



**REGIONAL SOLUTIONS OFFICE**  
**GOVERNOR KATE BROWN**

**South Central Oregon Regional Solutions Advisory Committee**  
*Representing Lake and Klamath Counties*

**Meeting Summary**

Wednesday Oct. 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Klamath Community College

Building 6, Room 6138

7390 South Sixth Street, Klamath Falls, OR 97603

**Attendees:**

**Regional Solutions Advisory Committee:**

Jane O’Keeffe, Governor’s Convener

Brand Winters, Lake County Commissioner

Kelley Minty-Morris, Klamath County Commissioner

Barry Imler, USFS, Fremont-Winema Forest

Tricia Hill, Gold Dust Farms

Carol Westfall, Mayor, Klamath Falls

Peter West, Energy Trust

Betty Riley, SCOEDD

Roberta Vanderwall, Lake (via conference call)

Jim Walls, Lake County Resources, Inc (LCRI)(via conference call)

**Regional Solutions Team:**

Annette Liebe, Regional Solutions Coordinator

Larry Holzgang, Business Oregon

Kyle Gorman, Water Resources

Greg Svelund, Environmental Quality

Beth Pietrzak, Agriculture

Stephanie Page, Agriculture

Theresa Yoshioka, Agriculture

**Guests:**

Rep. Reschke

Willie Riggs, OSU Extension

Scott White, Klamath Water Users Alliance  
Mason, Terry, OIT  
Jeremy Austin, ONDA  
Bill Lehman, Klamath Watershed Partnership  
Karen Chase, Energy Trust

I. Regional Priority Panel: Agriculture

- Overview of agriculture as an economic sector and challenges being faced by agriculture – Willie Riggs, OSU Extension

Willie's presentation described the farm gate value for Klamath County crops from the 2012 agriculture census; total farm gate value was \$290 M. For each of these dollars another \$.91 is generated in induced impacts.

Key issues for agriculture are: Water (availability and quality), Labor and Succession Planning. Willie's full presentation is posted on the website as materials for this meeting.

- Opportunities for water conservation – Scott White, KWUA  
Scott discussed some of the challenges and opportunities related to conserving water for on project irrigation districts. Scott's presentation can be found on the website as materials for this meeting.
- Opportunities to improve water quality - Stephanie Page and Beth Pietrzak, Oregon Department of Agriculture

The Oregon Department of Agriculture's Water Quality Program has been working with landowners and local partners to develop projects to improve water quality around Upper Klamath Lake. The goal of this work is to reduce phosphorous contributions from agricultural operations to Upper Klamath Lake. ODA currently has Agricultural Water Quality Farm Plans in place with most of the agricultural landowners adjacent to the Lake. All of the landowners ODA has contacted are willing to implement changes. It has been great getting to know these people and they have been wonderful to work with.

Earlier this year ODA worked with a 5000 acre potato/grain farm to eliminate summer tailwater contributions to Upper Klamath Lake. ODA and the landowners, with assistance from DSL, were able to divert develop and implement a system that pumps all tailwater to adjacent wetlands for filtration of nutrients.

The SWCD & ODA have met with most of the cattle operations around the Lake and there are now have plans in place for fencing and offstream watering. This

means almost all the cattle will be fenced out of waterways directly around the Lake. ODA also have AgWQ plans in place for the farms growing potatoes, grain, or grass seed. Projects also include tailwater recovery systems, solar powered pumping, laser leveling for water use efficiency, canal & ditch piping, biochar filtration, and on farm canal and drainage reconfiguration to facilitate improved water management. ODA is currently looking for funding for implementation.

ODA will conduct weekly monitoring as the potato/grain farms pump water onto their fields in the early winter for the flooding practice. The flooding practice saturates soils for planting in the spring and controls pests and diseases. ODA will also collect samples from all of the pump locations around the lake, on a weekly basis in February and March, while most of the pumps are discharging water to the Lake. ODA is also aiming to collect water flow volumes using flow meters attached to the outlet pipes. This will allow for loading to be understood rather than just snap-shot concentration levels. Winter monitoring needs that ODA does currently not have funding for include flow meters for each of the outlet pump/pipe systems around UKL and a portable, hand held multi parameter water quality meter.

