

Charter of Commitments
by Members of the
Klamath Communities Coalition Steering Committee

I. COALITION PURPOSE AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Klamath Communities Coalition (hereafter, “KCC” or “Coalition”), previously known and still referred to by some as the “Coalition of the Willing”, is a voluntary collaboration of diverse parties from across the Klamath Basin. The Coalition includes environmental organizations, farmers and ranchers, Native American Tribes, business interests and local counties and cities.

The KCC’s two overarching goals are to:

1. Identify pressing short and long-term problems that challenge the social, ecological and economic health of Klamath Basin communities, and, in response;
2. Develop and implement short and long-term solutions that help solve these challenges.

The Coalition has forged a Plan of Action¹, secured resources for locally led projects and facilitation support, and continues to work towards a comprehensive solution to water-related issues and challenges which have long vexed the Klamath Basin.

Twelve principles have emerged that guide collaborative engagement:

- A. Everyone has legitimate needs for Klamath Basin² water—for fish, farms and ranches, wildlife and people.
- B. Achieving a workable water balance that rebuilds fish populations, supports wildlife, and provides greater certainty for farmers, ranchers and Tribes is central to any long-term solutions.
- C. Competing demands for water have resulted in strained relationships and difficult conflicts among many parties in the Basin. Recent drought conditions, which may persist in the coming decade and beyond, are exacerbating disputes.
- D. Diminished water quality is a long-standing problem in multiple parts of the Basin. This has resulted in severe impacts on fisheries, wildlife and cultural practices, and creates

¹ Twenty-five parties from across the Klamath Basin contributed to and support the Plan of Action (Plan). Additional parties expressed support, yet were not actively involved in development of the Plan (see Appendix D).

² In this document “Klamath Basin” or “Basin” refers to the overall Klamath Basin or Klamath Basin Watershed.

challenges for those managing irrigation systems. Facilitating large-scale watershed restoration and water quality improvement projects is a high priority.

- E. Many in the Coalition have long held the view that removal of the lower four Klamath dams will improve water quality and benefit fisheries, and have marshalled resources, planning and political will towards this end. Exploring post-dam removal water management scenarios and prioritizing ecological restoration activities is imperative and may help contribute to the resolution of future water conflicts.
- F. A comprehensive water and resource management plan that meets the needs of fish, agriculture, wildlife and people is needed for Basin communities to survive and prosper. Movement towards collective solutions is critical but faces painful headwinds:
- Tribes who have lived in the Basin since time immemorial have suffered immeasurable losses since colonization. Today, many sovereign Klamath Basin Tribes risk losing their cultural identity as several species of fish in locations up and down the Basin approach extinction.
 - Farmers, ranchers and residents of nearby local communities that have prospered for generations in the Basin have suffered significant livelihood losses, especially during recent and current drought years. Their agricultural identity is also at risk.
 - Wildlife refuges that are critical to the Pacific Flyway—along with private lands that benefit many forms of wildlife—have been deprived of water in recent years, and Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuge experienced a mass bird die-off in 2020.
 - Some Basin municipalities risk diminished access to potable water without proper mitigation during dam removal.
 - Small coastal communities in California and Oregon depend on stocks of Klamath Basin salmon. Poor Klamath salmon returns have resulted in fishing closures and loss of livelihoods for commercial fishing families.
- G. Rebuilding trust and strengthening civil working relationships, even as litigation and political advocacy proceed, is an important element of the Coalition’s collaborative work. This requires cooperation on some matters even while competing over others.
- H. No one group of stakeholders and rights-holders can reasonably expect to have everything their way to the exclusion of everyone else. Short and long-term solutions should create at least minimum benefits or neutral impact for the broad range of Coalition constituencies.
- I. Anticipating that water availability will continue to fluctuate in the future, everyone in the Basin needs the highest level of certainty and predictability that is possible in all types of water years.

