

KWUUA Klamath Water Users ASSOCIATION

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June 7, 2017

Ms. Ginny Burdick, Chairwoman
Senate Committee on Rules
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for Klamath Amendment to HB 2873-A

Dear Chairwoman Burdick, Ranking Member Ferrioli, and members of Oregon's Senate Committee on Rules:

My name is Scott White and I am the Executive Director of the Klamath Water Users Association (KWUA). Prior to my current role with KWUA, I served the State of Oregon as the Klamath Basin Watermaster, so I have an intimate knowledge of the effects water law can have on the water users of Oregon and the limited tools provided to them to effectively manage the resource – especially in the Klamath Basin.

KWUA is a non-profit corporation that has represented Klamath Reclamation Project farmers and ranchers since 1953. KWUA members include rural irrigation districts and other public agencies of the Klamath Reclamation Project as well as private water users who beneficially use water on both sides of the Oregon-California border. KWUA focuses on issues that affect thousands of people including farm and ranch families, local businesses and our rural communities.

In 2013, the State of Oregon, after 38 years, adjudicated the waters of the Klamath Basin. Prior to this process, there was no certainty to the water, nor was there the ability to effectively manage it. Unfortunately, under current law, water managers in the Klamath Basin still do not have the same tools available to them as the rest of the state to utilize water in the most efficient and effective manner possible. Having these tools available to the Klamath Reclamation Project water managers is critical to continue generations of conservation and efficiency.

Today, I write in support of the proposed Klamath Amendment to HB 2873-A. This simple amendment offers Klamath Project irrigation districts and other municipal corporations the same management tools currently available to irrigation districts elsewhere in the state. Offering these districts the tools to effectively manage water upon the same terms as other districts in the state, does not harm anyone, and is a mindful approach to better manage the valuable natural resources of Oregon.

Given the Klamath Basin's long history of strife and desperate need for simple solutions to better manage its resources, I urge the Senate Committee on Rules to join me and the many irrigation districts in the Klamath Basin in our support for the proposed Klamath Amendment to HB 2873-A.

Thank you for your consideration on this important matter,



Scott White
Executive Director