

Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Plan

Appendix C to the Upper Klamath Basin Watershed Action Plan

Prepared by Klamath Watershed Partnership and Trout Unlimited
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Upper Klamath Basin Watershed Action Plan Overview

The purpose of the Upper Klamath Basin Watershed Action Plan (UKBWAP) is to inform effective and prioritized voluntary restoration activities in the UKB to restore riverine and riparian process and function; improve water quality; and restore habitat for native, endemic, and endangered species. Several past collaborative efforts between agencies, organizations, landowners, and Tribal governments, including the Upper Klamath Basin (UKB) Comprehensive Agreement, Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) documents, and Endangered Species Act (ESA) recovery plans, have identified the need for a plan to prioritize and implement restoration actions to support fish population recovery, water quality improvements, and recovery of wetland, floodplain, riparian, and riverine process and function in the UKB. Subsequent efforts identified lists of appropriate restoration projects, but the UKB restoration community has recognized the need for a cohesive, collaborative voluntary restoration strategy. The UKBWAP focuses on cooperative and voluntary restoration that benefits both the local rural economy and the ecosystem. Actions that require regulatory or management agency support for implementation, or are a result of legal, policy, or regulatory mandates (e.g., invasive fish removal, UKL lake level management), are not within the scope of the UKBWAP. Refer to the UKBWAP itself for additional information.

Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Plan Purpose

Many of the areas in the UKB with the greatest restoration potential are on private lands. To achieve the goals of the UKBWAP, it is therefore critical that we develop collaborative relationships with private landowners to implement voluntary restoration on private lands. The UKBWAP Team¹ seeks opportunities to build landowner relationships, to provide technical assistance necessary to improve management practices, and to expand awareness of the work necessary to realize ecosystem and economic benefit throughout the watershed. The UKBWAP Team recognizes the need for coordinated education and outreach to reach identified conservation goals on private lands. This includes a coordinated outreach plan, with multiple messaging avenues, that will help move this community effort forward. The UKBWAP Team also plans to collaborate closely with other agencies and organizations in the UKB who were not

¹Local restoration professionals including U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Klamath Tribes, Trout Unlimited, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Klamath Watershed Partnership, The Nature Conservancy, and the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.

a core part of UKBWAP development but play a critical role in outreach, planning, and implementation of restoration.

The collaborative nature of the UKBWAP and a coordinated outreach effort can overcome many obstacles by providing a service and a benefit to those landowners that might consider restoration on their land. The social, community, and environmental benefits of improved water quality, aquatic habitat, and water savings must be communicated in our restoration outreach efforts. The Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Plan identifies the outreach actions necessary to implement the UKBWAP and realize economic and ecosystem benefits for the watershed, rural communities, and individual landowners.

Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Actions

A successful and effective outreach and engagement effort must include a combination of broad and targeted outreach strategies. We also include here a list of specific action items and estimated completion dates; these are subject to change, particularly depending on the trajectory of the pandemic in 2022 and beyond.

Broad Marketing

Website: The UKBWAP Team developed a website in spring 2022 (www.ukbwap.com). This website provides access to the latest version of the UKBWAP, a brief summary of the UKBWAP, a link to the Interactive Reach Prioritization Tool (IRPT), and answers to frequently asked questions. The website will be maintained and updated as needed.

Outreach Events: Starting in 2022, the UKBWAP Team will participate in Producer Listening Sessions organized by our partners (primarily Sustainable Northwest). These outreach events will provide an opportunity to understand landowner needs and provide information about restoration opportunities in the UKB. These outreach events will occur approximately every 2 months.

Targeted Marketing

To facilitate targeted marketing, the UKBWAP Team developed the Restoration Priority List using publicly available data such as taxlot and water rights information, county records, and ecosystem conditions data in the IRPT. The Restoration Priority List allows the UKBWAP Team and other interested restoration professionals to prioritize targeted outreach efforts to landowners in areas with the greatest restoration potential and need. This tool is primarily a database but may also include a map component in the future.

