

Upper Klamath Lake (UKL) Fish Screen Program

Background

This public scoping notice announces and seeks public comment on a proposal by the Bureau of Reclamation to implement the UKL Fish Screen Program. Under this proposal, Reclamation would provide funds to assist landowners in installing Federal and State approved fish screens on privately owned irrigation diversions which are operated on UKL and Agency Lake (AL). This Program occurs within the boundary of Reclamation's Klamath Project located in southern Oregon and northern California. Reclamation is undertaking this Program under the authority of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, section 16 U.S.C §661.

Reclamation's Program responds directly to the need for biologically effective fish screens on UKL and AL irrigation diversions to reduce the high risk of entrainment where endangered sucker populations are most abundant and widely distributed. The Program would (1) assist with the effects for endangered sucker populations in their primary habitat area and (2) complement the existing Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) statewide fish screen program which provides cost share funds to private landowners who wish to screen their irrigation diversions.

Public Scoping is a term used for an early and open process to determine the scope of issues to be addressed and to identify the significant issues related to a proposed Federal action. Reclamation will use the comments received in response to this notice to (1) identify the significant issues relevant to the proposal, (2) identify those elements of the environment that could be affected by the proposal, (3) begin formulation of alternatives to the proposal, and (4) determine the appropriate environmental document to be prepared, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The Proposal

Reclamation's proposal will assure any new screens ultimately designed and constructed through this Program satisfies Reclamation's Klamath Basin Area Office (KBAO) is proposing to implement a program to screen private diversions on UKL and AL to meet its Endangered Species Act (ESA) entrainment reduction responsibilities on the Klamath Project. Reclamation is required to reduce entrainment of juvenile, sub-adult, and adult suckers as a result of the ESA Biological Opinion on 2002-2012 Klamath Project Operations. The KBAO has developed a preliminary inventory of such diversions and has determined there are approximately 20-30 private diversions operating on UKL and AL. These diversions range in size from somewhat large gravity diversions (e.g., 60 cubic feet per second (cfs)) to very small pump diversions (e.g., less than 5 cfs). *Recommended Interim Fish Screen Criteria for the Upper Klamath Basin*, adopted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, ODFW, and California Department of Fish and Game in July 2005.

Location of Study Area

UKL and AL are located in southern Oregon as shown on Figure 1.

