ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

ROGER K. PATTERSON

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STATUS OF INTERVIEWS:
OPEN FOR RESEARCH

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Interviews Conducted and Edited by:
Brit Allan Storey
Senior Historian
Bureau of Reclamation

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Record copies of this transcript are printed on 20 lb., 100% cotton, archival quality paper. All other copies are printed on normal duplicating paper.

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Brief Chronology of Career

1949–Born in McCook, Nebraska

attended high school in Hayes Center, Nebraska

Attended McCook Junior College and then the University of Nebraska in Lincoln.

December 1973–Graduated from the University of Nebraska with an M.S. in civil engineering.

January 1974-1980–McCook Project Office where he worked in water scheduling

1978-1980–Safety of dams coordinator for the Lower Missouri Region in Denver

1980-1983–Lower Missouri Region branch chief in the Water Operations Branch.

1983-summer 1986–Project manager in El Paso.

Summer 1986-1988–Moved to Billings as assistant regional director.

1988-1989–Acting regional director in the Great Plains Region.

1989-1991–Regional director in the Great Plains Region.

1991-1999–Regional director in the Mid-Pacific Region.

1999-2005–Head of the Nebraska Department of Water Resources and subsequently the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources.

2005-2006–Independent consultant.

2006-present (2011)–To the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California as Assistant General Manager, Strategic Water Initiatives (Colorado River and CALFED).

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STATEMENT OF DONATION
OF ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS OF
ROGER K. PATTERSON

1. In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 21 of Title 44, United States Code, and subject to the terms, conditions, and restrictions set forth in this instrument, I, ROGER K. PATTERSON, (hereinafter referred to as "the Donor"), of Sacramento, California, do hereby give, donate, and convey to the National Archives and Records Administration (hereinafter referred to as "the National Archives), acting for and on behalf of the United States of America, all of my rights and title to, and interest in the information and responses (hereinafter referred to as "the Donated Materials") provided during the interviews conducted on March 22, and September 2, 1994; April 12, 1995; March 22, 1996, and on May 19 and 21, 1998, at the Bureau of Reclamation's regional office in Sacramento, California, and on March 28, 2000, in Lincoln, Nebraska, and prepared for deposit with the National Archives and Records Administration in the following format: cassette tape recording and transcript. This donation includes, but is not limited to, all copyright interests I now possess in the Donated Materials.

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INTERVIEWER:_____

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Introduction

In 1988, Reclamation began to create a history program. While headquartered in Denver, the history program was developed as a bureau-wide program.

One component of Reclamation's history program is its oral history activity. The primary objectives of Reclamation's oral history activities are: preservation of historical data not normally available through Reclamation records (supplementing already available data on the whole range of Reclamation's history); making the preserved data available to researchers inside and outside Reclamation.

The senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation developed and directs the oral history program. Questions, comments, and suggestions may be addressed to the senior historian.

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For more information about Reclamation's history program see:
www.usbr.gov/history

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Oral History Interviews
Roger K. Patterson

Storey: This is Brit Allan Storey, senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Roger K. Patterson, the regional director of the Mid-Pacific Region of the Bureau of Reclamation on March the 22nd, 1994, beginning at about eight o'clock in the morning. This is in the regional offices of the Bureau of Reclamation in the Mid-Pacific Region. This is tape one.

Mr. Patterson, could you tell me where you were born and when, and talk about your education and tell me how you eventually ended up at the Bureau of Reclamation, please?

Born in McCook, Nebraska, in 1949

Patterson: Okay. I was born in Nebraska, McCook, Nebraska, as a matter of fact, which is an old Reclamation hot spot, December 7th, Pearl Harbor Day, 1949. My folks farm and continue to live on the farm in Nebraska. In fact we live about three miles just north of Red Willow Dam, which is Hugh Butler Lake, north of McCook a ways.

". . . grew up on the farm there. Non-irrigated farm. My neighbors seemed to be into irrigation, mostly groundwater wells, but my dad decided that was not the way he wanted to go, which, having worked three or four summers for one of the neighbors helping them irrigate, I appreciated his decision, because it's a lot of work . . ."

So I grew up on the farm there. Non-irrigated farm. My neighbors seemed to be into irrigation, mostly groundwater wells, but my dad decided that was not the way he wanted to go, which, having worked three or four summers for one of the neighbors helping them irrigate, I appreciated his decision, because it's a lot of work, and I'm not sure the profit margin for those guys pumping water out of the Ogalalla aquifer was maybe all it was cracked up to be. (laughter) So we pretty much ran a dry land wheat and cattle operation and still do.

My dad's sixty-six now, and he's trying to figure out how to retire. And having three boys, all of which moved on, went to college and left, and none of which are wanting to take over the farm, that's a little bit of a struggle for him. In fact, one of my brothers, my ***youngest*** brother, works for the Bureau of Reclamation in Boise.

Want to a One-room School

So, farm background. Went to a one-room school that my dad now owns. Through seventh grade I was the only kid in my class, which puts you at the top of the class. (laughter)

Storey: Or the bottom. (laughter)

Patterson: Or the bottom. My nature is that it's half-full, and so I was at the top. And then

Rosalie came in the middle of seventh grade and she wasn't too smart, so I still managed to stay on the top of the class through eighth grade.

Attended High School in Hayes Center, Nebraska

And then I went to high school in Hayes Center, Nebraska, which is kind of a dinky little town. People in Nebraska know it because it's where Channel 6 TV station's located, so you see Hayes Center once in a while. I think we had thirty-three kids in my class kind of at the max, and the whole high school–ninth through twelfth–was about a hundred kids.

I started driving. I mean, the way to get there, there was a bus, but I had my first car, my '56 red and white Chevy, and I started driving to school when I was fourteen. I'm not sure I had all the permits, but anyway, out there it didn't make a lot of difference. So I sometimes took the bus, and other days I drove in because we had football practice and whatnot.

". . . we were kind of twenty miles from anywhere, twenty miles from McCook, twenty miles from Hayes Center, Culbertson, Maywood. Our address was McCook, went to church in Culbertson, and went to high school in Hayes Center . . ."

So I went to high school in Hayes Center, which was out of the county that we lived in, so it was one of those–we were kind of twenty miles from anywhere, twenty miles from McCook, twenty miles from Hayes Center, Culbertson, Maywood. Our address was McCook, went to church in Culbertson, and went to high school in Hayes Center, and the county seat was in Frontier County. So we were involved in all of those communities to some degree. Anyway, I went to high school there.

"I guess the expectation was that I was going to go to college, because there was never any question that that's sort of what my folks had in mind. And so I headed in that direction. . . ."

I guess the expectation was that I was going to go to college, because there was never any question that that's sort of what my folks had in mind. And so I headed in that direction. Thirty-three kids–I was at the top of my class there too, which was a little more difficult than with just Rosalie, but I managed to do that, so I got to be the valedictorian of Hayes Center and I got a couple of little scholarships.

Attended McCook Junior College for Two Years

I went to McCook Junior College for two years and sort of took pre-engineering stuff. I think the reason I did that must have been because I was good at math and science. I'm not sure, I never thought about it too much. But anyway, I was in pre-engineering stuff.

Received a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering at the University of Nebraska

Then I went to the University of Nebraska in Lincoln and picked up a bachelor's degree in civil engineering.

Married in 1971 and His Wife Finished Her Degree at the University of Nebraska and He Took a Masters Degree in Civil Engineering, Both Receiving Their Degrees in December of 1973

We got married in '71, and my wife was in college in Kearney, and she was in teachers college,[1] and, newly married, she decided, well, she was going to get a real job, and she went to work for an insurance company. And after about a year, she decided that was ***not*** what she wanted to do for a future, so we talked to my folks and they said, "Well, we'll kind of bankroll you through this if Linda wants to get back into school," which she did in Lincoln.

And what that did, though, it put me a year ahead of her when I graduated. And so as I was graduating. EPA [Environmental Protection Agency][2] at that time had grants that they were pretty liberally providing to engineering students that were willing to go to graduate school and focus in the sanitary engineering and wastewater treatment, environmental engineering kind of areas, and I had picked up enough hours that I could get the EPA grant. I had nine hours of credit already, I could get a master's in a year, Linda and I could graduate at the same time, so it was just an obvious fit. So I jumped on that, and, in fact, ***did*** that. Both of us then graduated in mid-year, in December of '73, I guess it was, from the University of Nebraska.

Worked for Reclamation During the Summer While in College

I got hooked up with Reclamation during the summers when I was in college, particularly when I was in McCook College, and it was a great summer job. I managed to get a job. I was working for Fred Corey, who was a guy that worked in the regional office in Denver. They were running an irrigation management service kind of thing, and Fred needed people that could dig holes. And so Tom Brose [phonetic] and I, we got the job digging the holes and monitoring the fields and doing

1. Founded in 1905, the Nebraska State Normal School at Kearney became the Nebraska State Teachers College in 1921 and then Kearney State College in 1963. In 1989 the Nebraska legislature moved the college from the Nebraska State College System to become the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Nebraska_at_Kearney on September 20, 2011, at about 11:15 A.M.

2. A note on editorial conventions. In the text of these interviews, information in parentheses, ( ), is actually on the tape. Information in brackets, [ ], has been added to the tape either by the editor to clarify meaning or at the request of the interviewee in order to correct, enlarge, or clarify the interview as it was originally spoken. Words have sometimes been struck out by editor or interviewee in order to clarify meaning or eliminate repetition. In the case of strikeouts, that material has been printed at 50% density to aid in reading the interviews but assuring that the struckout material is readable.

The transcriber and editor also have removed some extraneous words such as false starts and repetitions without indicating their removal. The meaning of the interview has not been changed by this editing.

In an effort to conform to standard academic rules of usage (see *The Chicago Manual of Style*), individual's titles are only capitalized in the text when they are specifically used as a title connected to a name, e.g., Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton as opposed to Gale Norton, secretary of the interior; Commissioner John Keys as opposed to John Keys, commissioner. Likewise formal titles of acts and offices are capitalized but abbreviated usages are not, e.g., Division of Planning as opposed to "planning;" the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992, as opposed to "the 1992 act."

that kind of stuff as part of this program working during the summers.

Both of those guys have since left Reclamation and have their own businesses. Fred's got a big outfit in Phoenix, Arizona, and he's kind of made a business out of irrigation scheduling.

"Spent most of the time in Kansas and lived on per diem, and as a GS-3, I was in tall cotton. . . ."

But anyway, after working a summer doing that, and since I was in college in McCook, and the project office was there, I worked fifteen or twenty hours a week while I was going to school–for the Bureau, and it was just a tremendous summer job. And then the following year I worked that summer on a drainage investigation crew. Spent most of the time in Kansas and lived on per diem, and as a GS-3, I was in tall cotton.

Jobs Were Plentiful, but He Chose to Work for Reclamation

But when I graduated from college, then, jobs were pretty plentiful. Engineering jobs were fairly easy to come by, and I had a lot of interviews, and I had some offers start to come in. Ray Aldrige, who had been my boss in McCook, called me in Lincoln one time. He said, "Hey, I've been getting all these calls from people asking about you for references, you know. What gives?"

And I said, "Well Ray, I'm getting out of college. I figure it's time to get a job and move on with things."

And he said, "Well you ought to stop by and see me next time you're back here." He said, "I happen to have a job. Jack McNeese [phonetic] is leaving, and I have a job out here."

And I'd never really thought about it up until sort of at that time. I thought, "Well gee. That's something I need to do. I guess I'll do that." I was going to be home in a couple of weeks. And that's when then I started–I did, I stopped and talked to Ray. I ***knew*** enough about Reclamation for what I had done with him, you know, summers and part-time, and it was fun, but I sort of had never really thought about it as where I was really going to ***work–***where I was going to go to work.

And as I started stacking up these offers and doing interviews, I had an offer from like the state of Minnesota, and the best-paying offer I had was with Black and Veach Engineering in Kansas City, which was a big engineering firm. And then I started to sort of weigh this public service/private thing which was–I'd never really thought about public service as a place for a career versus private sector kind of a thing. And I started chewing on that.

I remember in Kansas City when I went down for the interview with Black and Veach and they were offering, as I say, more money than you could get definitely with the Bureau or the state of Minnesota, and I had a couple of others, but after the

interview, I'm sure Black and Veach didn't care for this a whole lot, but–I left and I went out the front door and I went in the back door, back where the engineers worked back there, and I went over and I talked to this guy about his job. He'd been there three or four years, something like that, and he was still on a ***drafting*** board. I said, "Well, gee, they said that that's where you start."

He said, "Yeah, that's where you start, and that's where you are for quite a while, too."

I said, "Well, have you gotten a raise?"

"Oh, yeah, yeah, I've gotten a couple of little raises."

And I said, "Well how's the work?"

And he said, "Oh, it's about the same."

I thought, "Ah, jeez, I'm not sure that's quite what I wanted to get into." And it may have just been I picked a guy to talk to, but I kind of looked around and I saw all these guys sort of there looked like they were doing the same thing. And I was never real big on the technical precision kind of thing, and I thought, "Ah, I don't know."

So anyway, I got back, and a couple days later I wrote a letter to Black and Veach and I turned down their offer.

"I had been sort of negotiating with Bob Kutz . . . He's the project manager in Grand Island, Nebraska, and he started with the Bureau when he was seventeen. He's worked forty-seven years on the same project, and he's now the project manager. . . ."

I had been sort of negotiating with Bob Kutz[3]–Bob's somebody you might ought to talk to. He's the project manager in Grand Island, Nebraska, and he started with the Bureau when he was seventeen. He's worked forty-seven years on the same project, and he's now the project manager. He's really quite a guy, and when it comes to Reclamation, he's a guy I think a lot of, and he's seen, from a single-project perspective, more than anybody.

". . . I was smart enough to read the rulebook, and I saw that if you had a master's degree you *could* start as a GS-9, and Kutz thought I ought to start as a GS-5, which was sort of déjà vu, because when I started in the summer, in college, he wanted me to start as a 1. I didn't know what it was, but I asked him if he ever knew anybody that was a 1, and he said, 'No.". . . I said, "Gosh, what about a 2?' . . ."

But I was sort of negotiating with him because I was smart enough to read the

3. Reclamation's oral history program includes an interview with Bob Kutz.

rulebook, and I saw that if you had a master's degree you ***could*** start as a GS-9, and Kutz thought I ought to start as a GS-5, which was sort of déjà vu, because when I started in the summer, in college, he wanted me to start as a 1. I didn't know what it was, but I asked him if he ever knew anybody that was a 1, and he said, "No." (laughter)

And I said, "Well Bob, I don't know if I want to be the lowest guy that's ever worked out here."

And he said, "Well, you know, you don't know a whole lot, and you're just out of high school, and you're getting in to college, and I don't know."

I said, "Gosh, what about a 2?" So anyway, we negotiated and I end up with a 2. My first job was a GS-2. I think he must have been a 2, because he kind of caved in.

Well anyway, so I get out of college, we're kind of back to the same thing. I said, "Well gosh, Bob, I see you can start as a 9."

"Nope. No, no, no, we can't do that."

And that's when I did use the offers I had a little bit to kind of lean on him, and said, "God, Bob, I've got these other offers and they're ***well above*** a 9." Anyway, bottom line on that, he finally caved in to me, which he remembers to this day that he allowed me to start as a 9. So I got to skip from a 4, which was my last summer job, up to a 9. Bob–he's still not sure that was a very good decision. But anyway, I did. And that's sort of how I got there.

"It turned out my first job was a non-engineering kind of a job, which was fine with me. It was the guy that basically talked to all the water districts and decided how to meet their schedule, how much water do we release, and where do we release it from . . ."

It turned out my first job was a non-engineering kind of a job, which was fine with me. It was the guy that basically talked to all the water districts and decided how to meet their schedule, how much water do we release, and where do we release it from, and talked with these guys every day and take their orders and all that kind of stuff, and call all the dam tenders on the radio and find out what's going on. I was in heaven. Man, it was great. It was a great job. So that's how I got to McCook.

Storey: This was McCook, not Grand Island?

Patterson: This was in McCook. There was a project office in McCook which at one time, I think, during the construction of a lot of those dams in southwest Nebraska, that project office had, I don't know, three-, four-, five hundred people. It was in Indianola at that time, at the old prisoner of war camp. By the time I was there, we had moved into McCook itself, into–I don't know what it was. It was an old dance hall at one time. It was a big old building on the north side of town and the Bureau

was in there. I don't know how many people they had then, but quite a few, and it was a project office. Grand Island was a separate office at that time, and it was more of a planning-type office.

Storey: This was 1974?

Was Late to Work His First Day on the Job at Reclamation

Patterson: January of '74 is when I started. I'll never forget my first day at work, because it's when I learned that you sort of have to be creative. We hadn't found a place to live in town, so we were staying with my parents, which was twenty miles north of town. In Nebraska that time of year, you can get kind of crummy roads. I'm one that's a little prone to drive a little faster than I should, and I was on my way into work. I was in town, I was coming up Third Street, and I was only about three blocks from the Bureau office and there's this T–you're coming up Third Street and there's a T, you have to go right or left. Well, I was going a little faster than I should have, and I didn't go right or left. I went onto the guy's lawn right in front of this T and got stuck. I mean, I was had.

I thought, "Okay. Here you are, Patterson. It's ten minutes you're supposed to be at work. It's your first day on the job, and you're stuck on a snowdrift on some guy's front lawn." So, needless to say, I was late.

Well, I found out how the system worked that day, because there's two places you have to go your first day of work: to your boss' and to personnel. And I didn't lie, but I ***know*** that Ellie Trafagan [phonetic], who was the personnel lady, ***thought*** that I had been up and checked in with Ray Aldrige, my boss. And I ***know*** that Ray ***thought*** that I must have stopped off and saw Ellie first, so they's fine. They never did know I was late.

Storey: You just didn't say anything?

Patterson: I didn't say anything, you know. (laughter) All I was, was I was filling out papers and doing all that jazz and getting all this orientation, and I got to thinking, "Why didn't somebody jump on my case for being late the first day?" And bottom line, they must not have known. (laughter) Which is fine.

Storey: What was your degree specifically?

". . . my master's degree was actually in sanitary engineering. . . . which is *part* of the civil engineering department in Nebraska. Again, there you can take certain electives and I took a lot of the environmental engineering things, whatever they had. . . ."

Patterson: My bachelor's degree is civil engineering, and that's what it says, bachelor of science, civil engineering, University of Nebraska. Within that, there's a lot of electives that you can take, and most of the electives that I took sort of lead me towards the water side of it. And then my [master's] ~~***bachelor's***~~ degree was actually

in sanitary engineering.

Storey: You mean your M.A.?

Patterson: I mean my master's, yeah. Master of Science. Sorry.

Storey: M.S.?

Patterson: It's in sanitary engineering, which is ***part*** of the civil engineering department in Nebraska. Again, there you can take certain electives and I took a lot of the environmental engineering things, whatever they had. That's what I was in.

Storey: Were there any professors that stand out in your career?

". . . we called him Fox. . . . he was the guy that taught surveying. He really loved surveying. . . . and he had written all the textbooks. . . . you had to run levels from a certain point on the campus all the way around and down by the stadium and whatnot. Every class for forty years had run this same set of levels, right? So my roommate and I . . . But we figured that those levels were pretty neat. You could watch the coeds around campus, so we managed to get our hands on the same set of levels everybody else's were in. We knew it was 0.88 elevation difference and all of that, so we kind of filled the field book out and we were out there watching the levels. And that was great, looking through there and watching all the girls and this and that. It was all fine until Lego comes up and, 'Let me see your field book.' And he noted that our field book was done and we were only halfway through. (laughter) So we had a little visit about that, and he made us run them three times and he was on our case for it . . ."