- J. Fishery restoration and other project-based work across the Basin must be designed and advanced with an eye towards integrated, regional-level planning, as well as improved effectiveness and accountability.
- K. Implementation of broadly acceptable solutions that emerge from the Coalition will need support from federal, state, county and philanthropic partners. Careful communication beyond the Coalition will become increasingly critical.
- L. Communities throughout the Basin aspire to long-term economic, environmental, cultural, and demographic sustainability, all of which are related to water.

II. STEERING COMMITTEE PURPOSE

The Coalition’s Steering Committee (hereafter, “Steering Committee”) is a formal coordination and planning body designed to provide leadership and strategic guidance on the purpose, direction and focus of the Coalition. Although the Steering Committee serves in a coordination and planning capacity, it does not make decisions on major substantive issues and topics that necessitate robust discussion and deliberation by the larger Coalition. All major substantive decisions ultimately flow to the Coalition for further consideration.

To this end, Steering Committee members will work together to develop common, informed understanding of current and future Basin needs, negotiate proposed short or long-term solutions to water resource challenges, and jointly seek investment from federal, state, county and philanthropic partners. This last effort will likely lead to meetings with federal envoys to the Klamath Basin and with federal and state congressional leaders.

Topics and Subjects

It is understood and acknowledged that different stakeholders and rights-holders on the Steering Committee and in the Coalition will tactically have different priority topics for consideration. However, it is also understood and acknowledged that no topic is off the table. No one can veto someone else’s interests. The Steering Committee will organize its own topics for discussion and when sharing ideas, discussion outputs and recommendations with the Coalition.

Working Groups

In addition to its own discussions, the Steering Committee will form working groups or subcommittees as needed to advance its work. Establishment of working groups will reflect the need for deeper and more sustained exploration of specific issues that require deliberation among key Coalition parties or caucus groups. Working group members, or the facilitation team, can invite others with pertinent experience or expertise to join any group. Participants are not required to be members of the Steering Committee or active participants in the Coalition. Working groups will develop draft proposals, reports or recommendations for consideration by the Steering Committee and larger Coalition. No final advice, recommendations or decisions will be made by any working group or subcommittee.

At the time of the signing of this Charter of Commitments, two working groups have been conceptualized and may commence soon. One will review past negotiated or proposed water agreements and associated technical materials to determine what remains relevant and may help address current and future water management challenges. A second will explore future climate-driven water scenarios, land use trends, population demographics and projected resource needs, and then “back-cast” from those scenarios to inform the Coalition’s plans and priorities.

Other prospective working groups, listed in no order of priority, may be established to discuss:

- Development of a Water Program to implement a science-based water balance which integrates efforts on water quantity, water quality and habitat restoration.
- Proportional allocation, guaranteed blocks of water for key parties, or other water management options under future water availability scenarios.
- The schedule, collateral impacts and prospective ecological restoration opportunities surrounding dam removal.
- History, conciliation and restorative justice in the Klamath Basin.
- Plans to meet drinking water needs of small communities (e.g., Fall Creek as the primary source for the City of Yreka).
- In-stream flow requirements for Klamath River salmon and necessary conditions for rebuilding sucker fish stocks in Upper Klamath Lake.
- Strategic investments in irrigation infrastructure improvements and farmer-led solutions to managing water for agriculture in the Klamath Basin.
- Prioritization and integration of fish restoration, reintroduction, and monitoring activities throughout the Basin.
- Strategies to provide affordable electricity to meet irrigation needs and pump water for fish and wildlife needs.
- How to address regulatory issues, including ways to minimize or eliminate impacts to farmers and ranchers, when salmon return to the upper basin.
- Development of a Tribal Program and Counties Program to address economic issues and foster participation in Basin fishery and water activities.
- Development of a Refuges Program that links management of Basin water resources to the conservation and protection of the Klamath wildlife refuge complex.

