

NEWS RELEASE – Tuesday, February 9, 2010

Contact:

Greg Addington, Exec. Director, Klamath Water Users Association – 541 892 1409

Jeff Mitchell, Councilman, Klamath Tribes of Oregon – 541 891 5971

Becky Hyde, Boardmember, Upper Klamath Water Users Association – 541 891 5950

Klamath County Commissioners Vote to Support Klamath Basin Settlement Agreements

- Settlement benefits include energy independence, protection of jobs, and economic development opportunities

- Vote follows recent approval by Klamath Water Users Association, which represents interests of the Klamath Reclamation Project

Klamath Falls, OR – Supporters of the Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement applaud today’s 3-0 “yes” vote by the Klamath County Commissioners in support of the Klamath Settlement Agreements – the Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement (KBRA) and Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement (KHSA).

Yesterday, the three county commissioners held a three hour question-and-answer session with proponents and opponents of the agreement, in order to further analyze specific details of the plans. Settlement supporters who testified at this hearing emphasized to commissioners that a “yes” vote for the KBRA would ensure that Klamath County has a seat at the table in all future natural resource management decisions that will occur through implementation of the Klamath Settlement Agreements. Supporters also emphasized that the KBRA includes extensive economic, social and environmental benefits that are good for agricultural producers, tribes, and commercial fishermen.

Among others, proponents testifying included Greg Addington, Executive Director of the Klamath Water Users Association – which represents irrigation districts within the federal Klamath Reclamation Project; Becky Hyde, board member of the Upper Klamath Water Users Association – which represents farmers and ranchers irrigating above Upper Klamath Lake; Dean Brockbank, Vice President and legal counsel for PacifiCorp – the utility that owns four hydroelectric dams in the Klamath River that are slated for possible removal under the agreements; Tom Paul, Deputy Director of the Oregon Water Resources Department; and Mike Carrier, natural resources policy advisor to Governor Kulongoski.

The Commission vote means that the county will remain as a named party to the Agreements, and that it will have opportunity to manage significant economic development and mitigation funds. Commissioners emphasized that it was their role and obligation to stay involved – as participants – as these Agreements go forward to ensure they are protecting and securing maximum benefits for the

citizens of Klamath County.

Supporters' testimony called out the significant economic benefits of the Agreements, which include jobs creation and investments – in both Klamath County and surrounding areas. A particular focus was the reliability offered by the settlements for delivery and use of water for irrigation in the Upper Klamath Basin.

Testimony pointed out these Settlement Agreement benefits:

- Boosts investment and interest in Klamath and surrounding counties
- Stabilizes the agricultural economy
- Restores fisheries to reduce regulatory pressures
- Develops renewable energy infrastructure to create jobs and diversify agricultural revenues
- Caps ratepayer power costs associated with dam removal – a move which utility PacifiCorp sees as providing greater ratepayer security than continued relicensing

The vote in support by Klamath County comes as part of a review period for stakeholders. Parties that now support the Agreements include the three largest irrigation districts on the Klamath Reclamation Project, as well as the Klamath Water Users Association (KWUA) which represents them, irrigators above Upper Klamath Lake represented by Upper Klamath Water Users Association, the Klamath Tribes of Oregon, the Yurok and Karuk Tribes, a large number of conservation organizations including Trout Unlimited, the states of Oregon and California, and the Department of the Interior.

A signing ceremony is expected to occur later in February.