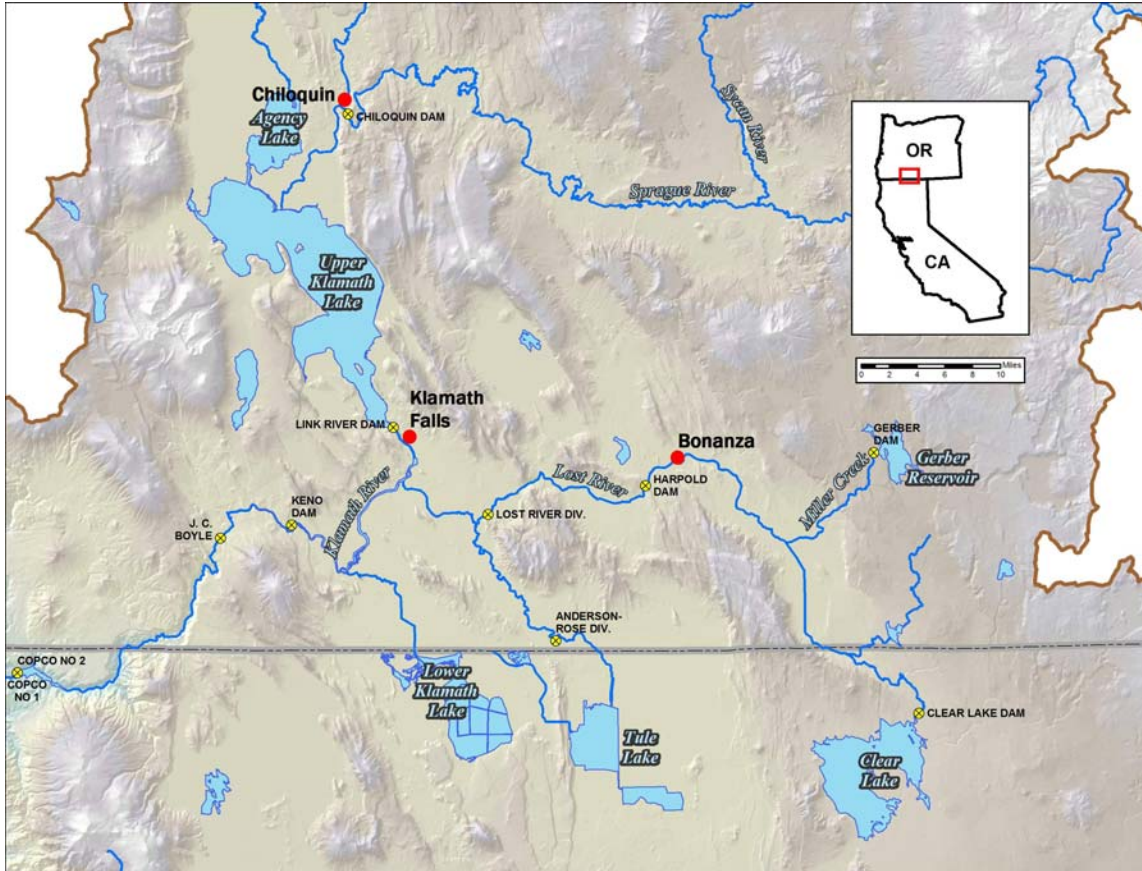


Figure 1: General Location of Upper Klamath and Agency Lakes.

National Environmental Policy Act

In conjunction with this program, Reclamation will prepare the appropriate level of environmental document (environmental assessment or environmental impact statement) in accordance with NEPA. The environmental document will describe the proposal and its purpose, alternatives considered, potential effects of the proposal and alternatives, and any mitigation which may be needed as a result of undertaking the proposed action. The NEPA document will be made available for public review and comment at a later date.

Timing

Reclamation anticipates completing the appropriate NEPA decision document by early 2007. The decision document will determine whether or not to implement the proposed Federal action.

Public Comments Requested

Reclamation is seeking comments from the interested public, including Tribes, individuals, organizations, and agencies, regarding the proposal to provide Federal funds to allow the program to be implemented. Your comments should be received by **November 30, 2006**.

Our practice is to make comments, including names and addresses of respondents, available for public review. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will honor this request to the extent allowable by law. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public disclosure in their entirety. You may use the enclosed comment sheet to provide written comments by mail, facsimile transmission, or electronic mail to:

Chuck Korson, Fish Passage Manager
Bureau of Reclamation, Klamath Basin Area Office
6600 Washburn Way
Klamath Falls, OR 97603
Fax: 541-884-9053
Email: ckorson@mp.usbr.gov

Reclamation may prepare other information and reports during the course of developing this program. If you would like your name added to the mailing list to receive future information, or be removed from future mailings, please complete and return the enclosed comment sheet or contact the Klamath Basin Area Office at 541-883-6935.

You may direct questions regarding this Program to Mr. Chuck Korson at telephone 541-883-6935, via facsimile at 541-884-9053, or via e-mail at ckorson@mp.usbr.gov. This scoping notice and other information about this program will also be available on the Klamath Basin Area Office website www.mp.usbr.gov/kbao.

UPPER KLAMATH LAKE FISH SCREEN PROGRAM COMMENT SHEET and DOCUMENT REQUEST FORM

Please provide your comments below and return them by November 30, 2006, to be of most use to the Bureau of Reclamation by mail OR facsimile transmission to Chuck Korson, Fish Passage Manager, Bureau of Reclamation, 6600 Washburn Way, Klamath Falls, OR 97603; fax: (541) 884-9053. You may also e-mail them to ckorson@mp.usbr.gov.

Note: You can request to withhold your name and/or address by stating this prominently at the beginning of your comment. However, we will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public disclosure in their entirety.

If you want to be on the mailing list, please **print** your:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Optional Phone _____

Optional Fax _____

Optional E-mail _____

Do you want to receive a copy of the draft report? yes _____ no _____

What format: cd-rom (with built in reader) _____ paper copy _____

Comments:

Please continue your comments on the back of this sheet and add additional sheets if desired. Please return sheet(s) by mail OR facsimile transmission to:
Chuck Korson, Fish Passage Manager, Bureau of Reclamation, 6600 Washburn Way, Klamath Falls, OR 97603 OR fax: 541-884-9053. You may also e-mail them to ckorson@mp.usbr.gov.

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation