

SB 264

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**Larry Nicholson**  
**Oregon Senate Hearing, March 23, 2014**

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak with you today about these bills. Today you're going to hear some rhetoric from a few folks organized by one Klamath County Commissioner who's on a personal mission to derail the Klamath agreements. How do I know its rhetoric? Because up until a couple years ago, I too was standing shoulder to shoulder with him, opposing these agreements. We used many of the same arguments you'll hear today to oppose these agreements back then, most of which have been answered to the satisfaction of most reasonable thinking people. The Klamath Settlement Agreements as a package now have a majority of Klamath County farmers and ranchers who support it. So what changed?

Most of us primarily opposed the Klamath Agreements because it left out the off-project irrigators. We too wanted assurances that we would receive water in order to plan and manage our farms and ranches. I realized that in order to resolve this complex issue and become part of the solution instead of the problem, I had to take a different approach.

About two years ago, our Governor, Senator's Wyden and Merkley, along with Congressman Walden, asked all affected parties to return to the table and work out our differences. I was one of several irrigators trying to find solutions to all the complex issues. After several months of negotiations with the Klamath tribes, along with several other stakeholders, we agreed on the final piece of the puzzle and created what's called the Upper Klamath Basin Comprehensive Agreement. There are now three agreements that all work in conjunction with one another to resolve one of the most contentious issues impacting our region. For the first time, you have the vast majority of all the stakeholders from the top of the tributaries in Southern Oregon <sup>ALL</sup> the way to the sea in Northern California who have agreed on how to share water. These agreements take into account the needs of the tribes, farmers, ranchers, water quality, fish, and fisherman. Think about that!! This could easily become a model for the nation on how to share what's becoming one of the scarcest precious resources we have today, water!

After these meetings, we spoke about the structure of these agreements to different organizations and groups around the county and got additional endorsements from the Klamath County Farm Bureau, The Klamath County Cattlemen's Assc, The Klamath County Chamber of Commerce, The Family Farm Alliance, The City of Klamath Falls, along with the Oregon Farm Bureau and the Oregon Cattlemen's Assc. We continue to have support from the Klamath, Karuk, and Yurok tribes and most every Oregon irrigation district in the Klamath watershed. We have a long list of large group supporters including the U.S. government, tribes, agriculture, business and community organizations, sportsman and conservation groups, commercial and sport fishing industry, and newspapers.

So, why are we all here today? What you're being asked to vote on will not restore any steams, or help salmon get up those streams. It's not going to give ranchers or farmers any assurances they'll have water to irrigate from year to year and it certainly will not guaranty good water quality for fish in the rivers. Those jobs are for all the hundreds of sincere, hard-working, intelligent folks who have been working hard to put all the pieces to these agreements together for the past decade. What we're asking of you: Allow us to continue this journey so we can put all the pieces together and find solutions. This is a process. There is a lot of work to do before we can declare success. We need the state of Oregon able to join us and help guide us to success. There will be bumps in the road and changes along the way to accommodate unforeseen circumstances as we move forward. I urge you to vote for SB 264 & 206 and allow us to continue to work through all the issues to an acceptable resolution for all.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ty W. Smith", written in a cursive style.

# Klamath Settlement Agreements: Supporters

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The following list of organizations and entities are parties to, or have endorsed, the Klamath Settlement (partial list):

## Government

U. S. under the Obama and Bush administrations  
California under Gov. Brown and Gov. Schwarzenegger  
Oregon under Gov. Kitzhaber and Gov. Kulongoski

## Tribes

Karuk Tribe  
Klamath Tribes  
Yurok Tribe

## Agriculture

Family Farm Alliance  
Oregon Farm Bureau  
Klamath/Lake County Farm Bureau  
Modoc County (CA) Farm Bureau  
Oregon Cattlemen's Association  
Klamath County Cattlemens Association  
Klamath Water Users Association  
Upper Klamath Water User's Association  
Klamath Water and Power Agency  
Oregon Potato Commission  
Fort Klamath Critical Habitat Landowners  
Upper Klamath Landowner Improvement District  
Oregon Water Resources Congress  
Resource Conservancy  
Sprague River Water Resource Foundation  
Enterprise Irrigation District  
Klamath Irrigation District  
Malin Irrigation District  
Shasta View Irrigation District  
Sunnyside Irrigation District  
Tulelake Irrigation District  
Ady District Improvement Company  
Klamath Basin Improvement District  
Midland District Improvement Company  
Pioneer District Improvement Company  
Plevna District Improvement Company  
Westside Improvement Company  
Van Brimmer Ditch Company

## Business and Community

PacifiCorp  
Klamath County Chamber of Commerce  
City of Klamath Falls  
Humboldt County  
Cal/Ore Produce  
Gold Dust Potato Processors  
Malin Potato Co-op  
Wong Potatoes  
Winema Hunting Lodge, Inc.

## Sportsmen/Conservation groups

American Rivers  
California Trout  
Federation of Fly Fishers, Northern California Council  
Trout Unlimited  
Salmon River Restoration Council  
Sustainable Northwest  
The Nature Conservancy  
Klamath Basin Rangeland Trust  
Klamath Watershed Partnership  
Cal-Ore Wetlands and Waterfowl Council  
California Waterfowl Association  
Delta Waterfowl  
Bull Moose Sportsmen  
Izaak Walton League, Oregon Division  
Berkley Conservation Institute-Pure Fishing Company  
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers  
Association of Northwest Steelheaders  
Central Oregon Flyfishers  
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

## Commercial and Sport Fishing Industry

Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations  
Institute for Fisheries Resources  
Northwest Guides and Anglers Association  
Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association  
Yamsi Ranch Flyfishing  
Shasta Trout guide service  
Wild Waters Fly Fishing  
Ted Fay Fly Shop

## Newspapers

Klamath Falls Herald and News  
The Oregonian  
Eugene Register Guard  
Salem Statesman Journal  
The Sacramento Bee  
The New York Times  
The Eureka Times-Standard  
The Chico Enterprise Record