Patterson: Yeah, there were a couple of guys there that I remember. There's one guy, we called him Fox. His name was Adrien Lego [phonetic] and he was the guy that taught surveying. He really loved surveying. He thought the world must rotate around surveying, and kind of your own worth rotated around your ability to survey, which I didn't quite agree with, but he was really a great guy, and he had written all the textbooks. Every textbook that we used in Nebraska was written by Lego. I remember him, he was tough.

You had to survey–you had to run levels from a certain point on the campus all the way around and down by the stadium and whatnot. Every class for forty years had run this same set of levels, right? So my roommate and I were in the class together, and he was kind of a free spirit. He's now city engineer for Lincoln, so the guy's smart enough, and he's got a great job. But we figured that those levels were pretty neat. You could watch the coeds around campus, so we managed to get our hands on the same set of levels everybody else's were in. We knew it was 0.88 elevation difference and all of that, so we kind of filled the field book out and we were out there watching the levels. And that was great, looking through there and watching all the girls and this and that. It was all fine until Lego comes up and, "Let me see your field book." And he noted that our field book was done and we were only halfway through. (laughter) So we had a little visit about that, and he made us

run them three times and he was on our case for it, but it was fine.

And then there were a couple of other guys. Mark Hammer. He went on to become–I think he was the dean, then, later, of the civil engineering department. But Mark Hammer was a real smart guy, and a real creative guy.

And then my advisor in graduate school was a guy named Terence McGee [phonetic], and I think a year or two after I left, he went to–is Tulane in New Orleans?

Storey: Yes.

Patterson: He went down to Tulane. That's what I asked Aaron Watkins [phonetic]. Aaron Watkins is our guy who works for us in Washington, and he's from New Orleans. I asked him, "Is Tulane in New Orleans? I don't know all those foreign schools." Anyway, McGee, he went down there. I remember those guys.

I had a lady in McCook, Gwendoline McKinsey [phonetic]. She's since passed away. She was teaching at this junior college. She was kind of one of a kind. She was the math person. Just brilliant. Brilliant lady. Lived by herself with a couple of big dogs. You know, she was a little eccentric, but she was really good. I learned a lot from her, and she was kind of neat.

Although my same roommate and I, he was a cowboy from up north, and he and I roomed together in McCook for a while, too, and she told us one time that she was real fond of venison. Well, Roger Figert [phonetic], he shot several deer a year, one of which he had a permit for, but up on the ranch it was not a problem. So we sort of cut school for a week one time, and thought, "Jeez. The only one that's really going to get on our case is going to be Miss McKinsey, so what's the game plan?"

And old Figert, he said, "Well, we've got a deep freeze full of deer meat in here. What we'll do is we'll just take her in a cooler of deer steaks and tell her we've been up to Bedford [phonetic] and managed to get her a deer."

Beautiful! That's a great plan. She loved it. "Well, I don't know about you boys. You know you missed some stuff, but I suppose you could make it up. And thanks for the venison." (laughter) It was really good. So she was kind of a classic.

Storey: Did I hear you say that you talked to the ditch riders or the watermaster?

How Water Scheduling Worked at That Time

Patterson: My job, I worked in the water operations branch, and I was the guy that was sort of in charge of collecting all the information. It's different. We didn't have these SCADA[4] systems where you had a computer that went out and pulled in all the data and you could schedule releases. You did it. Somebody had to do it, and so that was

4. Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition.

my job.

So every morning the first thing I would do would come in, and I think we had twelve dam tenders scattered around Kansas and Nebraska, and we had a couple of radio systems, so I would get on the phone or on the radio and I would get the morning report from all of these guys. What's the temperature, what was the evaporation yesterday, what's that inflow, outflow, and what's the lake level? That kind of information.

So from every one of those reservoirs, the dam tender would get on the radio and he would give me those reports. And then I'd manually fill out this big long form that they'd been using for years and years and years. So that told us kind of what the status of everything was.

And then the next thing I would do would be to get on the radio or telephone with the irrigation district managers. So these were people that didn't work for the Bureau, but they were the manager, or a couple of them, the bigger ones, had maybe a watermaster that worked for the district. And so I would hook up with them later in the morning and they'd say, "We're going to need 250 cfs Thursday. Great." Take that down. Then what I'd have to do is figure out, okay, how am I going to get 250 cfs on Thursday. When do we have to release it, what reservoir do we to release it from, how much do we have to release? Because you have losses, and what's the temperature going to do? The hotter it was, the more losses you have, and all that kind of jazz. So that was pretty much my job. And then at the end of every month, we had these monthly reports you had to do. You take all this daily stuff and whatever, put it together.

But when I ***started*** there, nothing had ever been really done on the computer. I mean very, very little. We had an old Bendix downstairs that filled this room. I mean, a great big huge computer that they had started to use for some of the hydrology studies and whatnot.

Started to Work on a Supervisory Control System for the Systems Operated out of McCook

And, we had this idea that we could put in a supervisory control system for these dams, which was a ***thousand*** miles from the project office if you made the rounds to all these dams. I mean, ***these*** suckers were spread out everywhere. And there was no power system, and the supervisory control systems up until that point that were done in the Bureau were all through the power systems and whatnot. Well, my boss had had the idea that maybe we could put a supervisory control system in out there, and it could gather all this data that I was having to do every day and whatnot.

So here I was. I'd been in college for five and a half years, and the last thing I wanted to hear was what I heard, and that was, "Hey, we're going to send you to school, because we need somebody here that can help us figure out how to put one of these supervisory control systems in and what we need for computer technology." And ***man***, that was the last thing that I wanted to hear. But I did. There were three of

us that ended up–in fact, we went to Stanford for about a month, and we went down to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, to some kind of a school.

And from the time that I started in McCook, over the next about two or three years, we went through the process and we acquired and had this system installed, supervisory control system out there. And it's still there. In fact, it's driven by an old Modcomp II computer, which happens to be the same relic we have upstairs here.

I couldn't believe it. I come out there to C-V-P, the biggest water project in the Bureau of Reclamation, I go to the control center, here's the same antique computer that I started on when I was out in McCook in 1974. It's still here. I just couldn't believe it. It needs replaced, no question, but they keep it wired together.

"We were on that transition from 'do everything manually and fill all the forms out,' to 'Is there any way computer systems can make our job easier and help with some of this?'. . ."

So anyway, that was how we got in. We were on that transition from "do everything manually and fill all the forms out," to "Is there any way computer systems can make our job easier and help with some of this?" So I kind of got into the middle of that. It was kind of fun. It was different.

The ***firm*** that ended up providing the supervisory control system was an outfit out of Sacramento called Wismer Becker [phonetic], I think. They were stationed out here. Because after we got going, I had to spend some time in Sacramento at their place, which–I'm still not quite sure where it was. I think it was South Sacramento over Elk Grove area. I'd never been to Sacramento, and so I was lost. I still don't know quite where it was. Anyway, that system's still out there, chugging along.

Storey: Could you tell me what a supervisory control system is?

Patterson: Well, it does a couple of things. What it does, it's a computer master station that is connected by either telephone lines or radio to remote sites, and a remote site is one of the dams. And on the other end, then you'll have what's called a remote terminal unit, R-T-U, which is kind of a local microprocessor box that is set up so that you can run sensors in from all of these places.

All this stuff that I had to get daily over the radio, now we would have a sensor on the lake level, and every few seconds or few minutes this microprocessor would go out and read the lake level and it would store it, and it would monitor a river gauge downstream and it would store that data. Temperature, all this jazz.

And then every ten minutes, the master station in McCook would initiate a polling process where over the radio system it would go out to all of these sites and ask for the data to be sent in. So every ten minutes this data would come in from all the remote sites into the master station in McCook. So all that data now could be gathered automatically.

The other part of it is you could program the master station to make these releases. You could do gate movements from a central location, and you could set it up in a way that–you know I said I'd have to figure out where to release the water and when to do it. Well, now you could actually program it to do it at four in the morning if that was the most efficient time to do it, rather than me doing it at five o'clock before I left work the day before rather than come in to town.

So you can program that, and what it would do is it would store that data, and then at four o'clock it would send out to that remote terminal unit the signal to move the gate two-tenths, or whatever, and it would do it. And then every ten minutes it monitored and it'd get gate positions and all that kind of stuff.

Storey: Does this mean that dam tenders were made obsolete by the technology?

Patterson: What it did, it moved them into a different place. We still kept the dam tenders out there, because with the system there was a lot of checking you had to do and that kind of stuff. But what we did then, we formed a sort of roving maintenance crews, and it allowed those guys to–you know, if there were five of them that happened to be located within fifty miles of each other, those five people then, rather than spend a lot of their time on this operational stuff, they were freed up and they could go do maintenance on the gates, or paint the pipes, or whatever. And they kind of rove around and spend a day working at one of the sites and the next day at a different one, that kind of stuff. So it freed them up so they could spend ***more*** of their time on maintenance as opposed to operation.

Storey: Did Reclamation have a lot of supervisory control systems?

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. MARCH 22, 1994.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. MARCH 22, 1994.

Storey: I was asking if this was the only supervisory control system in Reclamation.

Patterson: No. The other ones, though, were all on power systems. We were in the Lower Missouri Region at that time, which was headquartered in Denver. We were a project office on that, and in that region they had two other systems, one in Casper, Wyoming, which was the North Platte Project, and then they had a supervisory control system in Loveland, Colorado, which was Colorado-Big Thompson.

Storey: But those were on power systems?

Patterson: They were on power systems. I don't know. I don't know whether there was any other just water operation thing or not. That may have been the first one. It seemed like the first one, I can tell you that–we were plowing a lot of new ground at the time.

Storey: In what way?

Reclamation Wanted to Keep the Cost of the Supervisory Control System Reasonable

Patterson: Well, just crazy things, like we couldn't afford to have a microwave system because the cost of this we wanted to keep reasonable because a lot of it was going to be passed on as an O&M cost to the water users out there, and they ***were not*** real progressive, and the thought of having a computer in charge of opening one of their gates was not something they were particularly interested in. But the few of them that were the more forward-thinking folks, "Well, yeah. Maybe the world is changing. Maybe, maybe not. Maybe we can try this ***if*** it doesn't cost us too much," was kind of the thing. And so ideally, the communication between the master in the field, as a minimum you wanted to have a microwave system, which was very reliable communication.

