



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

August 26, 2020

Mr. W. Darren Coppock
President and CEO
Agricultural Retailers Association
1156 15th Street, NW.
Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Coppock:

Thank you for your letter of August 4, 2020, on behalf of the Agricultural Retailers Association outlining the Klamath Water Users Association's (KWUA) recommendations for the Klamath Restoration Project.

We understand that current drought conditions in the Klamath Basin are severe, falling outside the normal range of water supply. Please know that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is collaborating with the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) to assess drought relief needs and the potential applicability of USDA's programs to help address the current conditions and need in the Klamath Basin.

As to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) related recommendations you detailed, DOI has regulatory responsibility for the implementation of the Act. USDA's responsibility, like other Federal entities, is to comply with ESA's regulatory requirements. Within this framework, USDA agencies, whenever possible, work collaboratively with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), as well as with State agencies and Tribes, to streamline the consultation processes for implementation of USDA programs.

We also work with FWS to find creative, data-driven ways to address ESA regulatory requirements that minimize the impact of those requirements on the producers participating in USDA programs. Looking forward, and with the information provided in your letter, we will certainly consider your recommendations should we encounter such issues while implementing USDA programs having direct or indirect association with the Klamath Restoration Project.

Thank you for your letter and for sharing your concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sonny Perdue". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sonny Perdue
Secretary