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Reclamation announces 2023 Klamath Project allocation, \$13 million for drought resiliency

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ecosystem enhancement

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KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. – The Bureau of Reclamation announced the 2023 water supply allocations for Klamath Project contractors at the Klamath Water Users Association annual meeting last evening. In addition, Reclamation announced \$13 million for drought resiliency, ecosystem enhancement, and groundwater monitoring in the Klamath Basin.

Detailed in the 2023 Annual Operations Plan, the Klamath Project allocation includes 215,000 acre-feet available from Upper Klamath Lake, 35,000 acre-feet from Gerber Reservoir, and 35,000 acre-feet from Clear Lake Reservoir.

To support Klamath Basin communities amid a fourth consecutive year of drought, Reclamation is committing \$13 million to support drought resiliency programs and ecosystem enhancement projects. Approximately, \$9.85 million will be available through the Klamath Project Drought Response Agency for contractors who receive a reduced water allocation, with an additional \$3 million in technical assistance to Tribal Nations for Klamath Basin ecosystem activities, as well as \$150,000 for groundwater monitoring in the Basin.

“While winter storms have brought reprieve to much of the West, the Klamath Basin is seeing a repressed response to rainfall and continues to experience prolonged drought conditions,” said **Reclamation Regional Director Ernest Conant**. “We are monitoring hydrological conditions and will provide updates to the allocation as available.”

The Klamath Basin has received near normal precipitation, yet inflows remain well below average. The 2023 allocations are based on analysis of existing hydrologic conditions and inflow forecasts from the California Nevada River Forecast Center. As the water year progresses, changes in hydrology, actions that impact operations, and opportunities to deliver additional water will influence future allocation announcements. Reclamation will continue to monitor hydrology and inflow forecasts and may adjust allocations if conditions warrant an update.

The Project allocation accommodates necessary biological criteria for Klamath Basin fish species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). This includes setting a more conservative year-end lake elevation for Upper Klamath Lake to ensure that water is available to meet both minimum instream flows for salmon next winter and lake level elevations for suckers next spring. Any increase to the allocation would be based on additional observed inflows beyond what is projected and will not compromise ESA standards.

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For more information about Reclamation’s Klamath Basin Area Office’s work to manage and protect water and related resources in Klamath Basin communities, and Klamath Project hydrologic and operations updates visit <https://www.usbr.gov/mp/kbao> or contact the Klamath Basin Area Office at 541-883-6935 (TTY 800-877-8339).

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