- How to link the Coalition’s collaborative efforts to technical modeling associated with Endangered Species Act Section 7 re-initiation of consultation, and the scope and timeline of the US Bureau of Reclamation’s forthcoming proposed agency action.
- Creation of a forum to coordinate with federal, state and philanthropic partners to implement, secure ongoing funding for, and oversee and integrate all Basin programs.
- Ongoing discussions, as needed, regarding relief packages for irrigators and Tribes from the Department of Agriculture, Department of Interior or other federal authorities.
- And others to be added to the list of possible future working groups.

Working groups on these or other subjects will be initiated only with the concurrence of the Steering Committee.

III. MEMBERSHIP

The Steering Committee is comprised of a reasonably balanced representation of Basin interest groups. Though not necessarily exhaustive or perfect, Steering Committee membership includes interest groups that are part of the larger Coalition and who bring critical voices and unique perspectives to informed, cooperative discussions. Members live in or work across different areas of the Klamath Basin.

Current Steering Committee membership includes:

- Mike Belchik, Yurok Tribe (alternate)
- Chris Colson, Ducks Unlimited
- Derrick DeGroot, Klamath County
- Mark Hennelly, California Waterfowl (alternate)
- Dan Keppen, Dan Keppen and Associates, Inc.
- Michael Kobseff, Siskiyou County
- Frankie Meyers, Yurok Tribe
- Larry Nicholson, Upper basin rancher
- Nancy Ogren, Siskiyou County (alternate)
- Chrysten Rivard, Trout Unlimited

- Scott Seus, Seus Family Farms
- Randy Shaw, Klamath Falls business community
- Robert Super, Karuk Tribe
- Paul Simmons, Klamath Water Users Association
- Glen Spain, Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations and Institute for Fisheries Resources
- Craig Tucker, consultant to the Karuk Tribe (alternate)

Other members may be added as the Coalition evolves, and some at times may rotate out in order to maintain a reasonable balance.

The Steering Committee utilizes the following criteria to maintain its membership composition, and, as needed, add new members. Members commit to:

- Contribute to a reasonably balanced representation of participating Coalition interest groups and geographic areas across the Basin.
- Demonstrate a clear willingness to collaborate and problem-solve with other members.
- Come prepared to all meetings and engage in follow up actions as needed.
- Collectively maintain a manageable group size and composition for effective and efficient deliberations.

Steering Committee members currently have no term limits, though some may be established. Coalition members may select or change their own individual representatives as long as their new representatives meet the membership criteria. At times, the Steering Committee and facilitation team may need to assist in the recruitment of new members to continuously ensure a reasonably balanced representation of perspectives.

Changes in Steering Committee member representation will generally coincide with an annual membership review process. Current members can also assess their ongoing interest to remain on the Steering Committee during this review period. In the event a member needs to change representation outside this time frame, the member will notify the facilitation team and Steering Committee in writing or email of the need for change no less than two weeks prior to the next Steering Committee meeting.

In regularly assessing its membership composition, the Steering Committee will strive to ensure representation from both formal organizations and sovereign Tribes, as well as others who speak only for themselves yet carry the voice and view found in critical stakeholder groups, or perspectives that may not be incorporated or formally organized.

It is essential that members actively participate in Steering Committee meetings on a consistent basis. To ensure continuity, broad participation, and momentum, members are allowed but not required to use alternates on an as-needed basis. Primary members will keep alternates informed of Steering Committee activities on an ongoing basis. Alternates are encouraged and welcome to regularly attend meetings. No items addressed at previous meetings will be revisited during Steering Committee meetings to accommodate an alternate or previously absent member.

