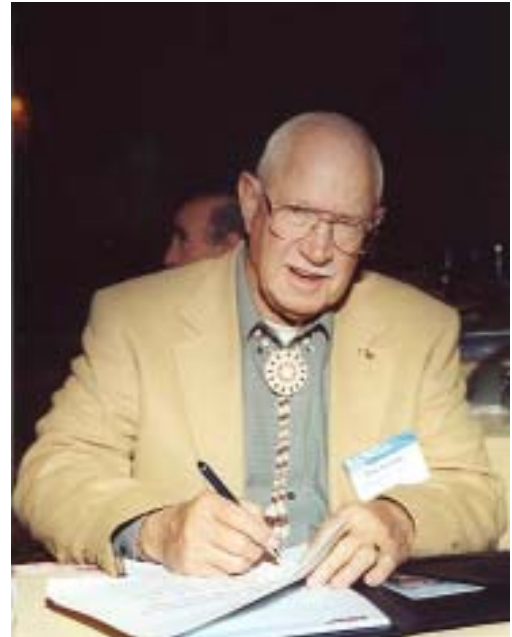


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## THE NEXT STEPS - IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE WATER PLAN

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I was going to say good morning but it's nearly too late to say that. But Karl did tell me that at the end of the program he was going to call role so that he could see whether everybody who received per diem stayed here all the way through. So no matter how boring I am, you better stay in that seat.

I want you to know that I haven't been here for the last couple days. I am the kind of person who likes to get out and really get something done. So I have been up in the high country in Colorado looking at the snowpack. While I was up there, I took a camera and I had a rifle with me. The camera was to take pictures of the snow pack, which there wasn't, and the rifle was just to protect myself from any big-horned animals that might come along. So keep in mind what I said, we don't have any snowpack at this point in Colorado.

By the way, Ed Archuleta, I am sure glad you got a good basis for your education in Mosquero, Wagon Mound, and up in that country because it shows.

I want to congratulate Dr. Wood and his staff for the far-reaching idea of having this water conference on the state water plan. I know planning started back probably at least a year ago (and at that time we didn't even have a new governor), but Dr. Wood had been listening evidently that we were going to have a state water plan. And I marvel at the fact that the Governor thought that we could come up with a plan in one year. Also, I felt the burden when he asked me to serve on the Interstate Stream Commission. But I have a very good Stream Commission, and more importantly, we have an excellent staff in the Office of the State Engineer. I don't think anybody expected us to have a

state water plan in the short time that we did, and wouldn't have, without the quality of OSE staff. I would like to give those people a hand because they are the basis of the state water plan in the state of New Mexico.

Now, as I said earlier, I have spent the past week in Colorado and probably have not prepared quite as well as I should have. I go back to the time when I first started giving speeches when I was about 20 years old and my speech professor said that if you are nervous, just look out over the audience - I'm sure you have all heard this before - just imagine that no one has clothes on, and you'll be alright. My perspective has changed since that time, so it doesn't have that same effect on me anymore.

I want to talk a bit about portions of the state water plan and the fact that we do have plans being put forth for implementation. The underlying policies of those are to provide security, certainty, and transparency. By doing that, we have to complete our adjudications. You heard the State Engineer say that we only had a small fraction of those completed. We have to move forward as fast as we can, and do a credible job as we progress.

### **Installation of Measuring and Metering Devices**

Now, I am sure that in some areas in the state, as I have been learning in the last several years, water has been very well metered. But I come from San Juan County. We measure nothing, or practically nothing. Installation of measuring and metering devices must be completed in order to reach a fair adjudication of water rights. We must move forward on the settlement of Indian water rights. If we are going to adjudicate a water basin, we need to have a complete knowledge of the water rights that are spoken for in that basin. Indian water rights basically were being spoken for a long time ago, so we have to quantify those water rights as the next step.

### **Installation of Water Masters to Assure Water Deliveries**

In our area of New Mexico, we joke that it would probably take a water master and two armed guards to start with in order to have a water master who can meter water because people are accustomed to using all the water that comes down the canal. You and I know that's not a practice we can allow to continue.