Well, that was a lot more expensive than we can afford, so we ended up through Motorola putting in basically an FM system, which was a lot lower technology to communicate out to the field, but it was a lot less expensive. But had its problems, you know, it wasn't as reliable, and blah, blah, blah. And so we spent a lot of time trying to make that system work.

We made a mistake, I think, in that we should have had one contractor provide the control system and the radio system, so you'd have one person responsible. As it turned out, we had one provide the control system and Motorola provide the radio system. It was one of these things that every time something was wrong, if the control guys say, "Well the radio system's the problem," the radio guys, "It's the control system's the problem." And here we were kind of holding the bag trying to make the system work and show people it wasn't just a big boondoggle, and that this was sort of the future technology, and it would work. And so it seemed like we were plowing a lot of new ground in that area.

Storey: When you say the control system, we're talking about the software for the computers?

Patterson: Software and the hardware for the computer.

Storey: How long did it take you to implement the system so that you felt it was working efficiently?

Patterson: Oh, man, it was a couple of years, then to get it debugged, get everything sort of working, and by then I think it was probably working–I'd grade it about a C, you know it wasn't . . . It never really did meet all the expectations that we had. We always had to sort of keep an eye on things and make sure that it was working. But it took a while.

Storey: So you were double-checking on whether the gates had actually opened, whether the water was actually flowing, whether the sensors worked?

Double Checking the System to Make Sure it Worked Correctly

Patterson: Yeah, yeah. We double-checked on a lot of it.

Storey: Did you do that using people from your office or using the dam tenders? Or, how did that work?

Patterson: In the field, the dam tenders would pretty much check on it, but they didn't have to be there right at the time. At first we had them watching to make sure it was going to work, and then the next phase is, "Hey, when you guys get back from wherever you were working today, go out and check on this stuff and make sure everything's fine." kind of thing. So we got a little more flexibility as time went on.

I don't know, I think they're at the point probably with that system out there that these things generally–for the power systems, the life span on them was eight, ten, twelve years. Let's see, this was in '74, so that system is still there, and it's been in twenty years and they're talking about replacing it with something. Which now, you can buy technology that is really, you know–it's amazing what it'll do right off the shelf. Johnson Control, people like that, they have this stuff you can just plug it in and they've got it all figured out. Takes all the fun out of it, but it probably works a heck of a lot better.

Storey: Then this control system that was being implemented then was being developed as it was being implemented? Is that correct?

Patterson: Yeah, I'd say that's fair. I'd say that's fair, yeah. I mean, we had to plan it. Since it was new, rather than the normal way the government would buy stuff and that is describe, spec out what you want, put it out, have people bid, and take the low bid, this was new enough and we knew ***what*** we wanted it to do, but we didn't know enough to, say, spec this thing out.

So we went into the two-step procurement process where we described what we wanted it to do, took solicitations from a number of people. You tell us how you would put a system together to do this, and then we conferred with each of them and finally decided, ***not*** just on cost, but cost-plus, sort of what we thought was the best technical way to meet the needs kind of a thing, decided which contractor to go with.

That probably was a good decision to go that way, because we really didn't know. And even the experts in Denver in the E&R Center and the guys in the regional office that had dealt with the other power systems, they weren't real sure how to spec this thing out, so they all concurred that was probably the way to go about acquiring it.

Storey: You have any idea why Reclamation would have chosen to develop a system like this at McCook rather than somewhere else?

Patterson: Oh, I think because the folks in McCook kind of stepped up and said, "We want to do it." I don't know. It's interesting. That's a good question, because I think that's how–how do things happen, how do decisions get made? And it usually takes somebody that takes the initiative and says, "Hey, we ought to do this or we ought to do whatever." And that's kind of what happened there.

Ray Aldrich, who was the head of operations there, for whatever reason, he thought this was the way to go, and that's just kind of how it happened. I didn't question at all. I was just, "God, I've got to go to college again." (laughter) They'd pretty much decided to do it by the time it got there, and so I didn't question it.

Storey: What did you have to go to school to ***learn*** in order to do this program?

Patterson: Actually, we had to go learn how to program some of this stuff that was done in binary–you know, on and off, sixteen bits, and stuff that nobody would mess with now. But we had to go learn how to do some ***real*** fundamental programming stuff with this. And then later, once we decided what system we were going to get, we had to go learn how to sort of debug stuff when it didn't work and all of that. I don't remember.

Storey: Did you have a contractor's rep sitting there in McCook ***with you*** that you relied upon? How did this work?

Patterson: Yeah, we did. Once we got going, we had a guy, his name was Leo, and he was a classic. Man, this guy–I mean in McCook we weren't sure he would make it. He was from California and he had a ponytail, and ***nobody*** in McCook had a ponytail, if they were a guy. And here was Leo, and I became really good friends with this guy. God, he was wonderful. But he was sort of the contractor's rep that did the software stuff.

I can remember the first time we went downtown. We went down to get a beer someplace, and Leo and I and, I think, Dennis Aleker [phonetic], another guy was with us, and I'd never been stared at in McCook before, but when I was going down the street with Leo, everybody tended to notice you. He had sandals and a ponytail and dressed a little different than most of the folks from around there, but what a neat guy he was. But he was our contractor's rep and he did a great job. It was an experience for him, too, because I don't think he'd been outside of California much. That's sort of how it worked.

Storey: How long do you suppose he was there?

Patterson: Oh, man, I think long enough that he sort of got–everybody knew him and most people that got to know him thought he was okay. He was probably there close to a year maybe, on and off. Mostly on. He was there a long time. He was real committed, he was really committed to make this thing work. So he was there and worked as many hours as it took and do whatever it took try to get the system to work. So he was there for a long time.

Storey: Do you remember his last name?

Patterson: No, I don't. I really don't. I probably could find it somewhere.

His One Room School

Storey: I'd like to diverge back for a little bit. Your one-room schoolhouse, how many kids were there?

Patterson: Oh, jeez, well, it was K through eight, and the big class was my brother's, and there were four in that class. A couple others that were one, so twelve, fifteen maybe.

Storey: One teacher?

Patterson: One teacher, Mrs. Caston [phonetic].

Storey: Why didn't you go back to the farm?

"At that time, if you went to college, you didn't go back to the farm. Now the only way you can go back to the farm is if you've been to college and have a business degree and agronomy degree and all this other stuff. . . ."

Patterson: I don't know. Like I say, I think there was this expectation, that we never really talked a lot about, that you're smart enough and you're just going to go to college. At that time, if you went to college, you didn't go back to the farm. Now the only way you can go back to the farm is if you've been to college and have a business degree and agronomy degree and all this other stuff. But I don't know. But, I don't know, that was just not the expectation.

Storey: Do you think it was the same way with your brothers also?

Patterson: With my second brother it was. He's an engineer. He was three years behind me, three and a half years younger, and he works for an environmental engineering firm in Fort Collins now. I think it was sort of the same way with him.

And then my ***little*** brother, ***Ryan***, works for the Bureau in Boise. He's their repayment branch chief now. He's eleven years behind me, and if anybody might have done it, it might have been Ryan. But I don't know, just didn't.

Actually, it's worked out pretty well for my folks because there's a neighbor kid that is just a tremendous kid, one that can pass muster with my dad, which most people can't. And he's just a great kid and he's a hard worker. He wanted to farm, and to get into farming now takes so much, takes so much money, takes so much everything. My dad worked out an arrangement with this kid, Mike, where he would take my dad's cows and do all the work, and they would split the calves fifty-fifty. So this allows Mike to get half of the calves and he can sell part of them make some money, and he can keep the good heifers and he can start building up his own herd and that kind of stuff. Plus Mike's dad farms, and so it's worked out, and like I say, he passes muster, so it's worked out.

Storey: When you graduated in '73 and went to work for Reclamation in '74, you mentioned that it wasn't ***really*** an engineering job. What did you have to learn in order to properly do that job, and how long did it take you to learn it?

Learning to Do Water Scheduling in the McCook Office

Patterson: Well, I don't know if I ever quite learned it, but what I had to do, I think this is what everybody does. You know, when you're in college, the old textbook's one thing, and that's not how things really are. Well, this was really different, because what I ***had*** to do is I ended up having to ***talk*** with about twenty people every day that were outside of the office, and that's where I got my information.

I had to call these dam tenders. They were all different personalities, believe me. This one guy, Tim Jackson, ah, God, what a classic. He was the dam tender at Medicine, Medicine Creek. He was the guy that always told me, he said, "I'm so poor I can't even pay attention." (laughter) But anyway, it's the one thing I learned is how to get along with those guys and get the stuff that I needed to do my job.

Then with the district managers, you know, they were relying on me to get them their water when they needed it, and if it didn't happen, the farmers were all over their back, and they were on my back. So I guess what I learned, which is kind of what's involved in every job, is how to relate to all these folks and get the information you need to do it and kind of help them get their thing done, too.

"I truly never did have an engineering job with the Bureau. . . ."

There was nothing technical about any of that. You know, the technical part of this was sort of, yeah, I had to figure out how to do this computer programming and all of that stuff. But, I wasn't particularly good at that. I could do it. I mean, I was good at if I wanted to, but it just wasn't as much fun. So I don't know, so it was that. I truly never did have an engineering job with the Bureau. I just haven't, and not because I avoided it. Maybe it is because I avoided it. I don't know. I just never really have, which is fine. We're probably a safer country for it. (laughter)

Storey: There has to be something to figuring out and timing water releases and so on other than just, say, dumb fool luck. I mean, there's ***some technique*** to it.

Patterson: Oh, yeah. Yeah, you go through, you make some calculations. It's more real time, though. You kind of take a look at your last decision and how close you got and what's different now. Is the weather different, or the losses a lot higher than you thought? Or did you cut it too–you know, whatever.