IV. FACILITATION

The facilitation team serves at the pleasure of the Steering Committee and is committed to independence. Facilitators are required to:

- Advocate for and manage a fair, effective, and credible process, but remain impartial with respect to major substantive outcomes of the deliberations.
- Promote good faith discussions and negotiations—share information, ensure inclusive participation, encourage mutual understanding, maintain focus on meeting agendas, and seek multi-interest solutions.
- Apply collaborative, interest-based methods of dialogue that foster collaboration and aim to find broadly supported solutions.
- Track and ensure agreed upon meeting action items are completed and reported on in a timely manner by appropriate parties.
- Check in with parties regularly, at or between meetings, to better understand member interests and ensure all issues are identified and thoroughly explored.
- Provide, as needed, mediation or shuttle diplomacy to help resolve specific disagreements among Steering Committee members, participants in the larger Coalition, or with other interested constituencies.
- In the absence of broadly supported concurrence, help identify areas of agreement and disagreement among the parties, ensure all majority and minority viewpoints are clearly documented, and make procedural recommendations to break impasses.
- Ensure all Steering Committee members uphold the tenets of this charter.

V. OUTREACH AND MEDIA RELATIONS

Media at times show interest in the Coalition’s work. Steering Committee members will speak only for themselves or the Tribe, organization or perspective they represent. When asked about the Coalition’s work by external parties, including the media, Steering Committee members will not represent the Coalition’s view unless there has been a formal adoption of a statement, report or recommendations.

Participants maintain the freedom to express their own opinions regarding Coalition activities to the media, but should inform media and external parties that they only speak for themselves and do not represent others. As an article of good faith, the temptation to discuss or characterize someone else's statements or positions needs to be avoided.

VI. STEERING COMMITTEE DECISION MAKING

In order to hold a meeting and conduct its work, a quorum of the Steering Committee must be present in person or electronically. A simple majority of the total number of currently filled member seats constitutes a quorum.

The Steering Committee will make many smaller procedural decisions as well as more substantive decisions. Procedural decisions may range from the location, date, and time of meetings to matters of funding and direction for the evolving Coalition and the formation of working groups or subcommittees. Substantive decisions will include, but not necessarily be limited to, forging potential agreements and making or sharing formal recommendations to the full Coalition or to federal, state or county agencies, and to the public.

Working towards the highest possible consensus is a fundamental principle which will guide Steering Committee work together. Full consensus decisions are those that everyone will support or at a minimum, for which there is no objection. The Steering Committee will not limit itself to strict consensus if 100% agreement among all participants cannot be reached after all interests and options have been thoroughly identified and explored. If the Steering Committee is unable to reach consensus, the range of opinions provided, including areas of agreement and disagreement, will be documented by the facilitation team.

The Steering Committee may take formal votes when needed. Only one vote will be cast by each member, whether primary or alternate, but not both. All final, binding decisions will be made only with all members voting. Simple majorities will determine the outcome of formal votes.

The facilitation team will use straw polls to assess the degree of preliminary support for an idea or proposal before it is given consideration as a final Steering Committee decision. This may occur when moving from agreements in principle to agreements in detail, or when it appears a consensus agreement is near or otherwise emerging. During straw polls members may indicate tentative approval without fully committing support for a final decision or recommendation.

VII. AMENDING THE CHARTER

The Steering Committee can recommend and adopt changes to the charter. Suggested changes may be put forward by the members or the facilitation team. The Steering Committee will utilize its decision-making procedures to adopt changes to the charter.

VIII. STEERING COMMITTEE COMMITMENTS

By our signatures, we commit to fulfill our respective roles and responsibilities in service of the

Coalition's collaborative purposes. Our responsibilities include:

- Without foregoing candor, we will focus on interests and needs and engage in civil, respectful and constructive dialogue with other Steering Committee members, as well as the larger Coalition and facilitation team.
- We will serve as strong, effective advocates and educators for the interest groups or stakeholder perspectives we represent.
- We will actively seek out engagement of the Klamath Tribes of Oregon by extending an invitation to participate in the Coalition and keeping them informed of the Coalition's work on water quality and other relevant issues.
- We will arrive at each meeting fully prepared to discuss all agenda items, distributed materials and relevant issues.
- We will maintain balanced Steering Committee membership composition based on constituencies regularly represented at Coalition meetings.
- We will thoughtfully explore the difficult challenges that have long vexed the Klamath Basin, with a focus on creating new, short-term, long-term and comprehensive solutions.
- We will develop an innovative, problem-solving approach in which the interests and viewpoints of all Steering Committee members and the larger Coalition are considered.
- We will utilize interest-based negotiation methods to forge agreements and, when needed, explore options to resolve disagreements.
- We will advance and participate in select working group efforts and share work outputs for consideration by the Coalition.
- We will ensure accuracy of information dissemination about Coalition activities at outside meetings or during other public outreach, and correct false information as needed or appropriate.
- We will remain free to explore options without implied commitment and, when deals are to be made, negotiate in good faith.
- We will avoid entering into agreements unless we can commit to and are capable of honoring them.
- We will avoid representing the viewpoints of others in the Coalition, speak only for ourselves, and will respect confidential conversations.

- We will help the Coalition identify productive discussion topics and maintain broad, consistent stakeholder participation from across the Basin.
- We will coordinate with the Coalition to maintain and, as needed, refine and improve its organizational goals, structure and function.
- We will help identify funding opportunities and legislative investment that would provide financial support for the Coalition's work together.
- We will coordinate with funders and, as needed, the Family Water Alliance, to administer any awarded funds.

APPENDIX I. SUPPORTING PARTIES TO THE COALITION PLAN OF ACTION

The Coalition Plan of Action (Plan), developed during the 2019-2020 time period, is available to interested parties as a companion document. Twenty-five parties from across the Klamath Basin forged and support the Plan. Strategic actions from this early agreement helped the Coalition secure federal funds for several locally-led projects and gave rise to this Steering Committee charter³. The following parties contributed to and support the Plan.

<i>Local counties and cities, Native American Tribes and stakeholder groups</i>	
California Farm Bureau	California Waterfowl
Cal-Ore Waterfowl and Wetlands Council	CalTrout
City of Yreka	Dan Keppen and Associates, Inc
Ducks Unlimited	Family Water Alliance
Karuk Tribe	Klamath County Board of Commissioners
Klamath County Chamber of Commerce	Klamath Water Users Association
Modoc County Board of Supervisors	Oregon Farm Bureau
Oregon Hunters Association	Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations
Institute for Fisheries Resources	Shasta Watershed Conservation Group
Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors	Sustainable Northwest
Trout Unlimited	Rogue Valley Irrigators
Yurok Tribe	
<i>Individuals (no affiliation)</i>	
Becky Hyde	Larry Nicolson
<i>The following parties support the Plan, yet were not actively involved in its development</i>	
Klamath Falls City Council	Klamath Falls Downtown Association
Klamath County Economic Dev. Association	Klamath County Home Builders Association
Scott River Watershed Council	Quartz Valley Indian Community

³ Funds secured for the region by Oregon senator Jeff Merkley and awarded via the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

SIGNATURE PAGE

<p>Date: Chris Colson Ducks Unlimited Signature:</p>	<p>Date: Chrysten Rivard Trout Unlimited Signature:</p>
<p>Date: Dan Keppen Dan Keppen and Associates, Inc. Signature:</p>	<p>Date: Scott Seus Seus Family Farms Signature:</p>
<p>Date: Derrick DeGroot Klamath County Signature:</p>	<p>Date: Randy Shaw Klamath Falls business community Signature:</p>
<p>Date: Mark Hennelly (alternate) California Waterfowl Signature:</p>	<p>Date: Glen Spain Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations/Institute for Fisheries Resources Signature:</p>
<p>Date: Michael Kobseff Siskiyou County Signature:</p>	<p>Date: Paul Simmons Klamath Water Users Association Signature:</p>
<p>Date: Frankie Meyers Yurok Tribe Signature:</p>	<p>Date: Robert Super Karuk Tribe Signature:</p>
<p>Date: Larry Nicholson Upper basin rancher Signature:</p>	