

Klamath Basin Monitoring Program

What is it?

The Klamath Basin Monitoring Program (KBMP), formally known as the Klamath Basin Water Quality Monitoring Coordination Group, is an organization comprised of groups either conducting water quality monitoring or interested in water quality issues within the Klamath Basin. In collaboration with the Klamath Watershed Institute, the KBMP has developed a plan for the long-term sustainability of the Klamath Basin. Entitled the 'Klamath Basin Water Quality Monitoring Plan', the purpose of the plan is to serve as a collaborative and comparable plan for sampling and analyzing water quality samples within the Klamath Basin. The plan is intended to be developed in phases; the current version represents phase one of a multiphase process. The goals of the plan are to:

- Develop and maintain a coordinated long-term monitoring network of sites that capture status and trends of selected indicators throughout the Klamath Basin over time and space;
- Coordinate monitoring activities to inform total maximum daily load development and achievement of action plan goals;
- Frame monitoring objectives in terms of supporting beneficial uses and improving the understanding of the ecology of the Klamath Basin;
- Strive for consistent quality assurance and control regarding all monitoring activities; provide accessible data in a timely manner to better inform regulatory agencies, organizations, tribal community and the public; and
- Identify and document the effects of climate change and supply data to support climate change models to enhance the understanding of future impacts on water quality within the Klamath Basin.

The plan is not intended to replace individual water quality monitoring efforts or autonomy, but to expand coordinated monitoring in a way that benefits long-term coordination and collaboration among organizations.

Why is it important to the State?

California has listed the portions of the Klamath River within its jurisdiction (from the CA/OR Stateline to the mouth) for impairments due to elevated water temperatures, elevated nutrients, and organic enrichment/low dissolved oxygen. In addition, the portion of the Klamath River watershed downstream of the Trinity River, partially within the Yurok Reservation, is listed for sedimentation/siltation impairment. Finally, in March 2008, the US EPA added the reach of the Klamath River that incorporates Copco 1 and 2 and Iron Gate Reservoirs to the 303(d) List for the blue-green algae toxin microcystin. These conditions contribute to the nonattainment of beneficial uses, including the most sensitive beneficial uses: those associated with cold water fish and fisheries (including in particular the salmonid fishery) in California, and those related to cultural uses and practices, and those related to recreation.

Why is it important to me?

The Klamath River Basin is of vital economic and cultural importance to the states of Oregon and California, as well as the Klamath Tribes in Oregon; the Hoopa, Karuk, and Yurok Tribes in California; the Quartz Valley Indian Reservation in California, and the Resighini Rancheria in California. It provides fertile lands for a rich agricultural economy in the upper basin. Irrigation facilities known as the Klamath Project owned by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation support this economy as does hydroelectric power provided via a system of five dams operated by PacifiCorp. The basin is the home spawning grounds of a once vast Tribal, sport, and commercial fishery and provides other aquatic resources of cultural significance to the local Indian Tribes. The watershed supports an active recreational industry, including activities that are specific to the Wild and Scenic portions of the river designated by both the state and federal governments in both Oregon and California. Finally, the watershed continues to support what were once historically significant mining and timber industries.

For residents of the Klamath Basin, the KBMP provides online data. This allows residents to understand more about where their waters are safe and healthy and where more help is needed to keep them clean. It is easier for citizens to understand and advocate for clean water when it is clear to them where water quality is adequately maintained and where it is not.

How will this information be used?

The Klamath Basin Monitoring Program has a newsletter to inform group members and the public of activities within the Klamath River Basin and has launched a database to store monitoring data. This data management system will connect with the larger California Environmental Data Exchange Network system, making that data available for management decisions and to the public.



Partners (as of January 2010): Aquatic Ecosystem Sciences, Bureau of Land Management, California Department of Fish & Game, California Department of Water Resources, California Environmental Protection Agency, California State Coastal Conservancy, CalTrout, French Creek Watershed Advisory Group, Hoopa Valley Tribal EPA, Humboldt State, University Jefferson Fish Society, Karuk Tribe, Kier Associates, Klamath Bird Observatory, Klamath I & M Network, Klamath National Forest, Klamath River Compact Commission, Klamath Riverkeeper, Klamath Tribes, Klamath Watershed Partnership, Mid Klamath Watershed Council, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Park Service, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon State University, Oregon University School of Law, Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, PacifiCorp, Quartz Valley Indian Reservation, Redwood Sciences Lab, Resighini Rancheria, Salmon River Restoration Council, Scott River Watershed Council, Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District, Siskiyou County Public Health, Siskiyou Resource Conservation District, Southern Oregon University, Sprague Watershed Council, State Water Resources Control Board, Stillwater Sciences, The Nature Conservancy, Timber Products Company, Trinity County Resource Conservation District, Trinity River Restoration Program, U. S. Bureau of Reclamation, U. S. Department of Agriculture, U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Forest Service, U. S. Geological Survey, UC Davis Center for Watershed Sciences, University of California Berkeley, University of California Santa Cruz, University of Oregon, Upper Mid Klamath Watershed Council, Watercourse Engineering, Watershed Initiatives, Watershed Research and Training Center, and Yurok Tribal Environmental Program.

To learn more about KBMP, click here

