently secured a contract to supply most of the western U.S. WalMart stores with potatoes. Starting next week consumers can also purchase potatoes directly from the distribution center as well.

Tour attendees were able to watch potatoes being sorted as they came off the truck. The packing sheds were not yet in operation. Employees of Wong’s were processing “reds” and “yellows” and will begin russet potatoes next week.

This year due to low yields from smoke and lack of water, cellars are being loaded two feet lower than normal.

**Wrap Up**
The 11th Annual KWUA Fall Harvest Tour was a great educational event. Like a field trip for adults. Most of the attendees have no connection with Ag other than living in proximity of the Basin and shopping at the same stores the farmers do.

“It was an eye-opening experience,” said a 2018 attendee. “I did not know what all Ag did, I thought they just put it in the ground and waited for fall. There is so much more.”

**Editor’s Note**
This is my 3rd visit with the KWUA Fall Harvest Tour. The first was with the Klamath County Chamber of Commerce Leadership Klamath, and I learn something new every time. The horseradish field / processing and mint harvest were a first for me. I am born and raised in the Basin and I had never experienced either of those until this week.

If you have an opportunity to attend one of the Harvest Tours, through the KWUA, or any other organization, I recommend that you do so. Whether you are involved in Ag or not these tours are a great way to see and understand just what it takes to grow the food on your dinner table. Now is a great time to get on the list for the 2019 tour, contact Chelsea Shearer at 541-883-6100 or visit [www.kwua.org](http://www.kwua.org) for more information.

View behind the scenes photos and videos from the tour on our Instagram Page at [https://www.instagram.com/klamathfallsnews/](https://www.instagram.com/klamathfallsnews/).
As a fisheries biologist, I have been heavily immersed in the fishery issues looming over the Klamath Basin throughout the past year. Many hours of research and staring at a computer monitor have been the rule, trying to get up to speed on the disease issues in the lower Klamath River. It has been challenging and interesting to keep up with the Lost River and shortnose sucker status and recovery efforts in Upper Klamath Lake while learning about C. shasta ecology in the Klamath River below Iron Gate Dam.

**Upper Klamath Lake Water Quality**

In response to the Klamath Tribes’ Upper Klamath Lake litigation that occurred this past summer, I closely monitored the water quality in areas that harbor large numbers of Lost River and shortnose suckers during the July-September. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) deploys multiple water quality monitoring sondes throughout Upper Klamath Lake that record water quality parameters in real-time from May-October. The hourly readings can be accessed via USGS’s Upper Klamath Lake Long-Term Water Quality Monitoring Program website. In 2018, UKL saw few instances in where the dissolved oxygen, pH, and ammonia levels were at lethal levels for an extended period of time. Last summer saw prolonged ambient air temperatures over 90 degrees and fortunately with the large fires burning around the region, the smoke that blanketed the Basin reduced the productivity of the algae in Upper Klamath Lake. The reduced algae growth prevented the large fluctuations in the daily water quality dynamics that often lead to fish kill events.

**USFWS Sucker Assisted Release Program**

Last March, I was fortunate to participate in the release of hatchery reared juvenile Lost River and shortnose suckers into Upper Klamath Lake. This was the first cohort of the USFWS’ Sucker Assisted Rearing Program (SARP) which collects the sucker larvae from the tributaries of Upper Klamath Lake, raises them in geothermally heated ponds, and releases them about two years later. This program has garnered much attention due to the fact it is a proactive approach to the downward trajectory of the Lost River and shortnose populations in Upper Klamath Lake. Alan Mikkelsen, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of the Interior, Western Water and Resource Issues, was also in attendance and is very supportive of this program. Mr. Mikkelsen has since directed funds to USFWS for the expansion of the rearing facility to allow more suckers to be released in future years.

**Juvenile Chinook Disease Monitoring**
Last May, I traveled to the lower Klamath River to observe the methods utilized by the USFWS and Karuk Tribe for sampling juvenile Chinook and coho at Kinsman trap. The kinsman trap located at river kilometer 235, is a rotary screw trap that passively collects juvenile salmon for abundance indices and disease monitoring. The sampling is crucial for the Klamath Project because technicians capture out-migrating juvenile Chinook salmon in the trap and if more than 20% of them are infected by the C. shasta parasite, a dilution flow is triggered, sending up to 50,000 acre feet of Project water downstream to mitigate disease. The implementation of the court-ordered dilution flow happened to coincide during my visit and sampling efficiencies were less than optimum due to the volume of water being released from Iron Gate Dam. However, several juvenile Chinook, coho, and lamprey were collected during the sampling event.

