



Oregon
Department
of Agriculture

Klamath Headwaters Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan

May 2011

Local Advisory Committee Meets to Review Area Plan

Meeting summary

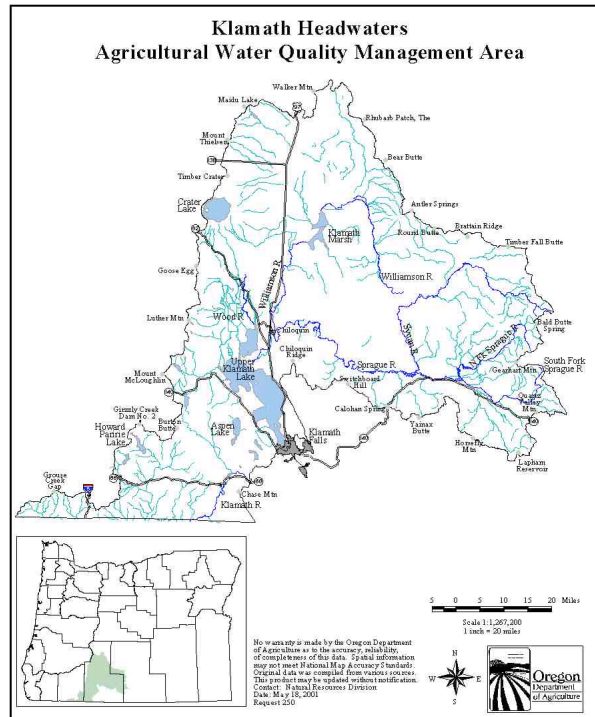
The Local Advisory Committee (LAC) met on May 12 and September 12, 2011, to review and make recommendations for implementation of the Klamath Headwaters Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan (Area Plan) and Rules (Area Rules).

The LAC listened to reports from the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) and Klamath Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) regarding Area Rule compliance and Area Plan implementation.

The LAC discussed the scientific basis of the phosphorus loading analysis to establish the Upper Klamath Lake Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). These sampling and modeling techniques were used to establish a 40 percent load allocation to anthropogenic sources. The LAC disputes this load allocation and wishes the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to revisit this issue.

The LAC discussed their belief that local agricultural landowners have accomplished many water quantity and water quality improvement projects over the last 40 years but that it has been difficult to demonstrate the effectiveness of these projects. The LAC made several recommendations to improve water quality monitoring as discussed in the monitoring section below.

The LAC also discussed difficulties of conducting outreach and working with agricultural landowners who are not connected to traditional producer



Located in the south central part of Oregon, the Klamath Headwaters Sub-basin includes all tributaries to Klamath/Agency Lakes and the Klamath River to the Oregon border with the exception of the Lost River Sub-basin.

groups. Also, it is difficult to conduct outreach and provide technical assistance to new farmers and absentee or non-traditional landowners.

The LAC does feel that, overall, the local agricultural community is continually improving their management practices to protect and improve water quality.

Compliance summary

There were no complaints, requests for alternative measures, or compliance investigations during 2009 and 2010 in the Klamath Headwaters Management Area.

Summary of Accomplishments

In the past two and one-half years, the Klamath SWCD has been involved in a wide variety of activities to promote the information provided in the Klamath Headwaters and the Lost River Agricultural Water Quality Area Plans (Area Plans). Listed below is a summary of some of those activities. The pledge of the Klamath SWCD is to educate and assist landowners on water quality issues in their watershed. The Klamath SWCD Board of Directors has also asked the LAC that the District be called first for any water quality complaints or inquiries for Klamath County. Their goal is to make certain that the Klamath SWCD staff and directors are available to every landowner in Klamath County and to provide technical assistance and explore funding possibilities to correct identified problems whenever possible.

- Over 750 contacts with landowners regarding water quality, irrigation water management, nutrient management, dry land conversion, and no-till farming. These contacts were proactive and provided landowner education regarding the Agricultural Water Quality Program, the Klamath Headwaters Area Plan, as well as conservation planning, and information for conservation cost share programs to assist with water quality projects.
- Worked with one landowner regarding a possible water quality violation. The Klamath SWCD provided technical assistance and/or secured funding to assist in water quality improvements.
- Completed 11 OWEB small grants projects on water quality improvements, with 13 additional projects in various stages of conservation planning.
- Distributed over 12 press releases and articles concerning water quality.
- Completed 116 conservation plans, and Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) contracts on 18,000 acres for irrigation water management, water quality and water quantity resource concerns.
- Presented 13 conservation awards to landowners and organizations.
- Conducted over 175 site visits on irrigation water management and water quality.
- Wrote 16 different articles in district newsletters regarding educational outreach and other associated water quality issues.
- Worked with the Klamath Watershed Partnership, Klamath Tribes, Klamath Basin Rangeland Trust and others on an Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Special Investment Partnership to develop a collaborative conservation program for the Klamath Headwaters area.
- Made four presentations to the Klamath County Commissioners on water quality issues.
- Made seven public presentations regarding water quality.
- Served on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Suckerfish Recovery Implementation Committee as an advisor for local water quality projects.
- Conducted two workshops on water quality and other conservation programs including livestock stream fencing.
- In partnership with the California Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), we established a six-member coalition of conservation districts referred to as the Klamath River Coalition of Conservation Districts to work on water quality and water quantity.
- Held six public meetings on water quality issues.

