**Klamath Watershed Advisory Committee Charter**

The extraordinary Klamath Watershed (Watershed) is in peril. Conflict and competition over water are dire. Agricultural communities are drying up fast, and fish and wildlife are suffering. Division among and within the Watershed is the worst it has ever been. The counties of Klamath, Oregon, and Siskiyou and Modoc, California, have come together as a group referred to as the Tri-Counties to address these issues and bring resolution to the entire Watershed. Below is a draft charter that the Tri Counties has developed to guide the development of a Klamath Watershed Advisory Committee.

**Background:**

* The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding for the Watershed has provided a unique, and likely one-time, opportunity to take specific action to improve the Watershed.
* To best spend these funds and attain long-term sustainability, we need a watershed-wide, negotiated, and intentional plan that will address water management for irrigation, fish, and wildlife and provide for fair and legal treatment of the Watershed, Counties, Tribes, and irrigators.
* A roadmap or comprehensive plan is need to lead the Watershed to the actions and projects that will best benefit the Watershed.
* This comprehensive plan must be based on intentional decision-making that will guide funding expenditures to result in improved conditions for the Watershed that will unify and end conflict.
* Intentional decision-making is based on sound science that everyone can trust, allows people to no longer work in silos, and fosters healthy working relationships. Intentional decision making also considers projects that can connect to others and have an identifiable, quantifiable benefit that touches as many areas as possible throughout the Watershed.
* We propose that tribal and county governments make up the Advisory Committee. These include:
  + Klamath County, Oregon;
  + Siskiyou County, California;
  + Modoc County, California;
  + Del Norte County, California;
  + Humboldt County, California;
  + The Yurok Tribe;
  + The Karuk Tribe;
  + The Klamath Tribes;
  + The Shasta Tribe;
  + The Modoc Tribe.
* Each entity would nominate one voting member and one alternate. These members shall be members of either Boards of Supervisors/Commissioners or Tribal Councilmembers. One member from the combined Counties and one member from the combined Tribes will serve as co-chairs.
* The Department of the Interior plays a crucial role in that it must call for these groups to form and participate in the Advisory Committee.
* Once the Advisory Committee is established, the Department of the Interior can serve in an advisory role to the voting members, but not serve as voting members.
* The advisory committee will encourage input from other interested organizations.

**Mission and Objectives:**

* Mission Statement:
  + For long-term sustainability, we need a comprehensive plan that reflects a philosophy that the best decisions on water issues are developed at the local level, a plan that is based on trustworthy science, and fully considers all communities and industries, including agriculture and Tribes.
* Objectives:
  + The Advisory Committee shall focus on how funding decisions are made and recognize that this is an opportunity to bring the Klamath Watershed together.
  + Decisions must be structured and intentional which includes:
    - Based on sound science that everyone can trust (science we cannot trust is that which has guided agency decisions for the last 25 years without any meaningful benefit (i.e Suckers in UKL, we now definitively know that more water does not equal more fish)).
    - Allows people to no longer work in silos, and fosters healthy working relationships.
    - Considers projects that can connect to others and have an identifiable, quantifiable benefit that touches as many areas as it can throughout the Watershed. The total results of all projects is the greater sum of them (i.e. projects connected throughout the Shasta River, for example, yield a greater result than just the sum of the individual projects themselves).
    - Improves the Watershed to a degree that current regulation is reduced, and additional regulation is not imposed.
    - Local government used as a tool to foster decision-making.

**Budget and Resources:**

* Upon development of and Federal support of the Advisory Committee, the committee could provide the mechanism for funding management, authorization, and disbursement to watershed projects, thereby allowing watershed decision-making at the local level.
* All applications and requests for funding expenditures shall be approved by vote of the Advisory Committee.
* Funding requested at this time would be all remaining funds of the $162 million following the year-one disbursement.