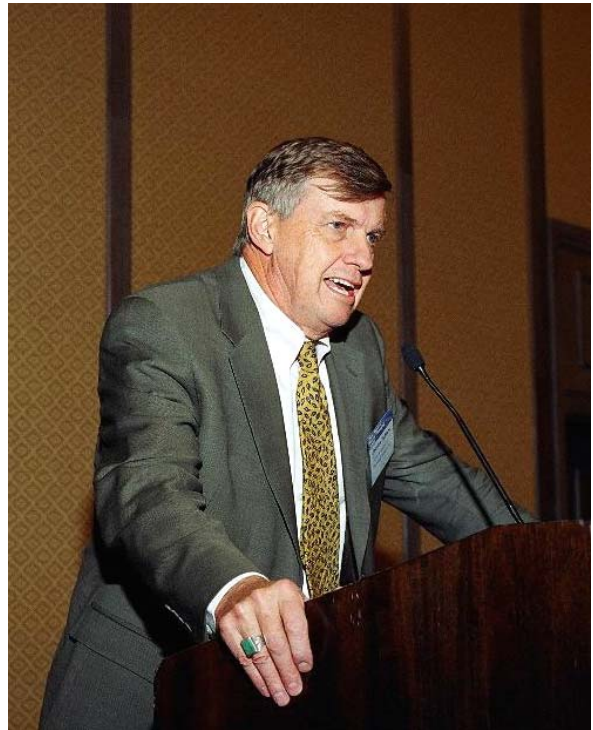


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PANEL DISCUSSION: PLANNING FOR NEW MEXICO'S WATER FUTURE

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1. The Middle Rio Grande is fully appropriated and has been since prior to the Rio Grande Compact and probably prior to the turn of the last century. It is subject to recurrent droughts that have occurred in the fifties, the eighties, and are occurring now. The demand for water is burgeoning and there is no effective methodology for accommodating shortages.
2. The Rio Grande Compact contemplated full development of the agricultural acreage in the middle Rio Grande Valley, including Pueblo acreage. No water was contemplated for future growth of municipalities, no water was allocated for excess evaporation caused by siltation at the mouth of Elephant Butte Reservoir, or for the invasion of non-native species of plants. With the

exception of Albuquerque, none of the municipal users has imported new sources of water, none has a clear mechanism for acquisition of water rights, and none of the users have determined how to compete with non-native species.

3. The Rio Grande Compact does not allow storage in post-1929 reservoirs if Elephant Butte contains less than 400,000 acre-feet. Presently there is no methodology to store native water in post-1929 reservoirs, other than using Rio Grande credits built up over a number of years. If there is no storage, then the agricultural community will suffer greatly, and in the long run, municipalities anticipating use of surface water supplies will have to determine the best method for conjunctive management of ground and surface water.
4. The Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act both contain federal expectations for the hydrograph and quality of the Rio Grande riverine system. These conflict with established uses of water, and have spawned an extraordinary amount of litigation. This will continue; these uses are financially supported by a great deal of national money and value based perceptions as to the future shape of the Rio Grande.
5. The six Middle Rio Grande Pueblos have congressionally quantified their entitlement to irrigate slightly more than 8,500 acres of land. They hold first priority on those lands. Determination as to the location, water demand and delivery expectations of those Pueblos provides a challenge to water planning in the region.