So, yeah, we had figured out what the normal losses would be for this fifty-two-mile reach of river and it wasn't the same. I mean, if you added fifty second-feet losses, it would be one thing. If you kicked 300 in, they were going to be a whole lot different, and so you did this kind of incremental thing as you worked your way through it.

"And as John Lawson always tells me, 'It's better to be lucky than smart.'. . ."

So yeah, there was some technical stuff to it, but there was nothing textbook about it. You had some data. You relied on that and then made your best cut. And as John Lawson always tells me, "It's better to be lucky than smart." So you just

kind of relied on what happened.

And what I did is I learned to sort of share the decision with these district managers. Sort of, I think, the way it had been done, is, "Okay, here's what I need and here's when I need it, by God," and then we'd make our cut. So I started getting smarter. Finally, I'd call them back and I'd say, "Well, Verney [phonetic], I been running through this thing and I'm thinking maybe we ought to release another 200 at three o'clock from here and whatever." Kind of, "What do you think?"

And sort of got him, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, that sounds okay to me." So that the next day he would call to chew me out because it didn't work out, I'd say, "Yeah, when we were talking about that yesterday, I wasn't sure how that was going to work."

And he said, "Yeah, I know. I know, yeah."

So that was sort of a trick that I learned, let them kind of share in the decision, and it worked. I mean, it made my life easier. As a matter of fact, it got to the point where, by the time I left, they'd call their order in and say, "That probably means we need to do this and this at this time and whatever."

I'd say, "Yeah, it sounds good to me." So it sort of transitioned over that time I was there, which was about four and a half years, I guess. I don't know how they do it now, but it worked for me.

Storey: So you were working on the basis of sort of built-up personal knowledge and some previous experience from the person prior who had done this?

Patterson: Little bit, yeah. He had retired, though, so he had all the stuff. I mean, he had everything written down and all the stuff. His name was Jack McNeese [phonetic], who turned out–his son married my sister[-in-law], my wife's sister. (laughter) Small world, McCook. But Jack had written this down.

I was the first engineer that had ever been in the job. Before, it was a technician's job. It always had whatever they call them, hydrologic technicians or something. And Ray Aldrich, again, who was the guy I was telling you about was the branch chief, I guess he decided he wanted an engineer, and he got me instead to take over that job because–I'm not sure. I think several things. One is they were moving to this supervisory control stuff and he just thought he needed more real engineering expertise in there. So I kind of started turning it in from truly just a technical technician's cookbook kind of thing into something else. I wouldn't call it a professional or engineered or anything else, but it changed a little bit.

Storey: Is there any way to intelligently discuss water losses on that project? I know the project data book, for instance, ***gives*** you water losses on a project, but that obviously has to be a very ***general*** kind of figure.

Patterson: Yeah. Water losses is a–you know, what's lost to me and lost to you might be my supply. You know you get in to that, too. That is a problem, as you know, what's

really lost? Because if you look at some of the system there, it was interlinked, and so what actually on those forms you're talking about is called waste. There's a form on there that says waste. And what that is, that's the quantity of water that went through these wasteways. That's the terminology that the Bureau used, probably still does.

Turned out that the wasteway on one of the upstream projects went right back into the river and was rediverted by Frenchman-Cambridge[5] downstream as part of their supply. So it showed up again down there. And that's stuff you had to figure out. You know you had to find out what these guys were ***wasting*** up here, because ***that*** was coming back in and that was going to help you meet this thing downstream.

And so this while idea of loss and waste and conservation, even, is one that isn't quite as straightforward as it may seem to be, because if it's returning to the river in any usable form, you've got to be a little careful or you're going to mess things up. If you cut that off, then you've cut somebody else's supply off.

And losses–generally the seepage losses, if you're in a usable groundwater area, those losses are recharging the groundwater. Sometimes things aren't what they are called, and that's hard, because then you know, gee, is there a better way to run the system than have all of the waste and all of these losses? Yeah, there probably is. It's called water management. And you can do a better job of managing it, but that doesn't mean you're wasting less or whatever. It's kind of tricky.

So, yeah, those forms that we've published, and the crop data, and the yields, and that stuff, you've got to watch out for that stuff, because I know how it's put together. Farmers, they exaggerate. There's two kinds of personalities. I mean, my dad, I swear, he always got more bushels to the acre than anybody around, but he always told everybody he got less. He'd go over, "Hey, how's your wheat doing?"

His neighbor, "Oh, man, this is great. Getting forty-eight bushel."

"Wow!" My dad's was making fifty-five. "Wow, that's really good. I don't know, we're not doing that well this year," kind of a thing.

So you have those kind of guys, and then these other ones. I mean, the people that drive the new pickups and have all this new equipment, they'd make thirty bushel to the acre and they tell everybody including their banker, "Made fifty." Well, ***that's*** the kind of data that gets consolidated, and here it shows up in the Bureau of Reclamation crop census data, and it's in black and white and it's in print, and it gets used by people for various things. Maybe these guys balance out the guys on the other hand and you end up with something that's pretty close, but I wouldn't bet my paycheck on it. But it's the best data you have. It's probably the best data you have so . . .

Storey: Could I have you define for me loss and waste of water?

5. Frenchman-Cambridge Division of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program in Nebraska.

Loss and Waste in a Water Delivery System

Patterson: Well, that's kind of hard. I think generally my view is anytime you're using more water than you need to get the job done, then that's wasteful, if you're using more water than you need to get the job done. Now, it may turn out that the part that you're taking and you're not putting to good use somehow is making its way back to the river and in fact is becoming part of somebody else's supply, but I think, *to me*, you have to manage it where you only take, and you really put to the best use that that you take, and you leave the rest in the river so that it doesn't have to find its way there a different time, a different place. But you actually take it.

I don't know, I've always viewed it as when you go into these "all you can eat" things, it says, you know, "Take what you need, but need what you take," or whatever it is, it's kind of the same way with the water. Put to good use what you take. Anything above and beyond that is messing with the system.

As the pressure's become more and more, we can't afford to do anything but the best management of it. And that's why I shy away from waste and loss because I think it's all it gets down to management, the best management of it.

Storey: "To get the job done." That's an interesting phrase for me, because doesn't that, in many areas at least, automatically imply that you have to use more water than you actually need to nurture the plants, because you have to carry away salts and so on?

". . . it turned out that the highest yields were coming from people that use less water. . . . There was a curve that your yield increased as your water supply increased up to a point, but then above that, as you applied more water, the yield actually became less. And that's something I've always remembered as, hey, just plowing more water on to it is not even good for you, let alone everybody else that needs to rely on that. . . ."

Patterson: You know, I don't think so. My first job, again, going back when I worked for Fred Corey in this irrigation management stuff and we were just looking at the irrigation side of it and we looked at yield, and it turned out that the highest yields were coming from people that use less water. There was sort of this curve. There was a curve that your yield increased as your water supply increased up to a point, but then above that, as you applied more water, the yield actually became less. And that's something I've always remembered as, hey, just plowing more water on to it is not even good for you, let alone everybody else that needs to rely on that.

"The people that really had the yields were very judicious with the way they applied the water that they got. They stretched it out, they applied it at the right time, and they were good stewards that way, where the other folks just kind of turned it on and let it run and didn't have the yield. . . ."

The people that really had the yields were very judicious with the way they applied the water that they got. They stretched it out, they applied it at the right time, and they were good stewards that way, where the other folks just kind of turned it on and let it run and didn't have the yield. Now, maybe that's the mentality that they

had, that's the way they did everything, I don't know, but that's what I say. This guy would use–it was about fourteen inches. You know, you talk about these Bureau projects, you put on three feet, six feet, eight feet. These guys out there that were raising corn that had the best crop, that crop, after about fourteen-, sixteen inches, when they got up to even two feet, it started dropping off. And so why put it on? I mean, it was silly. Why are you going to put more water on there when it costs more to get it on, you're taking water that could be better used someplace else, and your yield's coming down?

Well, the reason they put it on is a lot of times they'd already paid for it, and it takes more work. It takes more work to manage it. So they turn it on and let it run.

Storey: This was your summer job that we're talking about here?

Patterson: Yeah, yeah, it was summer. Right.

Storey: Do you happen to know whether or not Joe Hall was the regional director at that time?

Patterson: Joe Hall. Let's see. No, Joe wasn't. Ingles[6]. Ingles. He'd been the project manager in McCook. What was his first name? Ingles. He was the R-D at that time.

Storey: Clair comes to my mind, but I don't know why.

Patterson: No, no. Jim Ingles. Jim Ingles. I think he was the R-D, at that time an R-D. It didn't matter to me. (laughter) I was out there just trying to do it. I'll tell you how bad it was. The R-D, I'm not sure who it was. It was Jim Ingles. This regional office, I mean, I knew there was what was called a regional office, but I really didn't know what they did, other than I knew they had a couple of pretty smart people in there, because Fred Corey was one of them and we were sort of working for him on this program.

But when it came time for my first promotion, whichever that is, time, I'm not sure what time. Anyway, when the local guys told me, "You're doing pretty good. We're putting you in for a promotion," I said, "This is great." Then I asked. I said, "What's putting it in? I mean, you just don't do that?"

"No, no, they have to send this in to the regional office."

And I thought, "Oh, yeah, you're going to talk to Fred."

"No, no, this has to go to two guys. Two guys out there, they basically control everything." Gordon Wendler, who ran the budget, and Willis Ervin, who was the 400 water and land chief, and I worked in the Water and Land Division part of the project office, so Gordon and Willis had to sign off on this promotion, which at the time seemed like kind of a silly way to go. (laughter) Here are these two guys

6. James M. Ingles served as regional director from 1968 until 1975. Joe D. Hall was regional director from 1975 until 1980.

that I didn't know from Adam . . .

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. MARCH 22, 1994.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. MARCH 22, 1994.

Storey: [This is tape] two of an interview by Brit Storey with Roger Patterson on March the 22nd, 1994.

One of the things you mentioned with the contractor who was working with you on the supervisory control system, Leo, you said he took as many hours as it took to get the job done.

