

## **Addendum to Director's Report**

Agenda Item I, May 21, 2004

Water Resources Commission Work Session

### **Klamath Basin Activities**

Following is an update of on-going activities in the Klamath Basin. The Department is involved in a number of conservation, restoration, investigation and water supply activities in the basin. The Department is also participating in the California/Oregon Klamath Basin Work Group meetings. The bi-state workgroup was established to exchange information and data, and to plan and coordinate restoration and conservation activities of common interest to the two states.

***Chiloquin Dam Removal*** - Chiloquin Dam is located just south of the town of Chiloquin on the Sprague River about a mile above the Sprague confluence with the Williamson River, and about 15 miles above Upper Klamath Lake. The dam was constructed in 1917 as a control structure for the point of diversion of the United States Indian Irrigation Service project for Modoc Point. When the Klamath Indian Reservation was terminated in 1954, the dam, its canal, and the Modoc Point irrigation project were transferred to the Modoc Point Irrigation District (MPID). There are approximately 5,000 acres under irrigation in MPID. MPID, along with a number Klamath tribal members with irrigated land in the Modoc Point, have filed claims in the Klamath Basin Adjudication.

The Chiloquin Dam obstructs fish passage both up and down the Sprague River, effectively preventing migration of trout and the endangered sucker fish from Upper Klamath Lake to the Sprague River. The National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) stated in its 2003 Report on the Klamath River Basin that "removal of Chiloquin Dam has high priority and should be pursued aggressively." The NAS Report notes that "...Chiloquin Dam may have eliminated more than 95% of the historical spawning habitat in the Sprague River."

The United States Department of the Interior has secured funding for removal of Chiloquin Dam on or before the end of 2005. NEPA analysis and other dam removal studies are under way. Since the Chiloquin Dam serves as the point of diversion for MPID, changing the point of diversion to a new location on the Williamson River must include a legal mechanism to facilitate the change without jeopardizing the water rights in the area, including the MPID right. The Department has been working with the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Klamath Tribe, the MPID manager, the Nature Conservancy, and other interested parties to complete the change in the point of diversion.

***Barnes Ranch Acquisition*** - The Barnes Ranch is a privately-owned parcel located near the northwest corner of Upper Klamath Lake just west of Agency Lake. Historically, the Barnes property was part of the margin wetland of Upper Klamath Lake, but was diked off from the lake as part of the agricultural development of the lower Wood River/Seven Mile Creek drainage area. The Barnes property is surrounded by the restored wetlands of

the Upper Klamath National Wildlife Refuge and the Agency Lake Ranch. Removal of the dike surrounding the Barnes property and returning the land to part of the Upper Klamath Lake will increase the aquatic habitat and the storage capacity of the Lake.

The United States Department of the Interior is negotiating purchase of the Barnes Ranch. The Water Resources Department is providing technical assistance in the evaluation of the transaction. This assistance includes analysis of the associated water rights in the area, hydrographic investigation of the property and adjoining lands, and the constraint on storage availability created by returning the land to the lake environment versus managing the combined Barnes Ranch/Agency Lake Ranch properties as a separate storage facility.

***Bureau Of Reclamation Water Bank*** – Last summer the Bureau of Reclamation experimented with a water bank which reduced dependence on surface water by facilitating the use of ground water. The program demonstrated that surface water dependence could be reduced. This year staff worked with the Bureau to develop a program that provides extensive monitoring of ground water use. In the event ground water problems develop with other users, staff will be well positioned to work with the Bureau and the water users to resolve the problem. Ground water pumping under the provisions of the water bank began this month and monitoring is ongoing.

***Klamath Basin Adjudication*** – Contests in the adjudication continue to be resolved. Currently, 83% of the 5,656 contests have been resolved; 949 contests remain.

***Water Right Permitting Activity*** – Since 2000, the Department has issued approximately 178 ground water permits in the Klamath Basin. Of these 178 permits, approximately 100 were “emergency drought” permits, meaning permits that allow the use of ground water to replace surface water not available under an existing right because of drought. The remaining 78 ground water permits were largely approved for “supplemental” use, meaning they would be used to make up a deficiency of supply on lands with existing surface water rights. Both emergency drought and supplemental permits only allow water use on lands already covered by an underlying water right.

***Bonanza Ground Water Study*** – Staff have completed the peer review of a draft Lost River Subbasin ground water investigation report. The final report is nearly complete and will be presented to interested parties in the basin this summer.

***USGS Cooperative Study*** – Staff have completed data collection and constructed a basic watershed model of the basin. The steady-state ground water flow model is nearly complete, and work has begun on a transient ground water flow model. Completion of the project is expected to be in the fall of 2006.

***Bonanza Springs Hydrologic Study*** – Last fall, the U.S. Corps of Engineers (Corps) released a draft report of Phase I of their study of the operation of the Lost River and the associated relationship to the Bonanza Springs. The findings presented last December include a list of additional data needs and several alternatives recommended for analysis. Parties are currently reviewing the report and considering alternatives for funding Phase II of the study.