Summary of Accomplishments: *continued*

- Continued to work with the Lava Beds-Butte Valley Resource Conservation and Development Area (RCD) on issues relating to water quality on the Klamath River watershed.
- Held four meetings with State and Federal legislators concerning water quality improvement, water management, and conservation programs.
- The District presented three workshops for Klamath City and Klamath County 6th grade students on water quality.
- Gave six presentations on water quality and noxious weed programs at the Klamath Farm EXPO.
- Established four juniper removal contracts exceeding 200 acres.
- Wrote over 50 conservation plans for Klamath County landowners.
- 300 contacts with landowners regarding riparian restoration.
- Over 50 field visits for riparian planning.
- Initiated and served on local advisory committees for establishing water quality as the primary natural resource concern for local Federal conservation programs.
- Attended and hosted public meetings for water quality, and TMDL issues.
- Established the new Klamath Water and Energy Evaluation Program (KWEEN) to do field tests on irrigation application with a comprehensive plan for irrigation scheduling and inputs, including nutrients.
- Established a partnership with the Lava Beds/Butte Valley RCD to apply for Agriculture Water Enhancement Program Funding for water quality projects, and to establish a local advisory committee to participate in the Klamath River TMDL debates over the next two years.



***LAC Members
Present at Meetings***

Tom Mallams, Chair
Jim Gallagher
Linda Long
Sue Mattenberger
Chris Sokol
Joseph Watkins



LAC Plan Review: *continued*

Background

From 1998 through 2004, ODA and the LAC worked to develop the Area Plan and associated Area Rules for the Klamath Headwaters Management Area. ODA adopted the Area Plan and Rules in February 2004. The LAC was reconvened to review and update the Area Plan in 2007, 2009, and now in 2011.

The goal of the Klamath Headwaters Area Plan is to prevent and control potential water pollution from agricultural activities and to work toward achieving water quality standards.

The LAC developed Area Rules to specifically address water quality concerns identified in the Klamath Headwaters basin that are related to agricultural activity. The Rules require agricultural landowners in the Management Area to:

- Limit excessive sheet and rill erosion.
- Not create riparian conditions that are “down-trending” as defined by Bureau of Land Management Proper Functioning Condition guidelines or that degrade stream shading consistent with site capability.
- Comply with provisions of ORS 468B.025 or ORS 468B.050.

In early 2002, the Oregon DEQ established TMDLs for the Williamson, Sprague, and Upper Klamath Lake watersheds. The TMDL for the Klamath River, from Link River to the ocean and for the Lost River Sub-basin, was completed in December of 2010. Modifications to the Area Plan incorporating these new TMDLs were discussed at the Biennial Review.

Implementation activities

The Klamath SWCD, in cooperation with federal and state agencies as well as private groups and landowners, has completed a phenomenal amount of conservation work in the basin (page 2-3). The LAC believes that much conservation work is being done on private land by individual landowners that are not included in this report.

Monitoring

There are large amounts of data available on water quality in this basin. Various agencies, including the United States Geological Service, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Klamath Tribes, and Oregon State University have all been involved in monitoring projects in this basin within the last ten years. However, these data are not continuous and do not provide us with a way to look at trends in the basin related to agricultural activities.

The LAC identified a lack of reliable baseline data from the past 20 to 40 years in which to demonstrate the effectiveness of work that the agricultural community has accomplished towards improving water quality in the management area. The LAC recommended more effectiveness monitoring and the development of a program to monitor landscape condition.

The LAC recommended that a monitoring group be formed to look at what monitoring data is available and useful to measure trends in water quality related to agricultural activities. This group would also make recommendations on methods to conduct landscape condition monitoring and collect baseline data. The Klamath SWCD and ODA will work towards convening the monitoring group.

Oregon Department of Agriculture

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