Patterson: Yep, that's right.

Storey: I'm interested in how Reclamation supervisors and managers looked at the time you were expected to spend on the job. Could you describe that to me in your first job there at McCook?

The Work Ethic in McCook

Patterson: Yeah, it's real interesting, as a matter of fact. When you grow up on the farm, which a lot of the people around there did, it was a farming community, so a lot of us grew up on the farm and that sort of engenders a certain work ethic. Generally, if the sun hasn't gone down and you can see what you're doing and you have a job to do, you just keep going 'til you can't see anymore. And I saw a lot of that. You know, people really committed in doing this and that.

But on the other hand, there were some folks that I never understood, that really watched the clock. There was a lady that was our secretary, she was the secretary to the 400 Division chief. Her name was Frieda, Frieda Morse. Her husband was a radio guy in McCook. He was on K-B-R-L Radio, and I think he was some muckety-muck. He wasn't the station manager, but he was in management, then he was on the air some of the time, so everybody knew him around town kind of a thing.

But about twenty minutes before the official quitting time, Freida would start warming up, and she'd get her purse and she'd get her coat and she's kind of get in the starting blocks and she'd head downstairs and come up. That last twenty minutes–and it was every day. It was every day, and I mean, as the big hand moved itself towards the twelve and WHAM! She was outta there. And she moved faster at that point than you'd see all day. I mean, she just–BOOM, she was outta there. And there were several folks around that were sort of like that, so we had both ends of it. People that, you know, they sort of coasted along, and I don't think their output was all that high.

Then we had other people just sort of busting their tail, which is typical, I guess, of any office that you go, but it was interesting for me.

We had another guy that was the head of one of the branches in engineering,

and he was kind of a big guy, and he got sleepy after lunch. And ***every day***, I swear– his office was down by where the Xerox machine was–and you'd go by there after lunch, and you could bet on old Ray sort of be nodding over in his chair taking a little snooze. And so I was kind of ornery and I got in the habit of every day after lunch when I was down at the copy machine, I'd walk by his office, and if he was asleep, I'd just turn the light off in his office. Then I heard him one time when he woke up after whatever and he was rippin' and snortin' like, "How could somebody dare to shut my light off." And I thought, yeah right, how does somebody dare to be sleeping on the job especially when the taxpayers' are picking up most of your salary kind of a thing. So we had some of that, you know. We had some of that.

In every office I've worked, I think I've seen sort of both ends of it. But by and large, the work ethic amongst the folks in Reclamation where I've been has been really good. I don't know, I attribute a lot of that to sort of where a lot of them have come from and having that kind of a background may or may not be the case. But yeah, it would bother me to see somebody like Freida sort of warming up and getting ready to go and the rest of us scrambling around there.

And I never understood why the boss would tolerate that, you know. Even when you said something to him, "Hey, what's the story here?"

"You know her." (laughter)

Well, no, not really. I didn't get it. I think that's the biggest problem that I've seen around Reclamation, has been with management ~~, kind of with management,~~ because employees are generally good.

"Employees, I think, want to do a good job, and they're sort of like my two teenagers. I have an eighth grader and a ninth grader now, and whatever you expect them to do they'll pretty much do, but they're always going to be pushing over on the edge. And if it turns out that you don't care, then pretty soon they don't care about it. . . ."

Employees, I think, want to do a good job, and they're sort of like my two teenagers. I have an eighth grader and a ninth grader now, and whatever you expect them to do they'll pretty much do, but they're always going to be pushing over on the edge. And if it turns out that you don't care, then pretty soon they don't care about it. And, that bothers me.

". . . two-, three years ago . . . we did that survey of all employees in Reclamation, and one of the things that came back was that employees, in general, thought that Reclamation didn't have very good supervisors and managers. A lot of the supervisors and managers, well, they didn't believe that. . . . Well, to me, it was as true as the sun coming up every day. . . . I've seen it a lot. And it's because a lot of the things you have to do as a supervisor can be kind of hard stuff . . ."

For instance, two-, three years ago when we did that survey of all employees in Reclamation, and one of the things that came back was that employees, in general, thought that Reclamation didn't have very good supervisors and managers. A lot of

the supervisors and managers, well, they didn't believe that. You know, how could that be?

Well, to me, it was as true as the sun coming up every day. I mean, it was true, because I've seen it, I've seen it a lot. And it's because a lot of the things you have to do as a supervisor can be kind of hard stuff, stuff that doesn't come natural to people, and so they kind of tend to avoid it, whatever, and that can get built into the culture in some of these offices, particularly a lot of the field offices that have been there forever and haven't had a lot of turnover. If you have that culture in the management of the office for a long time where the expectations aren't very high, ***or*** just do your job and you don't need to know what's going on, it just kind of carries over from generation to generation.

That was another thing that we found out is that our employees–the consultant that ran the survey, I talked to him and he said, "You have the most curious employees of any organization we've ever surveyed." Because they asked two questions: Do you get the information that you ***need*** to have to do your job? And most of them said yes. Do you get the information that you want to have about what's going on? No. They didn't.

People really want to know, they want to know. You know, they care about what's going on. And we have too many supervisors that, "Well hey, you got all the information you need to do your job. Why don't you just do your job?" Well, people, they're not like that. And particularly our folks aren't like that, and that's why they need to know. And no matter how much you tell them, they want to know more.

Storey: Yes, that's been really frustrating to some of the managers in the Denver office as we're going into this reorganization, because they've been making, I think, very good efforts to communicate, and then they're faulted because they didn't communicate or because they don't tell them enough, or something like that.

Patterson: That's hard.

Storey: So it's a tough problem.

"It's really a challenge. I mean, communication in an organization is really hard, and during times that things are changing and people are concerned about the future, and what their future is, and what's really going on out there, just makes it harder. . . ."

Patterson: It comes with the territory. You can tell somebody something, and you think you communicated with them. I don't know. It's really a challenge. I mean, communication in an organization is really hard, and during times that things are changing and people are concerned about the future, and what their future is, and what's really going on out there, just makes it harder. And as a guy said the other day, if you've told somebody 100 times, hey, say it 101, because maybe they haven't heard. And you've got to listen, you've got to listen to what they're saying, and so it's hard. That's a hard part of it.

"We always sort of make the best technical person in the branch into the supervisor. . . . a lot of times those don't work out very well. They just aren't the kind of people that are going to be very good and very comfortable at being a supervisor. . . ."

We always sort of make the best technical person in the branch into the supervisor. You know, you've seen that, I've seen it. And a lot of times those don't work out very well. They just aren't the kind of people that are going to be very good and very comfortable at being a supervisor. I think that's one thing that Reclamation has done a lot in the past is pick people for supervisors that that's really not their forte. But the only way you can sort of get a promotion, and you wanted to reward that person that worked for you before that was sort of the best at what they did, and so when the chance came up, hey, they were the ones that became the supervisor, with no training.

I mean, here it was, I was the same way. I'd gone to college for five and a half years and all this kind of stuff. When I became a supervisor, I hadn't had any training to do that. It was you just sort of stumble along. Here it was, five and a half years and I'd never really did any technical work. And I made that much investment doing that. Well, yeah, it teaches you to think and all those kinds of things. Here you get to be a supervisor and you really don't have any training, and you talk to some of the other folks around there and they go, "Yeah, you're right, it's the worst job. Man, it's the crummiest job you can get, but, hey, it's one grade higher than all those schmucks that are working for you," you know, kind of a thing.

So it's a problem, and I'm glad to see it's getting more attention, I mean a ***lot*** more attention than it did when I started with the Bureau. It takes different skills, and we need to find ways to let people advance more in the technical side than they have before. But it's still not–we still haven't quite gotten it figured out. But I think there are more people aware of it and trying to deal with it–well, I know there are–than there were several years ago.

Storey: You mentioned things that don't come naturally that supervisors have to do. Could you give me some examples of that?

Things Supervisors Need to Do That Don't Come Naturally to People

Patterson: Yeah, like the communication side of it, I think, is something that a lot of people, particularly people that are in the technical backgrounds, which tend to a lot of times be more focused and internalized, kind of working within their own thing, that style doesn't work particularly well when you're a supervisor, because you need to do more coaching, which doesn't come real natural.

Sometimes delegation. The best technical person ***always*** has a hard time delegating, or ***most*** that I have seen, because they were real good at doing it, and the old thing, well, gee, it's easier to do it yourself. When somebody says that, I figure they're got a real problem supervising, because if you think it's easier to do it yourself, then that's always your natural inclination, and when you get in to a crunch–and you watch people like that. I've seen it. Man, deadline's due, we gotta have this

sucker done by Friday. Seven people there, the supervisor's there doing the work, and the other six are sort of trying to stay out of the way. Get past the deadline and then, "Hey, can you do this?" and whatever, and it's that. It's just hard. I think those are some of the–the coaching, the delegation, the communication, it doesn't come all that well. Only after the fact.

Reclamation's Organizational Development Seminar

I remember going to the OD seminar. Did you ever go to the Bureau's Organizational Development seminar? I went to the thing about '76 or something. It was the first time I'd ever really gone to one of these sort of touchy-feely kinds of things where you do a lot of self-analysis and you take all these screwball tests and try to figure out how you relate to people and how you think about the world and that stuff.

It was in Denver, and I can remember one of the tests we had to take. It was like one, two, three, four kind of a thing, and anyway, for some reason, I had reversed this thing, and so something that if I was strongly inclined to agree with it and should have given it a one, I was giving it a four or something like that. Anyway, I got 180. I remember that. I remember getting the results of this thing back, and, man, I was just blown away with this thing. It wasn't until the next day that the facilitator sort of started working with us, helping us figure out what all this meant. So I had this thing for one afternoon, all night 'til the next day, and basically it was telling me that I loved all this highly technical stuff, and I was a very kind of a self-focused kind of a person and all this kind of stuff. All night long I was going, "Gee, I didn't think I was like this. Why don't I do stuff on the job like this? Maybe it's this engineering training that I've had and maybe I'm really a closet techie," or something kind of a thing. And I mean, I struggled with this thing all night. It was really serious. I thought, "Oh, man, I'm doomed. I've got to rethink how I'm looking at the thing."