**Senator Merkley’s Sucker Summit**

I served on a panel of fisheries experts for Senator Jeff Merkley’s sucker recovery summit that was held in Klamath Falls last November. The purpose of the summit was to address sucker recovery issues on Upper Klamath Lake and to develop short and long-term goals to curb the downward trend in the Lost River and shortnose sucker populations. The panelists included fisheries experts from KWUA, USGS, Klamath Tribes, USFWS, and BOR. The three panels during the day-long event covered topics such as water quality, disease, and non-native species interactions. The experts suggest that water quality was a key factor that may exacerbate other issues such as non-native species interactions and disease. In the immediate future, the USFWS sucker assisted rearing program will provide a short-term solution while the other issues can be addressed. Also, projects are being implemented on property around Upper Klamath Lake to address water quality issues in response to the sucker summit consensus. The summit was well attended by various interests in the Basin and really opened the eyes of many people to the uncertainty associated with the declining sucker populations. Senator Merkley is heavily engaged in the Klamath Basin has been extremely instrumental in bringing funds to the Klamath Basin for sucker recovery efforts. Congressmen Greg Walden and Senator Ron Wyden have supported Senator Merkley’s efforts and continue to support recovery of the species.
The Second Session of the 115th Congress opened in January 2018, with the upcoming fall mid-term elections very much on the minds of lawmakers and administration officials.

On the legislative front, two major items emerged. First, the budget quickly became a key agenda item for the Congress. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) announced plans for an aggressive schedule, with the goal of completing the appropriations process in time for all funding bills to be ready for the President’s signature before the end of the fiscal year (September 30). Ultimately, legislation funding approximately 75 percent of the government reached the President’s desk prior to the September 30, fiscal year deadline – including the budget for the Bureau of Reclamation. In fact, the Reclamation budget was passed and enacted in mid-September, much earlier than in past years.

Second, discussions surrounding the need for infrastructure legislation also emerged as a key agenda item for the 115th Congress, with the key committees in the House and Senate holding hearings, developing legislation, and easily moving their respective versions of America’s Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) through the House and Senate unanimously by voice votes – a rare feat in Washington. By early fall, the two chambers were working out differences in a conference committee.

During the AWIA negotiations in September, representatives of Klamath Water Users Association leadership team and board members visited Washington for two days of meetings with Members of the Congressional delegation, key committee staff, and senior White House and Interior Department officials. A key purpose of the meetings was to highlight for policymakers the conditions facing the Klamath Basin in light of the significant drought, and need for relief for farmers in the Basin.

The final version of AWIA (enacted Oct. 23, 2018 as Public Law No: 115-270) included language (Sec. 4308) of direct benefit to the Klamath Basin, thanks to the efforts of the Oregon congressional delegation. The key provisions would: 1) Allow Reclamation to plan, implement, and administer programs to align water

By: Mark Limbaugh and Chris Kearney
KWUA Washington D.C Representatives

Presidential Memorandum on Promoting the Reliable Supply and Delivery of Water in the West

By: Mark Limbaugh and Chris Kearney
KWUA Washington D.C Representatives
supplies and demand for irrigation water users associated with the Klamath Project; 2) Provide any entity operating within the Klamath Project that uses Klamath Project water the ability to use, without any additional Federal contract, permit, or other authorization, Klamath Project works or facilities to convey non-Klamath Project water for any authorized purpose of the Klamath Project; and, 3) Directs the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with interested irrigation interests that are eligible for covered power use, to prepare a report that identifies a Klamath power cost benchmark and recommends actions that are necessary and appropriate to ensure that the net delivered power cost is equal to or less than the power cost benchmark.

In October, President Trump issued the Presidential Memorandum on Promoting the Reliable Supply and Delivery of Water in the West. Key among its directives: “The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce shall complete the joint consultation presently underway for the Klamath Irrigation Project by August 2019.” An important goal of the memo is to ensure the completion of the ESA consultation and related documents in a timely manner is a priority at the Secretarial level for both Departments. Prior to the issuing of the memo, completion of the process was open ended, uncertain, and not well coordinated among the agencies.

In addition, the Secretary of the Interior’s Western Water policy advisor, Alan Mikkelsen continued coalition-building meetings with representatives of a broad cross-section of interests in the Basin.

Meet your D.C. Representatives

Mark Limbaugh

“When I take on a client’s project, I become part of that project.”

Mark Limbaugh provides strategic policy and legislative guidance to clients on water, irrigation, energy, and natural resource management issues. He has extensive experience in federal agency budget formulation, policy development, regulatory issues, and management initiatives at the highest levels of the federal government. While at the Department of Interior, Mark was directly involved in some of the most complex water issues involving the federal government. He has worked closely with water and natural resource leaders in the 17 Western states and across the nation, with members of Congress and with his peers at the many federal agencies and science organizations responsible for dealing with national water and natural resource issues.

Chris Kearney

Chris is a public policy and governmental affairs professional with over thirty years of government and private sector experience in the energy, environment, and natural resource arenas, having held senior positions in the executive branch, the US Senate and House, and the electric utility industry. His policy areas of expertise include, but are not limited to, western water policy, sportsmen and public land related matters, NEPA, energy, the Endangered Species Act, ocean and coastal conservation, and the federal budget.

