

April 16, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

Another massive crisis is mounting in the Klamath Basin this year due to extraordinarily dry hydrologic conditions following several years of prolonged drought. The Basin has faced drought conditions almost every year this past decade, and 2021 is on track to becoming the worst water year in at least four decades.

The scope and scale of impact the drought will have on the already-strained people, economies, infrastructure, and wildlife of the Klamath Basin cannot be overstated. Federal disaster relief is required for both immediate relief that can serve as a down payment toward comprehensive long-term solutions, and move the Klamath Basin to more sustainable footing that supports Tribal people, family farms and commercial fishing, recovers endangered species, and restores the ecosystem. To mitigate the multiple crises facing us this year, we ask your urgent support for the following disaster relief resources:

1. Commercial and Tribal subsistence fishery disaster relief through "Fisheries Failure" Disaster Declaration from the Secretary of Commerce, including \$150 million in fishery disaster subsistence assistance direct relief for devastated West Coast salmon fishing-dependent communities, and to the Karuk, Yurok, and Hoopa. These dollars in no way reflect the value or the loss of this fishery to the Karuk Tribe or any other Tribe.
2. Restoration funding to address the needs of the critically endangered C'waam (Lost River Sucker) and Koptu (shortnose sucker).
3. Targeted support for Klamath Basin farmers and ranchers, including tribal members who farm and ranch, who are all facing the loss of this entire growing season.
4. \$50 million to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in coordination and cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for permanent land and/or water acquisition for voluntary sellers to transfer instream flow - without harm to Tribal and private property.
5. A senior federal envoy to the Basin appointed by the White House with the authority and charge to seek long term, sustainable solutions for overcoming long term, unsustainable, basin-wide ecological degradations.

Additionally, the following water infrastructure needs represent just a few of the many pressing stabilizing measures necessary to provide essential support to the stressed and interconnected water system, and to help prevent future water crises:

1. \$50 million for floodplain and riparian restoration projects by Tribal Natural Resource departments.
2. Continued federal resources, investment, and participation to achieve full implementation of the Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement (KHSAs) consistent with the determined timeframe.
3. Funds to bolster State and Tribal capacity to monitor and regulate groundwater depletions and water quality degradation.

The above resources are critical to respond to the current water emergency, as well as to provide a roadmap for long-term solutions to put the Klamath Basin on a sustainable path and end on-going and perpetual crisis management. We request your urgent attention to this matter and stand ready to provide local leadership and partnership to achieve these desired outcomes.

Sincerely,



THE YUROK TRIBE



Cc:

- Senator Ron Wyden
- Senator Jeff Merkley
- Senator Dianne Feinstein
- Senator Alex Padilla
- Congressman Cliff Bentz
- Congressman Jared Huffman
- Congressman Doug LaMalfa
- Governor Kate Brown
- Governor Gavin Newsom
- Secretary Deb Haaland, Department of the Interior
- Secretary Gina Raimondo, Department of Commerce
- Secretary Tom Vilsack, Department of Agriculture