

The Klamath Basin Water Recovery and Economic Restoration Act of 2014

Economic certainty and stability for the Klamath Basin

- The bill sets out a cooperative water management plan to protect fish and wildlife and provide more predictable water amounts for farmers and ranchers, allowing irrigated agriculture to sustainably continue above Upper Klamath Lake and within the Klamath Reclamation Project.
- The restoration works in the bill are anticipated to create or preserve over 4,000 jobs including those in farming, ranching, commercial and recreational fishing, and construction in and near the basin.
- It lays out a path to provide affordable power to irrigators, including renewable energy development and energy efficiency to support agriculture in the basin.
- The legislation will help secure the economic future of the Klamath Tribes in ways a water right alone cannot achieve, and sets up an economic development fund to sustainably manage their natural resources and create tribal jobs.
- Restoring fish, plant, and other resources will give Klamath Basin tribes greater ability to harvest those treaty rights and the bill provides improved access to those resources.
- In low water years, the bill outlines a drought plan to provide additional tools to collaborate efforts.

Benefits to fish and wildlife

- The bill will increase in-stream flows and lake levels, permanently protect and enhance riparian areas, restore hundreds of miles of fish habitat, and provide additional water for National Wildlife Refuges that are critical to the health of the Pacific Flyway.
- It will boost the annual production of adult Chinook salmon by about 80 percent, according to fish biologists.
- The bill modernizes the management of the Klamath Reclamation Project to include fish, wildlife, and National Wildlife Refuges as authorized purposes for the first time.
- And a formula in the bill directs some of the revenues from leasing farm land within the Tule Lake and Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuges to the benefit of the refuges. Greater certainty of water delivery and more flexible water deliveries will support greater numbers of migratory waterfowl, non-game water birds, wintering bald eagles, and other sensitive species.

Authorization for landmark Klamath Basin agreements.

Congressional approval allows the federal government to fully implement the basin agreements.

- The agreements include water management and restoration measures for the Upper Basin.
- Voluntary reductions in usage will lead to an additional 30,000 acre feet of increased stream flows into Upper Klamath Lake.
- As a whole, the agreements settle water disputes in exchange for greater water certainty, water for fish and wildlife needs, and additional benefits to the stakeholders and regional communities.
- The cooperative actions undertaken by irrigators, tribes, federal agencies, and others are designed to collectively achieve more for the recovery of listed fish species than federal regulatory or litigation actions would alone achieve.
- And they allow the Secretary of the Interior and the Governors of Oregon and California to determine whether removing four dams will advance the restoration of salmon fisheries and be in the public interest considering impacts on the local community. No federal funds would be used for dam removal.