And so the next day when the facilitator–we were kind of working our way around, he says, "Roger, what did you think of your results?"

And I said, "I was just blown away." I started talking all this, and by then I'd sort of been able to rationalize in my own mind, yeah, this is probably all right. This is probably really the way it is and whatever.

And the guy says, "Let me see that thing." He pulled out the instructions and he said, "You sure you did this thing right?"

And I got to looking at it. "Well, no." I'd just flip-flopped the dang thing, so here I'd put myself through all this self-rationalization kind of jazz and turned out, had to redo the thing. And then I came out about the way I thought I was. Yeah, it's true that my gut instinct of how I dealt with these things was fine.

"But the point of that was, I think that some of finding out what people are good at ought to be done before we cast people in the role of a supervisor . . ."

". . . probably the most important thing that we do is select people and put them

in the job. . . ."

But the point of that was, I think that some of finding out what people are good at ought to be done before we cast people in the role of a supervisor, or blah, blah, blah, this kind of stuff, and have that kind of data when the decision's made to put them in to that, which doesn't tell you everything you need to know, but it maybe helps, because that's probably the most important thing that we do is select people and put them in the job.

"My experience has been that if you have somebody that's not doing a very good job . . . Ninety percent of the time, they're just not in the right job. . . ."

My experience has been that if you have somebody that's not doing a very good job, more than likely they're just in the wrong job. Ninety percent of the time, they're just not in the right job. If you cast them in a different job, they'll be successful if you help them. And we tend, rather than do that, to either kind of ignore people, let them just kind of coast along and do a crummy job for a long time and don't rock the boats, or push them off in the corner, or if it's really bad, we try to push them out of the organization.

But not often enough do we say, "Hey, you're failing in what you're doing here, and it's probably because you're in the wrong job, and you ought to try doing something else." But there's sort of this stigma associated with either going back out of supervision, or even going into another area, that I think we need to change. That needs to be a change in the culture. Hey, everybody's good at something, and you've just got to sort of make a match between what people are good at and the jobs.

Storey: Is going to a person like that one of those areas that supervisors instinctively don't want to do?

Patterson: I think it is. I think it is, yeah. They sort of know, but it's hard, you know. It's hard, because as the supervisor you're not sure that you know the job that person can succeed at, and if you say, "Hey, you ought to try this," and then they fail at that, too, and blah, blah, blah, you never know.

W. Edwards Deming's Seminar

That's one thing, two years ago I went to one of Doctor [W. Edwards] Deming's seminars. He was doing work at the time for Ford Motor Company. I'd been trying to get into this thing for a long time, and it happened that a slot opened up and I got to go up there and spend a week. And I'm glad I did. I mean, the guy was in his nineties then, and he passed away last year. He's sort of the father of a lot of this management stuff. He had a lot of this stuff figured out.

When it came to putting people in jobs and making selections, he said basically, "You don't know whether somebody's going to be successful or not, and you really can't tell ahead of time." Somebody asked him where do you get your best information. You can look at the résumé and all that kind of stuff.

". . . he said the best data you can get is to talk to somebody that you have confidence in that has worked with this person for at least fifteen years. . . ."

And he said the best data you can get is to talk to somebody that you have confidence in that has worked with this person for at least fifteen years. How often do you get–at least fifteen years? And he says that's the best data that you can get. I think that's right. If you think about selections you've made over the years and what you had to go on, there's a lot of that. You go, "Well, gee, that's not right. You shouldn't do things that way. That's the old- boys' network." Because it sort of is.

And you know it's just so hard, I mean it is so hard getting people with the right skills in the right job, I think. Maybe it's easier for some people, but for me it's hard. And it's so critical, it's just so critical that we get the right people in the right jobs. I spend a lot of time fretting about that and how do you do it.

But when Doctor Deming said that, we've got to treat everybody fair, and you get the same amount of information on somebody else. Well, so I happen to know somebody that I think a lot of that's worked with this person. They've seen him, they've seen him under pressure, they know this, they know they're really good. Here's another person I don't know and all I have's a 171 and they list their contacts on here. I don't have quite the same information. Am I biased in my views on this thing? It's hard. It's hard to do that.

Storey: And the system isn't really designed to let you shift people around either, is it?

Patterson: Not very well, no. But you can. Now it's not, but there's a little more flexibility. I think there's a little more flexibility than we have historically used in it, particularly when you get into supervisors and managers. I think there's a lot to be gained, and I think for the future of Reclamation's managers, we need to really endorse laterals, working in different areas, and working at different levels to get the kind of background and exposure you need. Because we're really going to rely in the future a lot on about our GM-14-type–these area manager types.

Some of the people in the regions here, we're putting a ***lot*** on them. I mean, just out here, the responsibilities of people like Bill Luce down in Fresno, who has kind of the mid-part of California, and they've got Westlands and Kesterson and Friant and all this stuff, here's a GS-14 guy that we're leaning on hard, and we're helping him as much as we can, but he's carrying a pretty big load now, big decisions and hard decisions and all this competition on all sides, and we need to have people in jobs like that that have worked in various parts of the organization and maybe even worked in some other organizations. I don't know, I shouldn't say that, because I've spent my whole career with the Bureau, but I think there's a value in some of the cross-agency stuff, having different experiences.

"We've done some trades of personnel between Bureau of Rec and Fish and Wildlife. If you talk to people after they've spent even a short period of time with another agency . . . they always say is that . . . they're different than they thought . . ."

We've done some trades of personnel between Bureau of Rec and Fish and Wildlife. If you talk to people after they've spent even a short period of time with another agency, one thing they always say is that the other agency–and it doesn't matter which one–they're different than they thought, that the people that work there, they're really sincere about what they're doing, and they're trying to do the right thing. Every one of them I've ever interviewed after they've done that–it's been a half a dozen or so–they always say, "Gee, the guys at Fish and Wildlife, I mean they're really trying to do the right thing." Or you talk to the Fish and Wildlife guy, "You know, your guys down there, they're working hard and they're really trying to do the right thing."

". . . it used to be that supposedly if you entered into another regional director's domain without having the pre-approval, that somehow you were going to be nuked by the home regional director. . . . people couldn't journey into a project area without having permission ahead of time. . . ."

I think we need to get more of that cross-pollination, because there's a lot of turf in Interior, and even in Reclamation, I guess. I mean, it used to be that supposedly if you entered into another regional director's domain without having the pre-approval, that somehow you were going to be nuked by the home regional director. I mean, people couldn't journey into a project area without having permission ahead of time. I think for the most part we've gotten by that, but there's a lot of turf floating around, and I think the less busy people are, the more turf-minded they are. It's been my observation.

Storey: Reclamation sort of has an image of being a very control-oriented organization, and fits those kinds of images. I'd like to pursue that, but unfortunately, I don't want to–

Patterson: This went pretty fast, yeah.

Storey: –my time with you.

Patterson: Do you have somebody else you're going to talk to?

Storey: Yeah. Frank Dimick is supposed to come in at ten o'clock.

Patterson: Okay.

Storey: I would like to ask just a couple of quick questions. The hours at McCook–were they set hours for everybody?

Patterson: You bet–7:45-4:30, forty-five minute lunch. Two breaks, fifteen minutes.

Storey: And no flexibility?

Patterson: No flexibility–on the record.

Storey: Off the record, there was some, I take it.

Patterson: Yeah, you know. Depended on your boss, kind of a thing.

Storey: Good. Well, I think we've gone as far as we can or should today, given the time. I'd like to ask you now whether or not you're willing for Reclamation researchers and researchers from ***outside*** Reclamation to use the data included in these cassettes and in the transcripts from the cassettes.

Patterson: Oh, yea, I think the statute of limitation's run out on my being late the first day, so I don't know what they could do for me there. (laughter) So, no, I don't have any problem doing that.

Storey: OK. Good! Well, I appreciate it. Thank you.

END SIDE 1, TAPE 2. MARCH 22, 1994.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 1. SEPTEMBER 2, 1994.

Storey: This is Brit Allan Storey, senior historian at the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Roger Patterson, regional director of the Mid-Pacific Region of the Bureau of Reclamation, in the regional offices on September the 2nd, 1994, at about one-thirty in the afternoon. This is tape one.

One of the things we were discussing last time, you mentioned that you had a summer job digging holes. Could you tell me more about that? It was with Reclamation.

Working Summers with Reclamation

Patterson: Oh, I remember it vividly. You don't forget summer jobs digging holes. I was with Reclamation as a whatever–an engineering aide, I think it was called. I actually worked two summers, but the second summer was on what they called a drill crew, and there were several projects in Kansas and Nebraska that had drainage problems.

Worked on a Drill Crew Gathering Data for Design of Drainage Systems

And so our Engineering Division in the office in McCook had a drill crew, and their job was to go out and collect all this data by drilling the logging holes and finding out where the groundwater was and what kind of soils there were so that then they could design a drainage system. I was low on the food chain there, so my job was to hand auger these holes with an auger that you'd turn and go into the ground, and then one of the engineers, who was, I think, a GS-7, he then would look at the material and he would determine what kind it was and he would log it. He'd keep saying, "Just a little deeper." It seems like most of those holes were about twenty feet deep. I know they probably weren't. So my job was to dig down there.

When you hit the water, you'd always go a few more feet, and, of course, then the trick was, after you pulled the auger out, you had all this wet mud in it and you had to get it out of the auger so you could go another around. So you had a big rubber mallet and you'd smack it off with that, and by the end of the day you looked like you'd been out in a war zone.

But it was good work, because I was on per diem. I may have only been a GS-3, but they paid us per diem, and we didn't spend a lot of money, so I was in good shape. So I did that for the summer, and then I think I worked part time again during the school year and pretty much left for a couple of years, until I got my degrees out of Nebraska and came back full time.

