

Regional Water Quality Control Board
North Coast Region

Executive Officer's Summary Report
Thursday, October 9, 2014
Best Western Miner's Inn
Yreka, California

ITEM: 6

SUBJECT: Update on Klamath Basin Water Quality Improvement Activities (Clayton Creager, Bryan McFadin, Katherine Carter, Andrew Baker, Tom Williams, and invited speakers)

BOARD ACTION: Informational item. No action will be taken by the Regional Water Board.

BACKGROUND: This informational item responds to a standing request from Regional Water Board members for periodic updates on the status of water quality improvement activities in the Klamath Basin. The Klamath Basin has many approved TMDLs including Upper Klamath Lake (OR), Klamath River (OR and CA), Upper Lost River (OR), Lower Lost River (CA), Shasta River (CA), Scott River (CA), Salmon River (CA), and the Trinity River (CA). The Regional Water Board is the lead agency for implementing TMDL Action Plans for all waters in California and plays a key supporting role for waters in Oregon. Due to the presence of multiple impaired waters within the Klamath Basin, the Regional Water Board made the strategic decision for implementation to treat the entire basin as a single aquatic ecosystem using basin-wide coordinating frameworks, such as the Klamath Basin Monitoring Program and the Klamath Tracking and Accounting Program, to improve collaboration with Tribes, other state and federal agencies, NGOs, and local governments on water quality improvement activities.

The purpose of the presentation today is to highlight a few of the water quality improvement activities that are being undertaken by a few of the organizations that are participating in the collaborative frameworks. Staff has assembled a representative panel from the mouth of the Klamath River to the headwaters, who will describe a subset of their activities to improve water quality in the Klamath Basin. Due to constraints on time we had to limit the number of partners to include in the panel and panel participants will only describe a subset of their projects and programs that are contributing towards supporting conditions for Klamath Basin beneficial uses.

Today's panel includes:

- Katherine Carter – North Coast Regional Water Board and Sara Borok - California Fish & Wildlife will describe the Klamath Fish Health Assessment Team and their recent contribution to inform decisions regarding supplemental flow releases on the Trinity and Klamath Rivers.
- Sarah Beesely – Yurok Tribe Environmental Program will discuss the tribal water quality monitoring program and recent environmental restoration projects.
- Lyra Cressey - the Salmon River Restoration Council will provide background information on recent and planned riparian restoration projects along the Salmon River.
- Greg Laurie - United State Forest Service Klamath National Forest will present on their restoration projects at Seiad Creek and Scott River.
- Andy Baker and Bryan McFadin – North Coast Regional Water Board will provide a brief on update on the TMDL Shasta and Scott Waiver Programs.
- Bryan McFadin – North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, Sari Sommarstrom – Scott River Water Trust, Tom Menne – Scott Valley Ground Water Advisory Committee, Gus Tolley – University of California Davis, Ric Costales – County of Siskiyou, Amy Hoss and Amy Campbell – The Nature Conservancy, and Craig Tucker – Karuk Tribe will be discussing various flow augmentation projects for the Shasta and Scott Rivers.
- Adriane Garayalde – Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District and Clayton Creager – North Coast Regional Water Board will be providing an update on the Shasta River Watershed Stewardship Plan.
- Jared Bottcher and Nell Koldren – Klamath Basin Rangeland Trust will be providing an update on the diffuse source wetland treatment systems project on the Wood and Sprague Rivers above Upper Klamath Lake.
- Rick Carlson – US Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) will be providing an overview of Reclamation's water quality improvement projects and their TMDL Compliance Monitoring Plan.
- Mike Hiatt – Oregon Department of Environmental Quality who was recently hired as the Klamath Basin Water Quality Coordinator and is a key collaborator through our Memorandum of Agreement on TMDL implementation.

DISCUSSION:

Restoring water quality in the Klamath Basin will require the combined efforts of a large number of organizations and the stewardship action of individual landowners. The Regional Water Board is promoting the watershed stewardship approach as a means to work collaboratively with stakeholders on commonly held desired environmental outcomes. If successful, improved water quality will

result in more vibrant aquatic ecosystems and coastal fishing communities, restored conditions for Tribal ceremonies that have been practiced for thousands of years, improved recreational opportunities, and retention of working landscapes in our forests, farms and rangelands. Staff hopes that the presentations today demonstrate that a wide range of stakeholders are working together in the Klamath Basin to achieve these objectives.

**SUPPORTING
DOCUMENTS:** None

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