



# Lost River Subbasin Agricultural Water Quality Management Area

December 2010

## Local Advisory Committee Meets

### *Meeting summary*

The Lost River Subbasin Local Advisory Committee (LAC) met on December 8, 2010, to evaluate the implementation of the Lost River Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan and Rule and to discuss future development of the Area Plan to incorporate the upcoming Upper Klamath and Lost River Subbasins Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs).

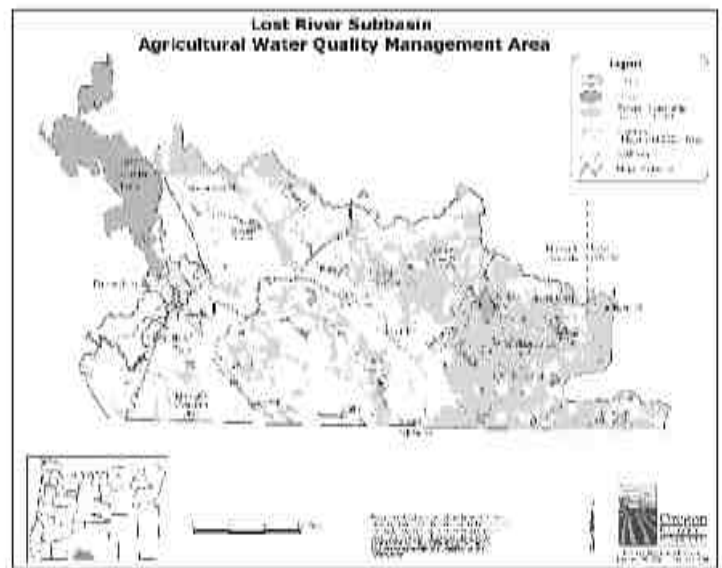
The LAC listened to a report on the Water Quality Program, monitoring, and statewide compliance cases from Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) and a summary of implementation accomplishments from the Klamath Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

### *Compliance summary*

From June 2008 to December 2010, there were no complaints filed with ODA in the Lost River Subbasin. The Klamath SWCD received two complaints locally. These complaints were resolved through a combination of education, technical assistance and Best Management Practices (BMPs) implementation. The LAC felt that this approach to locally led complaint resolution is the best sign that the Area Plan is working well.

### *Background*

From 1998 through 2004, ODA and the LAC developed an Area Plan and associated Administrative Rules for the Lost River Sub-Basin. The ODA adopted the Area Plan and Rules in June 2004.



### MISSION OF THE LOST RIVER SUB-BASIN LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Protect water quality  
in the Lost River Subbasin  
Agricultural Water Quality Management Area  
while sustaining the agricultural economy.

In 2006 and 2008, the LAC met for biennial reviews of the Area Plan and Rules. The Klamath SWCD has served as the local management agency for the development and implementation of the Area Plan and Rules.

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## 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 presented in the Lost River Subbasin. Listed below is an executive summary of some of those activities.

- Over 1,900 contacts with landowners regarding water quality, irrigation water management, nutrient management. These contacts were pro-active and provided landowner education regarding the Water Quality Management Act and the Area Plan for the Lost River Plan, as well as conservation planning, and information for conservation cost share programs to assist with water quality projects.
- Worked with one landowner regarding possible water quality concerns. The Klamath SWCD provided technical assistance and/or secured funding to assist in water quality improvements.
- 14 OWEB small grants projects on water quality improvements, with nine additional projects in various stages of conservation planning.
- Distributed at least 12 press releases and articles concerning water quality.
- Completed 116 conservation plans, and EQIP contracts on 18,000 acres for irrigation water management, water quality and water quantity resource concerns.
- Over 340 site visits on irrigation water management and water quality.
- 16 different articles in district newsletters regarding educational outreach and other associated water quality issues.
- Testified at several public meetings of the Klamath County Natural Resource Advisory Committee, and the Klamath Water Users Association on water quality issues.
- Worked with the Lava Beds/Butte Valley Rural Conservation and Development Area on implementing the Walking Wetlands Program in both Oregon and California.
- Made four presentations to the Klamath County Commissioners on water quality issues.
- Serving 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 Resources 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.
- Continue to work with the Lava Beds-Butte Valley RCD on issues relating to water quality on the Lost River watershed, which terminates in Tulelake, California.
- Had four meetings with state and federal legislators concerning water quality improvement, water management, and conservation programs.
- The District presented three separate three-day, (nine days total) workshops for Klamath City and Klamath County sixth grade students on water quality. Held in conjunction with the OSU Forestry Tour at Clover Creek.
- Presented two different two-day and one night, (four days and two nights) on water quality and noxious weed programs at the Klamath Farm EXPO.
- Established four juniper removal contracts exceeding 200 acres.
- Developed a contractor list of 28 different interested people or companies for juniper removal to free up underground water supplies.
- Established eight underground pipelines totaling over 15,000 ft for water quality and water conservation.
- Wrote over 50 conservation plans for Klamath County landowners.
- Made 300 contacts with landowners regarding riparian restoration.
- Made 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.
- Assisted, and gave direction to the NRCS for the Wetland Reserve Program.
- 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 Plan Review: *continued*

