

## *Director's Statement*

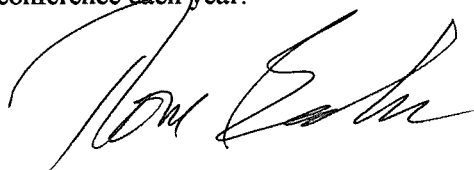
At this year's 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual New Mexico Water Conference, I announced that I will be retiring as the Director of the New Mexico WRRRI next summer. Back on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1978, I gave my first water conference speech as newly appointed Director of the New Mexico Water Resources Institute. The twenty-third annual New Mexico Conference was entitled, "New Mexico's Water Resources: Considering the Possible" and I delivered the luncheon address, sharing my thoughts on the role of the scientist and research administrator in solving water problems. Back then and still true today, I believe there are no simple solutions to water problems.

Many of the research priorities I described in 1978 like developing irrigation techniques and plant varieties that use less water, research to minimize water quality degradation, developing ways to integrate recreational uses of water with other demands, research on saline water development, and comprehensive economic and legal assessments of water management continue to demand our attention. We have made significant progress in these areas and I'm completely confident that the WRRRI will continue to lead the way by supporting sound scientific research that will allow the public to make decisions about its water future.

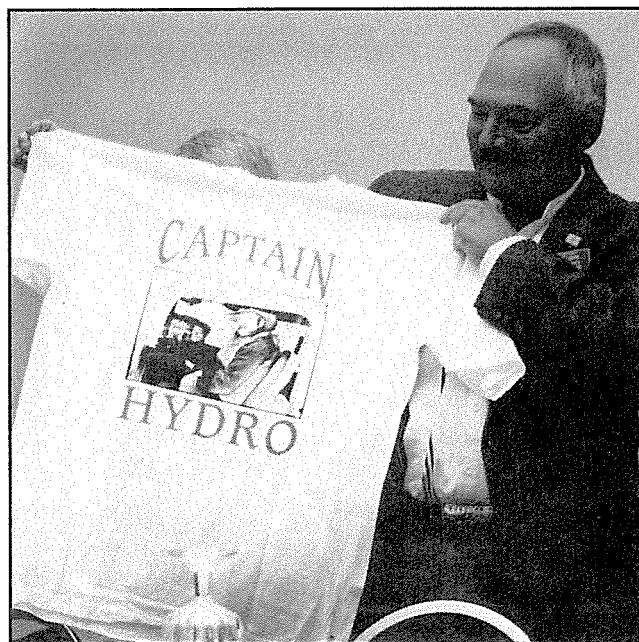
This year's water conference once again brought together participants from throughout New Mexico to discuss a topic of great importance to all New Mexicans: the many water challenges facing the Lower Rio Grande Valley. We heard from the Rio Grande Compact commissioners from Colorado, New Mexico and Texas. We listened to speakers describe how the conversion of agricultural water use to municipal use may occur. We learned how the Rio Grande evolved over time and we discovered what some researchers are doing to improve the quality of our water.

The success of this year's conference was a direct result of its participants willingness to listen to each other. Also, I am very appreciative of the suggestions and input I received from the Water Conference Advisory Committee.

I look forward to next year's water conference where I plan to be sitting in the audience. I will continue to be involved with New Mexico's water issues and look forward to seeing my many friends and colleagues who attend the conference each year.



*After announcing his retirement, the WRRRI staff presented Tom Bahr with a tee shirt. The staff will very much miss their "Captain Hydro."*



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*Cover photo taken at Caballo Lake State Park in January 1998 depicting a release to the Rio Grande for downstream use (about 300 cfs). Photo by Danny R. Duran.*