



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Scott White, General Manager
scott.white@klamathdrainagedistrict.org
(541) 510-6311

Klamath Drainage District patrons meet district's KPDRA land-idling goal

KDD landowners idle nearly 50% of available district acres in the Klamath Project Drought Response Agency.

Klamath Falls, OR - In April, Klamath Drainage District (KDD) Manager Scott White, recommended landowners in the district evaluate their 2026 farm plans and consider applying to idle as many acres as possible in the Klamath Project Drought Response Agency's reduced irrigation demand programs.

White's goal for the district was to idle 10,000 acres.

KDD patrons responded and applied to idle over 11,000 acres, nearly half of district's land eligible for the program.

"The response was tremendous," White said. "I'm proud of the district's landowners for stepping up to the plate and taking the action needed to help stretch water for all of the Klamath Project in a tight water year."

The KPDRA offered four programs. The No Irrigation program offered irrigators \$425 per acre for land not receiving water from November 1, 2025 through October 31st, 2026. The Partial Season program payment provided farmers \$212.50 per acre for not irrigating between March 1st and October 31st. The Limited Irrigation program paid growers \$212.50 per acre for perennial crops and \$75 for annual crops provided irrigation ceased by May 27th and would not resume until October 31st.

A five-year "Demand Reduction" assistance program was also offered for growers willing to idle at least 50 acres of irrigable land. The Demand Reduction program allowed growers to change



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which acres would be idled during those five years, provided the minimum parcel size was 25 contiguous acres and no parcel could be fallowed for three of the five years.

In previous communications, Klamath Water Users Association (KWUA) executive director Elizabeth Nielsen indicated the Klamath Irrigation Project needed to idle between 40,000 to 50,000 acres.

KDD highlighted its ability to play a large positive role in the Klamath Basin with landowners providing approximately 20% of the applied enrolled acres.

“It’s outstanding to see what KDD is doing for not only the Klamath Project, but the Klamath Watershed,” said Scotty Fenters, KDD and KDPR board member. “The projects KDD is taking on for improving habitat and water quality are incredible, not to mention how our landowners stepped up to make this year’s allocation go further.”

The district has other water-saving tools it applies during drought years. KDD’s design coupled with recirculation stations allow the district to re-use over 75% of the water that enters its canals. SCADA is also being employed district-wide to help KDD find opportunities to use water more efficiently.

In past water shortages, the district’s patrons sent unused recycled water to Unit 2 of the Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge via the Ady Canal. They will assess their ability to do so again this August.

About the Klamath Drainage District:

Klamath Drainage District (KDD) is a 27,000-acre district located in southern Oregon bordering the Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge in California. KDD proactively works to improve distribution and delivery of its scarce water resources including recycling over 35,000 acre-feet annually through its recently installed recirculation pumping plants. Of this recycled water, most is reused to grow crops, but a percentage is used for growers outside of the district and used for habitat improvement and other refuge purposes. KDD is home to one of the largest concentrations of bald eagles in the lower 48 states and prides itself on its restoration activities and the tremendous wildlife viewing opportunities it provides.

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