The Restoration Priority List prioritizes private landowners with at least 1.0 miles of riverfront property in areas scoring a 4 for the “riparian and floodplain vegetation condition” metric. This metric can be used as a proxy for impairments to river process and function, which are arguably the impairments of greatest concern for water quality and habitat. The limitations of using this metric to prioritize landowners is that it does not directly reflect priority areas for large woody debris and spawning gravel placement, may not reflect the prevalence of disconnected springs, and does not include information about fish passage concerns. Regardless, the purpose of using

these criteria (i.e., private land with at least 1.0 miles of river frontage in areas scoring a 4 for the “riparian and floodplain vegetation condition” metric) is simply to provide coherent and relevant means by which to distill a list of several hundred landowners in the UKB. This criteria is in no way binding or meant to limit outreach efforts; rather, it helps us strategically engage key landowners in high priority areas for restoration.

In-Person Meetings: One of the most effective ways to share information with landowners is through in-person meetings and site visits discussing and identifying opportunities for restoration and partnership. This type of outreach prioritizes landowners identified in the Restoration Priority List, and requires clear and frequent communication between UKBWAP Team members to ensure consistent messaging and approach.

Targeted Site Visits/Presentations: Working with landowners that have previously implemented restoration projects on their property, the UKBWAP Team will use the Restoration Priority List to identify others in the vicinity that may benefit from, or otherwise be interested in, restoration. There are numerous examples of successful and effective restoration projects on private lands in the UKB, and landowners are often excited to showcase restoration work completed on their properties. Providing opportunities for landowners to discuss their restoration work with neighbors is an effective method for generating interest in restoration, leading to collaborative relationships between restoration professionals and private landowners. Additionally, it allows neighbors that are interested but potentially hesitant about restoration on their properties to see how these projects are implemented and how they look once completed, and to meet local restoration professionals.

Action Items (2022 and beyond)

1. Develop the UKBWAP website – January 2022 (COMPLETED)
 - Web address: www.ukbwap.com
2. Restoration Priority List– May 2022 (COMPLETED)
 - Funding secured through OWEB
 - Identify points of contact from the restoration community (this will include UKBWAP Team members, and potentially external partners such as Natural Resources Conservation Service, Klamath County Soil and Water Conservation District, Sustainable Northwest, etc.) for each priority landowner identified in the Restoration Priority List.
 - Delegate outreach activities to these points of contact
3. Begin outreach per the Restoration Priority List – May 2022
4. Host three targeted site visits/presentations – no later than December 31, 2022

In addition to the specific action items to be completed in 2022, the UKBWAP Team will implement on-going efforts related to outreach and engagement. These include:

- Preparing materials, presentations, and contacts, and engaging landowners identified in the Restoration Priority List. We will request follow up and feedback from any landowners we engage with.
- Updating the UKBWAP website as new information is available, and as we receive feedback on the format and contents of the website. The UKBWAP Team will be responsible for website updates.
- Updating the Restoration Priority List as new information and data become available.
- Identifying funding sources for on-going UKBWAP-related work (maintaining and updating the UKBWAP website, IRPT, and Restoration Priority List).
- Tracking community response to our outreach and engagement efforts. Specifically, we will solicit feedback from landowners contacted as part of the targeted outreach effort.
- Following up with landowners, as deemed appropriate, with outreach mailings, emails, and site visits.

Additional Considerations

In addition to private landowners (the primary audience for outreach efforts described here), there are other stakeholders that may be interested in learning more about restoration implementation in the UKB. The UKBWAP Team will continue engaging funders and organizations not directly represented on the UKBWAP Team; this will be particularly effective once the website and outreach materials are developed.

Finally, restoration improvements can increase property value, improve efficiencies, and simplify management making farms and ranches more profitable. We also acknowledge that some projects may create challenges for landowners (e.g., capital costs, changes in agricultural operations, etc.). As such, communication and transparency about proposed restoration work, funding requirements, and potential changes to operations are critical. The UKBWAP Team seeks to incentivize restoration opportunities where policy allows but projects require long-term commitment on many levels. Strong, collaborative, and trusting relationships with private landowners are necessary to create sustainable projects that ultimately achieve the goals of the UKBWAP.