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To Herald and News Editors,

Gerry O'Brien's June 22 editorial laments the “threat of irrigation stopping....altogether by mid-July if a court rules against the Federal government and for the Klamath Tribes.” He says that irrigators are angry and that we should all read Marshall Staunton's “white paper” which provides the history of Klamath water negotiations.

I have not yet read Marshall's paper, but I will because Marshall is an honorable man and a straight shooter. However, there was then and there is now only one solution to the Klamath's water woes. That solution is to match water demand with the available water supply; and the supply appears to be shrinking.

The 2005 Farm Bill sought to reduce irrigation demand by spending $50 million to improve irrigation efficiency throughout the Klamath River Basin. Instead NRCS let irrigators drill wells so that they would have a second irrigation source. Some irrigators now sell water from those wells. Other irrigators even used those taxpayer funds to extended the irrigation season and thus increased irrigation water demand. That was wrong and shameful; some of those same irrigators now complain the loudest.

The KBRA balanced supply and demand on the backs of the salmon; buying off the tribes with "restoration" funding and kicking the demand reduction can down the road via future Drought and Climate Change plans. That led to up to 91% of juvenile salmon dying in the Klamath's low and warm waters before they could reach the ocean.

Irrigation consumes well over 90% of the water diverted from the Klamath and its tributaries. The only real "solution" is to front load irrigation demand reduction. Demand reduction must be from willing sellers and it ought to be basin-wide.

The KBRA failed to do what was needed because a few greedy growers who own and lease most of the land irrigated within the federal Klamath Irrigation Project refused to allow any reduction in the amount of land under irrigation. Those same "leaders" are the ones who now howl loudest.

Let them howl. They made their bed and now must sleep in it. I have no sympathy for those greedy folks; neither should the H&N's editors.

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