



## STATEMENT ON HB 4016 - OPPOSE

February 9, 2017

The Klamath Basin is host to a vast expanse of wetlands, marshes, and waterways. Among this water-rich environment are invaluable species of wildlife, key habitat for salmon, and vital irrigation for farmers. We ask a lot of the available resources in the Klamath Basin, which is why Audubon Society of Portland stands in opposition to HB 4016.

We're especially troubled by the transfer of determined water claims without having to prove use for the previous five years. We expect this to cause a rise in water demand for irrigation. Given that the Klamath area is once again preparing for a drought, this potential rise in demand will tax an already overwhelmed water system.

Further concerning is the precedent set by granting a special right to one group: the Klamath Project irrigators. This policy allows this select group to skirt the five year use requirements at the expense of other farmers in the Klamath Basin, as well as wildlife refuges, native tribes, and a number of endangered fish species. In 2017, the local commercial fishing industry collapsed, and fishing industry families still waiting for disaster relief for their losses. Subsistence fishing for local tribes has already seen drastic cutbacks, and lack of water to refuges has resulted in a die off of migratory bird species.

Simply put, the delicate balance of the Klamath Basin cannot withstand another blow.

Audubon Society of Portland respectfully asks the committee to reject HB 4016.