Internal Priorities & Areas of focus

During KWUA’s January 2019 planning meeting, the KWUA board approved an overall set of priorities and areas for focus in 2019. These are stated below, with a brief summary of the status of activity for each.

**Best possible 2019 water supply**: KWUA is working closely with Reclamation, and other stakeholders to achieve the most favorable outcome for the Project’s water supply in 2019. At the time of printing this report, it appears that the new ESA consultation will be controlling for water supply in 2019. KWUA worked on a variety of back-up plans and alternatives to make sure that, if the consultation were not finished, the Project would not experience a repeat of 2018.

**Favorable ESA Re-Consultation / water supply**: Federal agencies have worked to complete ESA consultation for operation of the Klamath Project before the 2019 irrigation season: KWUA had encouraged prompt completion of the process, because otherwise the court-ordered injunction for disease mitigation flows would remain in effect. The flip side of the accelerated pace was that there has been little to no opportunity for engagement with Reclamation or other parties in the Basin with whom KWUA has a proven ability to work. KWUA and KWUA members have identified concerns to Reclamation and there will an update on developments during the annual meeting.

**Meaningful and useful Power Study**: KWUA is engaged very actively in Reclamation’s process for completing the power study and report that Congress required in America’s Water Infrastructure Act. KWUA has retained EES Consulting to help KWUA participate effectively in this process.

**Engage the Administration**: KWUA has long enjoyed bipartisan support for our mission and activities. With each Presidential Administration, opportunities, priorities, and personnel change. Relevant leadership positions in the Administration are now well-established, and there is new regional leadership as well. KWUA has made good progress in engaging these policy makers on issues of interest to KWUA members, and is appreciative of their attention.

**Pursue strategies for maximum Project benefit**

**Prepare and pursue a goal-based budget**: KWUA’s activities are a function of available resources. KWUA’s budget committee has fulfilled a directive of the board to develop a goal-based budget, which includes further staffing positions and work by outside consultants, along with assessments necessary to support the budget. This budget is considered aspirational, and will be the topic of ongoing dialogue in KWUA and with member districts.

**Realize enactment of remaining legislative measures supported in KPFA**: In the 2016 Klamath Power and Facilities Agreement (KPFA), various parties from throughout the basin committed to support a suite of legislative measures that would be beneficial to Project water users, as well as provide tools that can facilitate future settlement activities. Thanks to our diligent Congressional delegation, we realized enactment of key measures in 2018. However, it was not possible to move all of the measures due to circumstances beyond the delegation’s control. KWUA will be active to pursue the remaining elements whenever opportunities arise.

**Avoid or minimize litigation costs**: 2018 was the most litigation-heavy year in over a decade. With litigation costs over half of KWUA’s budget, the board seeks to limit costs in 2019 to the extent possible. KWUA believes the 2018 experience reinforces that it is important to pursue negotiated resolutions with stakeholder.

**Strengthen KWUA effectiveness**

**Engage a strong Executive Director**: KWUA has engaged with Paul Simmons to lead the Association as Executive Director.

**Be a strong technical force**: KWUA engaged fish consultants to work with KWUA’s staff fish biologist, Mark Johnson.

**Engage other parties**: KWUA has continued to reach out and engage stakeholders with in the Klamath River system to engage in forward movement to a cohesive and comprehensive river system. KWUA believes there are strong and effective leaders throughout the watershed who can make a difference.

**Implement more favorable / beneficial messaging / marketing**: KWUA staff are preparing informal notes of all KWUA board meetings for immediate distribution to members. KWUA staff is also publishing a monthly newsletter to a broad distribution. KWUA’s Public Relations committee and Executive Director reworking to keep the Klamath Project Irrigators relevant in Washington D.C. The board has approved hiring of a PR firm and engaging committee to take a more active role in the Associations issues.
The Klamath Water Users Associations (KWUA) Board of Directors includes volunteer members that represent different districts of the Klamath Reclamation Project. The board reviews proposed work plans, budgets and policy resolutions, works out differences on local issues, conveys recommendations to member districts and provides guidance to KWUA staff.

**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: Gene Souza

**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 6:**
P: Luke Robison  A: Jason Chapman

**Position 7:**
P: Marc Staunton  A: Dave Jensen

**Position 8:**
P: Curt Mullis  A: Jason Flowers

**Position 9:**
P: Ry Kliewer  A: George Rajnus

**Position 10:**
P: Tricia Hill  A: Steve Kandra

**Position 11:**
P: Ben DuVal  A: Bob Gasser

We would like to say 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, protect and defend the interests of irrigated agriculture.
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KWUA would like to thank these Rainmaker sponsors for their annual sponsorship which helps us facilitate our Annual Meeting and share our Fall Harvest Tour with the public.

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