



March 13, 2013

Sierra Club
85 Second Street, 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
RE: America's Coolest Schools

To Whom It May Concern:

SOUTHERN OREGON UNIVERSITY'S "COOLEST SCHOOLS" SUBMISSION

BEF has been proud to partner with Southern Oregon University (SOU) and its students on innovative solutions to mitigate the campus' environmental impact.

Beginning in 2013, BEF will help SOU meet an ambitious new sustainability goal: to become the first campus ever to balance 100% of its on-campus water use with an equal amount of water restored to a critically dewatered ecosystem. Through the purchase of BEF Water Restoration Certificates® (WRCs), SOU student funds will launch a new water flow restoration project in the nearby Klamath River Basin. Over the upcoming five-year period, the university will restore approximately 80 million gallons of water per year to this critically dewatered ecosystem.

In response to the rise of global water scarcity, more and more businesses are seeking innovative ways to minimize their organization's water footprint through a wide range of conservation methods. BEF's WRCs offer the first-of-its-kind tool to go a step further—to actually restore the water footprint you can't avoid, gallon-for-gallon, to critically dewatered rivers and streams.

Each WRC represents 1,000 gallons of water restored in stream and directly contributes to restoring the economic, recreational and ecological vitality of critical freshwater ecosystems. All WRC projects are certified by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's strict set of criteria to ensure flow is restored to the environment in locations and at a time that will have optimum environmental benefit.

Historical water use in the Klamath Basin has led to the diversion of the entire flow from the upper reaches of Sevenmile Creek, resulting in the complete dewatering of two miles of the stream and limiting fish access to some of the most critical, intact habitat in the stream system. This dewatering also prevents high quality, cold, clear water from flowing down the remaining 17 miles of Sevenmile Creek to areas located in the National Wildlife Refuge.

Since 2004, the Klamath Basin Rangeland Trust has tested the results of improving flows in Sevenmile Creek. Keeping water in the stream has improved habitat and provided a critical migratory corridor for endangered and threatened species. Through habitat monitoring, there has been a demonstrated linkage between keeping water flow in stream and improvements to fish habitat. With increased flows, the Oregon

Department of Fish and Wildlife has reported dramatic increases in the occurrence of redband trout.

With funding provided in large part through SOU's student funds this project in total will restore approximately 1.2 billion gallons of water per year to a critical and previously dewatered stream system. The transaction will be completed on a voluntary basis with the landowner, and the property will continue to be operated as an active cattle ranch with dryland grazing.

It is with immense pleasure that I write in support of SOU and its students' trailblazing commitment to sustainability by being the first campus to restore an equal amount of water used through innovative and impactful partnerships. The importance of SOU's commitment to support sustainable water use and pave the way forward as an innovator and model for other corporations, businesses, and institutions to conserve and restore water is immeasurable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Reeve", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Todd Reeve
CEO