Upper Klamath Lake Technical Work Group – Thursday Nov 1, 1-4 PM. Local partners usually in attendance include USFWS, USGS, Klamath Tribes, DEQ, ODFW, SWCD, KWP, TU. KBMP meeting – Nov 14/15 – focus for this season’s meeting is water quality.

Merkley Sucker Summit – 1-3 year short term improvements in addition to longer term improvements.

**Future:** ODA’s Water Quality Program has been implementing Strategic Implementation Areas around the State. Strategic Implementation Areas are prioritized watersheds with identified agricultural water quality concerns. ODA completes an assessment of conditions in the watershed, conducts outreach with landowners, opens compliance cases with the properties of highest concern, local conservation partners work with landowners to develop & implement ag water quality improvement projects, ODA conducts a post assessment after 2-5 years. The process also has a regulatory backstop, where ODA can utilize enforcement mechanisms if landowners chose not to fix serious water quality problems. ODA is planning to establish an SIA in the Klamath Headwaters Management Area in 2019. Additionally, ODA has requested additional staffing resources for SIA work in our 2019-2021 budget and if we’re successful in receiving those resources, we’ve heard significant interest in investing some of those resources into the Klamath Basin.

- Opportunities to reduce power costs - Mason Terry, Oregon Renewable Energy Center, OIT  
Mason covered high level opportunities for decreasing power costs through the additional of renewable energy features such as, solar.

The committee discussed some of the barriers to addressing the issues in a holistic manner including how the Energy Trust of Oregon (ETO) can support solar projects on agricultural lands. ETO is regulated by the PUC; a project would need to demonstrate a strong public benefit in order to be eligible for ETO funding. The committee agreed that starting with a pilot project has the greatest opportunity for success; Modoc Point Irrigation District has already completed some initial study to prioritize investments. The Regional Solutions committee recommended establishing a committee to evaluate project opportunities in Modoc Point as a pilot project. The committee also express support for the ODA water quality pilot project.

## II. Regional Priority Projects – de-brief on Grant and Loan Review Committee – All

Convener Jane O’Keeffe shared that the process of having the RST evaluate projects and then allow the committee to make their own decision was productive. Committee had a high level of engagement. Commissioner winters recommended that if we use a two step (RFI/RFP) process that we are clear in the RFI that submittals won’t lead to funding. Betty Riley asked Annette to share the statewide list of final projects with the committee.

## III. Roundtable

Karen Chase acknowledged the great work done by Jim Walls as Exec. Dir. Of Lake County Resources, Inc. Jim introduced Nick Johnson as the new ED for LCRI. Greg Svelund, DEQ shared that Cleaner Air Oregon could be adopted by the Environmental Quality Commission during their Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> meeting. Commissioner Kelley Minty-Morris shared the work that Klamath County and KCEDA are doing to develop a strategic plan to address the housing shortage in Klamath County. Betty Riley indicated that SCOEDD has hired the contractor (Cardno) for the Brownfield grant (\$600k) in Lake County. Part of the grant will include a housing needs and market analysis. Mayor Westfall highlighted priorities for Klamath Falls: housing, Klamath Community College funding and water quality. More aeration is needed in the lake. Barry Imler talked about the role of the Forest Service in providing clean water to the lake as it comes from the forest. Barry also shared that the USFS is evaluating the viability of the sustained yield unit; it may be disbanded. This will increase treatment opportunities and help the Collins Mill in Lakeview. Commissioner Winters provided an update on Red Rock

Biofuels...the facility plans to be open December 2019. It will be a more than \$300M investment in Lakeview. Railroad upgrades are still needed. Commissioner Winters also talked about solar projects being proposed for Lake County; possible covering more than 400 acres. Jim Walls mentioned the community solar project in Lakeview in partnership with schools and the hospital. LCRI has opposed solar on high value farm land. Roberta Vanderwall mentioned the recent one stop with state and federal agencies to evaluate funding for \$9 – 10M water system improvements project.