### **Adjudication Component of Our Implementation**

We have to develop timelines with a level of work effort developed for all outstanding basins. The people in an area that have an ongoing adjudication process need to understand exactly what the law calls for, understand exactly what the timelines are, what they must produce for documentation, and what those people from the Office of the State Engineer have to provide, and what the judicial system will require. Priorities can be set for the completion of the adjudications so that people can understand what those timelines are and what must be done in order to meet the requirements of the adjudication. We have people in our county who believe that their water rights are just going to be taken from them. We don't like to hear those comments, but until we educate people on how to complete an adjudication, that's the kind of reaction we're going to get. It's them against us or it's the state out to get us. We don't want that to continue to be the thoughts out there. Before we can adjudicate Indian rights, we have to gather data and know how much water we have to allocate to the various parties. We have junior rights, we have senior rights, and we have Indian water rights, not necessarily in that order. However, that is the public perception with which we are dealing.

### **Metering and Measuring Components**

We can't manage without knowing how much water is in what location. It's ridiculous to remember and to try to determine how much water we have in any kind of adjudication without having some kind of metering to measure water use. Metering diversions at a wellhead is a priority also. We have an unknown amount of water being pumped in our basins, which happens when you can drill a well with only a \$5.00 permit from the Office of the State Engineer. And while that permit may tell you how much water you are allocated from that particular well, it doesn't have any monitoring requirements that forces you to live within those means. We believe we should meter diversions at wellheads as is already being done in the Pecos Basin.

### **Analysis and Interpretation of the Data Collected**

You have seen the work that Dr. King has done, as well as Ed Archuleta and others, on data analysis and interpretation. We must continue to do a better job in this area in the state of New Mexico.

### **Integration of GIS Platform for Accessibility and Usability**

GIS is a wonderful tool and it should be used more often. We ought to all be on the same scale for GIS mapping so that the data collected can be used by all the various agencies including the federal government.

### **Water Masters Component**

We need the creation of water districts with a water master assigned to those districts. We have water masters in the various basins but we do not have them in all the basins and until we measure what is being done with that water, and who is using it, we will not have a valid basis for any of the information that we need for administration.

### **Local Control and Responsibility**

The water master should be under local control and should be paid for by local people.

### **Conservation Component**

A sound plan for conservation and increasing efficiency of our delivery systems is a very important part of any attempt to maximize the water resources of our state. Conservation alone will not solve our water shortages, but it must be used as a tool to meet our ever-growing needs.

We must employ water conservation where possible to bridge drought impacts and maintain a reasonable supply. I think conservation is something that is a feel good word, at least, in my opinion, and we hear it quite often. Conservation is something that we have relied upon and on which we have spent a lot of money. But too many times we have conservation on our minds and we say that it is the solution. You have to understand that if Ed Archuleta in El Paso can conserve 35 percent of his water, as he has done in the past, and then El Paso continues to grow, and he uses up that 35 percent, he does not have 35 percent to conserve the next time he has a drought. We have to think of conservation realistically, and provide for those things that really will enhance our long-term water supply such as water banking and a significant reduction in depletion, so that we'll have available resources when we need them. First and foremost, we must recognize that we live in an arid part of the United States.

### **Bridge the Gap While Waiting Implementation of Certain Components**

To bridge the gap, we use conservation, we use water banking, and we use water storage projects. Conservation protects water quality because less water is used and returned for reuse. Conservation keeps maximum flexibility of our water supplies, but the supplies vary.

### **Data Component**

The Office of the State Engineer will need to maintain and continue to develop the WATERS database. This database will make valuable information available for all to use, including the general public.

The OSE will need to continue to maintain and improve their web page and provide continuous, up-to-date information for all to use. We recognize that a quality web site will save many man-hours of research for State personnel as well as the general public.

The OSE has made major advances in the last few years in data gathering and must continue to integrate water rights administration, databases, and hydrographic surveys as well as other current information.

### **Conclusion**

In closing, let me say that we will be judged in the future on how well we interpret our present and future water needs. The State Water Plan is a tool that needs to be used, changed, and implemented on a regular basis. We will all learn as we work through this new State Water Plan.

With that, I will turn it back over to Karl. I thank you.