*Monitoring*

Existing data on the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Laboratory Analytical Storage and Retrieval (LASAR) database has only two sites with continuous data in this basin, both on the mainstem of the Lost River. One site is located at the Anderson-Rose Dam, and the other is in Merrill at Highway 39. The Anderson-Rose Dam site has data that continues until 2002 with many gaps between 1985-1997. The second site at Highway 39 has continuous data beyond 2001. This site also covers nearly all the Lost River drainage, so it provides a good single point for looking at water quality trends in the basin.

Data from the site at Highway 39 showed elevated E. coli, to 840 MPN/mls, along with high pH (to 9.2), and turbidity (to 35 NTU). There were also high nitrate concentrations, up to 3.15 mg/l, and the Total Phosphorus results were above 0.08 mg/l, with a high concentration of 0.73 mg/l. Dissolved oxygen saturation had a tremendous range, from a low of 13 percent to a high of 210 percent. Eight other sites on the main stem Lost River were monitored briefly from May to October 2003, but this data is too limited to report on.

The LAC felt there needs to be better monitoring of water quality influenced by agricultural lands in the Lost River Subbasin and encouraged the Klamath

SWCD and ODA to work cooperatively to obtain funding to develop and implement such a monitoring program. The LAC also discussed the benefits to landowners of taking photo points to show landscape improvements. They suggested that the Klamath SWCD should create and host such a workshop.

*Impediments and Recommendations for Plan Implementation*

Overall, the LAC felt the Area Plan has been well implemented as shown by the great amount of education, outreach and technical assistance reported by the Klamath SWCD in their biennial report on implementation of the Area Plan. The LAC feels the Area Plan has a reasonable approach and allows landowners flexibility in meeting the Area Rules. The LAC had high praise for the fact that area residents feel they can bring water quality concerns to the Klamath SWCD and that they will be resolved locally.

The LAC did identify impediments to implementing the management Area Rules and Plan and made recommendations to improving its implementation. The most significant impediment to implementation of the Area Plan is the lack of landowner knowledge of the Area Plan and rules. The LAC discussed ways to improve communication to the landowners in the area during the meeting. The LAC also discussed market based economic incentives to help landowners implement BMPS that often don't



<p><b>LAC Members Present at Meeting</b></p> <p>Nathan Adelman Glenn Barrett Bob Gasser Jim Hainlin Luther Horsley Bill Kennedy</p> <p><b>LAC Member Not Present at Meeting</b></p> <p>Tracy Liskey</p>
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“pencil out” economically. One example discussed was nutrient trading to help reduce nutrient loading to Lost River and its tributaries.

### *Upper Klamath and Lost River Subbasin TMDLs*

The Oregon DEQ submitted the TMDL and Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) to the US Environmental Protection Agency on December 21, 2010. The plan addresses issues identified in DEQ’s TMDL assessment report for the basin. The TMDL assessment determines the amount and source of each pollutant entering streams and establishes pollution reduction requirements needed to meet federal water quality standards. The WQMP addresses pollution concerns including temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, ammonia and chlorophyll-a in the subbasins.

With this issuance, the Lost River Subbasin Water Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan will address these TMDLs and provide the management plan to address water pollution coming from private agricultural lands. The LAC identified the need to address the TMDL into the Area Plan during the next biennial review. Nutrient loading and nutrient trading needs to be further discussed and evaluated.

The LAC also recommended that a “menu” of BMPs be added to the Area Plan. The LAC did express a concern that TMDL load reductions may be unattainable and have unintentional consequences.

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Lost River Diversion Dam