Peer Review Plan

Keno Release Model Development for 2027 Klamath Project Long-Term Operations Environmental Compliance

Date: October 20, 2026

Originating office: Klamath Basin Area Office, Bureau of Reclamation, California Great Basin Region, 6600 Washburn Way, Klamath Falls, Oregon, 97603

Reclamation roles:
Director or delegated manager: Adam Nickels, Acting Regional Director, California Great Region, Bureau of Reclamation

Peer Review Lead: Amanda Babcock, Natural Resources Specialist, Klamath Basin Area Office, Bureau of Reclamation

Subject and Purpose:

The Keno Release Model (KRM) is a reservoir operations simulation application written in the higher-level programming language provided by the Water Resource Integrated Modeling System (WRIMS) and developed to represent hydrology, reservoir operations, and water management in the Klamath Project. The model was developed with intent and purpose to support long-term planning and environmental compliance regarding Klamath Project operations. This Peer Review Plan is intended to document review of the KRM assumptions and results describing Klamath Project conditions. Prior to this peer review of KRM development, WRIMS software has been widely tested and documented.

Impact of Dissemination:

Reclamation's Klamath Basin Area Office (KBAO) anticipates using the KRM model and output to inform the 2027 National Environmental Policy Act analysis and development of the Biological Assessment for consultation under Section 7 of the ESA on the Klamath Project Long-Term Operations (LTO) and subsequent decision-making on operating criteria. As such, the KRM meets the definition of influential scientific information requiring peer review by experts internal or external to Reclamation, as defined by the Office of Management and Budget Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review (70 FR 2664-2677) and Reclamation Manual Peer Review of Scientific Information and Assessments Policy (CMP P14).

Peer Review Scope:

The KRM's simulation code written in WRIMS language, simulation input data, and simulation output data describing water supply and operational conditions informing the subject long-term planning and environmental compliance documentation are the subject of this peer review. Peer reviewers will be asked to respond to the following questions:

1. To what extent does the model capture physical processes... does it represent operations appropriately given operational assumptions used solely for model development?

2. To what extent do the modeled water supplies and Klamath Project operations adequately reflect real conditions and how clearly are deviations in assumptions and output documented?
3. Can the model be used to reliably represent how changes in regulations, infrastructure, and water demand patterns affect the reliability of water supplies of the Klamath Project and the hydrology affecting aquatic environments?
4. To what extent are assumptions tolerable and clearly explained in KRM documentation?

Timing of Review:

Review for the model is anticipated to be completed by December 2026.

Methodology of Review:

Reviews will be conducted by one or more individuals. The identities of the reviewers will be disclosed in the final Peer Review Summary. The peer review process will not provide opportunities for public participation.

Each reviewer will be an expert in hydrology and/or reservoir operations modeling, be familiar with water management situations like those found in the Klamath Basin and be an expert in interpreting model results like those produced by KRM. Reviewers will be selected from within or outside of Reclamation and have independence from the scientific information subjected to this peer review.

Number of Peer Reviewers:

As many as three reviewers will be used from the groups described in the Methodology of Review.

Reviewer Selection Process:

Each reviewer will be selected based on their knowledge of hydrology and/or reservoir operations modeling and the Klamath Basin. Each reviewer will have ample experience working in the basin and/or in hydrologic and operations analysis.

Delivery of findings: Reviewers will deliver findings in a provided Excel spreadsheet. Each reviewer will also provide a summary paragraph with any major findings to be included in the review report.

Response to Peer Review:

A summary paragraph from each reviewer will be published on the Reclamation's peer review website (http://www.usbr.gov/main/qoi/peeragenda.html) along with a response to comments if there were any major concerns.

Federal Register Notice:

Federal Register notices will not be provided announcing the formation of a peer review team and completion of the final report.

Applicability of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA):

This peer review is not subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) because the review does not involve open meetings or committee chartering; and, reviewers are being asked to provide individual reviews on the subject matter. Reclamation is not seeking consensus advice from the reviewers as a group.

Agency contact:

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