

PREFACE

The 27th annual New Mexico Water Conference was held April 1-2, 1982, in Clovis, the heart of New Mexico's High Plains. The conference theme, "Hope for the High Plains," reflects the statewide concern over the decline of the Ogallala aquifer in this important agricultural region.

The portion of the Ogallala aquifer that lies beneath New Mexico has been an economic blessing for High Plains agriculture. Agricultural producers depend on this vast underground reservoir to irrigate crops that in 1980 were valued at \$107 million. However, the aquifer decline threatens to destroy that economic base. The purpose of the conference was to address those problems and generate ideas for solving them.

The conference began with an overview of the recently completed High Plains Study. Congress commissioned the study in 1976 to investigate the extent of ground-water depletion of the Ogallala aquifer and its impacts on six High Plains states. Each conference session focused on aspects of the study that pertained to New Mexico. The panel then encompassed both views with local, state and federal officials discussing the political and economic problems of dealing with the complexities of an aquifer decline affecting six states.

Conference participants also adopted a resolution calling for continuation of the High Plains Study Council to help plan strategies for solving the water resources problems of the Ogallala aquifer region. The adoption of this resolution reflects the commitment of conference participants in seeking these solutions.

Special thanks goes to the speakers and participants who helped make the conference a productive forum for seeking answers to the problems of a declining water supply. The Water Conference Advisory Committee must be recognized also for the guidance essential to the continued success of the annual conferences.



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