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Background

Conflicts over water and other natural resources in the Klamath Basin between conservationists, tribes, farmers, fishermen, and State and Federal agencies have existed for decades. In particular, several developments affecting the Klamath Basin have occurred in the last several years. These developments include:

- In 2001, water deliveries to irrigation contractors to Reclamation's Klamath Project were substantially reduced.
- In 2002, returning adult salmon suffered a major die-off.
- In 2006, the commercial salmon fishing season was closed along 700 miles of the West Coast to protect weak Klamath River stocks.
- In 2010, due to drought conditions, the project is forecasting a curtailment of deliveries that could result in the potential short-term idling of farmland and increased groundwater pumping.
- In 2010, the c'waam (Lost River suckers) fishery for the Klamath Tribes has been closed for the 24th year, limiting the Tribes to only a ceremonial harvest.

Since 2003, the United States has spent over \$500 million in the Klamath Basin for irrigation, fisheries, National Wildlife Refuges, and other resource enhancements and management actions. Consequently, the United States, the States of California and Oregon, the Klamath, Karuk, and Yurok Tribes, Klamath Project Water Users, and other Klamath River Basin stakeholders negotiated the KBRA and the KHSA (including the Secretarial Determination) to resolve long-standing disputes between them regarding a broad range of natural resource issues.

The agreements are intended to result in effective and durable solutions which: (1) Restore and sustain natural fish production and provide for full participation in ocean and river harvest of fish species throughout the Klamath Basin; (2) establish reliable water and power supplies which sustain agricultural uses, communities, and National Wildlife Refuges; and (3) contribute to the public welfare and the sustainability of all Klamath Basin communities. It is the conclusion of the United States that in order to reach these goals, both agreements must be authorized and implemented.

Ongoing programs that may be expanded include habitat restoration and fish population monitoring activities being conducted by Federal, Tribal, and State governments and agencies, fish disease research activities, continued implementation of Reclamation's Pilot Water Bank Program, and programs to improve fish passage and screen irrigation diversions. New programs that may be established by the KBRA include a Fisheries Restoration Plan, Fisheries Reintroduction Plan, Fisheries Monitoring Plan, Water Diversion Limitation and Pumping Plan, Water Rights Purchase Plan, Drought Plan, Environmental Water Plan, Counties' Impacts-Mitigation and Benefits Program, Tribal Programs, establishment of wildlife refuge water allocation, and additional water conservation and storage actions. The KHSA lays out the process for additional studies, environmental review, and a decision by the Secretary regarding whether removal of four dams owned by PacifiCorp: (1) Will advance the restoration of the salmonid fisheries of the Klamath Basin, and (2) is in the public interest, which includes, but is not limited to, consideration of potential impacts on affected local communities and tribes.

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