

Regular Meeting Minutes

Klamath Project Drought Response Agency
Amended Special Board Meeting
July 3, 2025
2:00 pm

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Marc Staunton, the President, called the Amended Special Board of Directors meeting of the Klamath Project Drought Response Agency (KPDR) to order on Thursday, July 3, 2025, at 2:00 pm at 620 Main St. and via the online conference platform called Zoom.

ROLL CALL

Directors Present: Marc Staunton, Scotty Fenters, Ty Kliewer, Rob Unruh, and Mike McKoen
Guests: Nathan Ratliff, Elizabeth Neilsen, Gene Souza, and Heather Casillas

Public Comment

No Public Comment

Review/Authorize agreement for the acquisition of water for protecting or restoring fish and wildlife resources.

Nathan Ratliff opened the meeting and recapped that the DRA worked with Reclamation to get an agreement that deals with compensation to the DRA for water that's made available to the refuge. This document does not reference the Enhancement Act authority that would be subject to a cap. This funding was made available through the Inflation Reduction Act and is intended for the restoration of fish and wildlife resources affected by drought conditions. It is similar to what DRA did back in 2018 and 2019, providing for payment on a per-acre-foot basis. There is a provision that requires DRA to seek approval for the water available.

If this is approved, these funds can be used by the DRA without restriction. These funds are not subject to all the terms of the grant agreement that we would be under with respect to the funding, such as what the DRA receives for the "normal" program. These are separate funds, and this is a result of the MOU that was signed around the first of the year. There's currently \$8 million that's identified to go towards this agreement. The second option to add would be to allow additional funding.

Elizabeth Neilsen, Executive Director for KWUA, clarified that under the MOU, there was a section, Appendix A. There were different sections for funding in Section II, which allocated \$10 million specifically for permanent land retirement. It has become clear that it is something that cannot be completed within the timeframe of this MOU; therefore, KWUA had requested through Reclamation to move the \$10 million under that Section II to Section III, therefore making the total for Section III, \$18 million (add \$10 million to the existing \$8 million).

The DRA would be responsible for expensing that, and Reclamation is working on that right now. Reclamation has asked for a written request from the DRA to move the funding, as well as they have requested written communication from the Klamath Water Users Association and KID. KWUA would support moving that funding from section II to section III, which would mean that all the \$18 million in funding would be under the responsibility of the DRA.

RESOLUTION #25-01

KLAMATH PROJECT DROUGHT RESPONSE AGENCY

WHEREAS this Agency was formed for the purposes of administering funds appropriated by the United States to be distributed to water users and/or districts negatively impacted by drought conditions;

WHEREAS funds have been appropriated through the Inflation Reduction Act to the Secretary of the Interior (acting through the Commissioner of Reclamation) for grants, contracts, or financial assistance agreements to or with public entities to provide for the conduct of certain activities, including ecosystem and habitat restoration projects to address issues directly caused by drought in a river basin or inland water body;

Regular Meeting Minutes

WHEREAS contract negotiations have taken place after the appropriation of funds with the Bureau of Reclamation to set forth the details of the relationship between the Agency and the Bureau of Reclamation as it relates to said funds and their administration;

WHEREAS the Klamath Project Drought Response Agency wishes to work with all deliberate speed to implement authorized programs and distribute funds to in accordance with its organization purpose; and

WHEREAS, as of June 30, 2023, it has been represented by the Bureau of Reclamation that the contractual agreement between the United States and the Klamath Project Drought Response Agency, in the form set forth in Exhibit A, attached hereto and incorporated fully herein, is substantially in final form, but it is still subject to internal review which should be promptly completed;

BE IT RESOLVED, the governing board of the Klamath Project Drought Response Agency approves the Agreement in the form attached hereto and hereby authorizes its chairman/president to execute the CONTRACT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE KLAMATH PROJECT DROUGHT RESPONSE AGENCY FOR ACQUISITION OF WATER FOR PROTECTING OR RESTORING FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES DUE TO DROUGHT CONDITIONS.

DATED this 3rd day of July, 2025.

Motion: To approve resolution 25-01.

Motion by: Scotty Fenters Second: Mike McKoen

Roll call: Unanimous, Marc Staunton, Scotty Fenters, Rob Unruh, Ty Kiewer, and Mike McKoen

Motion Passes

Nathan and Heather Casillas, from Reclamation, agreed that Reclamation should have written clarification on moving the funding. Nathan drafted a motion for review that contains that information.

Motion: To direct counsel to request additional funding for "water availability" contract with BOR, from Section II Permanent Demand Reduction programs from MOU.

Motion by: Scotty Fenters Second: Paul Crawford

Roll call: Unanimous, Marc Staunton, Scotty Fenters, Rob Unruh, Ty Kiewer, and Mike McKoen

Motion Passes

Discuss upcoming meeting times/date

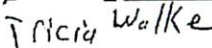
There was a discussion to have a work session in late July or early August. Nathan will send out date options via a doodle poll.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by consensus at 2:21 pm.

Minutes prepared by Chelsea Shearer

Approved: Marc Staunton  President

Approved: Rob Unruh  Secretary

 Patricia Walker