Storey: And then after you came back to Reclamation, you started work and they put you on the computerization project.

Patterson: Yeah, right.

Storey: I think we had discussed that. What did you do ***after*** the computerization project?

Effects on Reclamation of the Failure of Teton Dam

Patterson: Well, then we got that system in, finally, and then were continuing to work on the bugs. In total, I think I was in McCook about four and a half years doing the water scheduling part, sort of the water operations. I was the guy that a lot of the customers, the irrigation districts, would call in and they would place their water orders, and I took care of that.

Charley Calhoun Suggested He Apply for a Job in the Regional Office in Denver

During the time I was in McCook was when Teton Dam failed, and that, as you know, sent great, great ripples throughout Reclamation. And one of the spinoffs of that, which I didn't quite realize at the time, is they started the Safety Dams Program, and each of the regions was to hire or designate somebody to be the "Safety of Dams Coordinator." Charley Calhoun was working in the regional office at the time. He had the 430 Water Operations Branch, and I met him at Bonny Dam out in eastern Colorado. I had just been passed over for a branch chief job in McCook, and I thought, "Gee, I should have had the job," even though, as I look back, I probably wasn't even qualified, hadn't been there long enough. But nevertheless, Charley took advantage of me and said, "You know, we're going to hire a GS-12 safety of dams coordinator in the regional office, and you ought to apply."

Became the Lower Missouri Region Safety of Dams Coordinator

I thought, "Gee, somebody wants me." So I applied, and Charley selected me for the job, even though I had no background whatsoever to do that. I was on sort of the ground floor putting the Safety of Dams Program together, with a lot of the other first-timers from the other region, and we sort of all figured it out together. So that's when I went in the regional office as a 12, and I did that a couple years.

Storey: That was . . .

Patterson: That was in the summer of 1978.

Storey: And what did putting together a safety program involve? What kind of expertise did you have to call together, all those kinds of things?

Patterson: It was mostly, I think, an organizational kind of job. We had to basically figure out what all dams we had and what potential hazards they may pose, and then figure out some way to set priorities, working with the E&R Center there in Denver at the time, get the technical teams put together and have them start evaluating the safety of Reclamation's dams, starting with the highest priority ones. So it was pretty much getting the database together, developing a priority system, and then helping organize the teams. I actually headed up a couple of the investigations myself, two of them up in Wyoming, Pathfinder and Seminoe, which was interesting because Pathfinder was one of the first Reclamation dams built, and as you researched the records, there were all sorts of neat things that we learned about how it was built and what all had happened since the time it was built. So I did that for a couple of years.

Became Chief of the Water Operations Branch When Charley Calhoun Left the Position

And the Charley left and went to Amarillo, and I ended up with his job as the branch chief in Denver.[7]

Storey: Did you identify any dams that needed work?

Patterson: Yeah, we did. Yeah, there were a number of them. Most of the problems, particularly with the older dams, is all the hydrology and the floods that occurred since, which when you went back and recomputed how big of a flood might occur, it was much bigger than at the time the dam was built. And so what that led you to is hydrologic problems, where you either had to have more flood space in the reservoir than you currently had or you had to build a new spillway or you had to do some protections in case the dam was overtopped, if it were a concrete dam.

That was whole another part of the process, where you would actually prepare a modification report if the dam needed to be modified, and that would have to go through OMB [Office of Management and Budget] and the department to get funding under the Safety of Dams Act. Congress then had passed a Safety of Dams Act, which allowed Reclamation to get money to repair some of our dams.

Reclamation Deals with the Issue of Reasonable Risk in the Dam Safety Program

One of the things you'd run up against then was whether you spent the money to be absolutely sure that those dams could pass these new floods or whether there was some reasonable risk that Reclamation should take. I don't know, but I think that was probably the first time that that question was really in front of Reclamation, because before when you built a new dam, it's fairly obvious you're going to build it to handle whatever the current predicted earthquake potential is and whatever the current flooding potential is. When it came time to come back in and spend millions of dollars to ***modify*** this dam for a flood event that may occur once in a thousand years, it was a pretty interesting question.

7. Served as chief of the Water Operations Branch in the Division of Water and Land Operations, Lower Missouri Region in Denver.

I can remember being in some of those meetings over in the E&R Center when, gosh, who was it, Jim Brown, I think, was Reclamation's head designer at the time, and just to watch people have to think about–you know, it was easy to say, "Well, of course we'll spend the money to do it," and then have people raise the question, "Well, is that really a good investment?"

"Well, of course. It's people's lives we're protecting."

"Well, one in a thousand. What's the chance of lightening striking? What's the chance of planes going down? Are we in the same realm of probability?"

What's happened since then, as a matter of fact, is, we don't modify all of Reclamation's dams to be absolutely sure they'll handle the biggest flood. We take some risk, reasonable risk, I think, and we put in early warning systems downstream and we do a lot of that kind of work. Sort of the start of that was kind of interesting.

Storey: What about repayment issues that would come up on SEED-SOD[8] projects? Did you get involved in that?

Repayment Issues on Safety of Dams Projects

Patterson: Yeah, yeah, we got involved in that, because anytime you were going to do a modification, part of the report was, how are you going to address repayment? Those were always tough, because in a lot of cases, particularly with users, which were generally the irrigation districts, they ***really*** couldn't understand why you would spend millions of dollars for a one-in-a-thousand possibility when they were going to have to repay part of it. So that was a problem. There were lots of fun negotiations involved with that. I don't recall that we ever had a case where we couldn't get somebody to commit to do the repayment that was required, but it sort of tested your ability to explain reasonable risk, I guess.

Storey: Did they ever say something like, "Well, you guys designed this. You guys built this. It's your problem, not our problem"?

Patterson: They said that every time. That was always their openers.

Storey: But they never got away with it, huh?

Patterson: No. We said, "Yeah, that's right, and we built it based on best technology, and now it needs to be modified based on the best information. We signed in for the long run, and that's sort of how it goes."

No, that was a good argument. I mean, that was an argument on their part, arguments they've used in other cases. The same arguments apply for the siphons on Central Arizona and all sorts of other things, "Hey, we trusted you guys to do it right, and it turned out there's a problem and we think you ought to bear the cost."

8. Safety Evaluation of Existing Dams-Safety of Dams.

When they say that, we think, "The general taxpayer ought to bear it, because Reclamation doesn't have any money."

You have to ***really*** do your job at explaining the benefits they're getting out of the project as opposed to what the taxpayers are getting out of it, and usually if you're tenacious enough, you could get to that point. But they made good arguments.

Storey: Now, if I'm understanding what I think I'm hearing you say, Roger, the primary issue was the size of floods, basically catastrophic floods that could occur, rather than structural issues.

Most of the Safety of Dams Issues in His Region Had to Do with Dams Being Able to Pass Floods or Liquefaction During Earthquakes

Patterson: Yeah, I would say most of the ones that I dealt with, and then I think around were mostly flood related. There were some where there was some design or construction deficiency, some structural issue. There were some where there was earthquake, because most of the technology as relates to seismology was very primitive when most of our structures were built, and so there was earthquake issues with several, more of them out this way, obviously, than where I was working at the time. But things that we didn't know a lot about, like liquefaction of foundations during earthquakes was not accounted for much when those structures were built, and, of course, now with new earthquakes and saturated foundations, I mean there's a probability the dam could melt during an earthquake, and you've got a big problem.

"They just weren't big enough to accommodate that [flood] spillway-wise, which was interesting because then, if you just increase the size of the spillway, all you're doing is moving the flood right on past the dam. . . ."

Most of them that I dealt with were on the plains primarily, which as you get a new flood, if it's a big one, it can ***triple*** the size of the maximum flood you can predict. They just weren't big enough to accommodate that spillway-wise, which was interesting because then, if you just increase the size of the spillway, all you're doing is moving the flood right on past the dam. A lot of these dams were supposedly to provide flood control protection, so that big flood, yeah, it went by the dam. The spillway's big enough now. It goes downstream. It still floods people. So the tradeoff to that is, you've got to raise the thing or you've got to dedicate more of the space that's there to flood control as opposed to irrigation or some other use.

Storey: Storage. Yeah.

Patterson: You either had to have more storage or a bigger spillway, and there were arguments on both sides. And if you wanted more storage, to raise the structure, which is what the people that now had the water would want you to do, then a lot of those after several years, you've got all this recreation built around the shoreline, nobody wants to see that exposed in the flood risk. It's always something.

Storey: Many conflicting issues.

Patterson: Many conflicting issues, and they don't get any better.

Storey: And you were there about '78 to '80?

Patterson: I was doing that job '78 to '80, and then I did the branch chief's job until February, I think, of '83.

Storey: That's in the regional office in Denver?

Patterson: That was the regional office Denver, Lower Missouri branch chief.

Storey: How many people were in the branch?

How the Work Was Planned and Accomplished

Patterson: Oh, I don't know, seven or eight most of the time, great, competent people, which for me was good, because that was my first job as a supervisor, and they didn't need supervision, which worked out pretty good for me. You know, it was all professional staff, engineers and professional writers. It was a great staff. It was a good way to break into supervision.

Storey: Now, say you found a dam that did need to be modified. Who supervised the modification and did the work?

Patterson: Generally, once you got a report through, got it through the Congress, got appropriation, usually one of our construction offices or one of the project offices, depending on capability. The Denver E&R Center would do the design. The regions all had an Engineering and Construction Division that kind of provided the regional oversight. And then you'd have a project construction engineer usually in their staff that would do the oversight, just similar to what the arrangement was when you build a new structure.

Now, you know, as we have fewer construction offices around, you have to find some other way to do that, and that's why you're seeing, I think, some of the evolution of these mobile construction offices, like P-N[9] has one up in Bend, Oregon, and it's a mobile construction office. If you need a safety dams modification someplace, even if it's in a different state, they can take care of it. And we out here in this region have all of our construction expertise now consolidated in Willows, California. So any work that we need done in the region, they do it, which means they'll have people out for long periods of time on details. But it works.

Storey: But you didn't do that out of your office at all, then?

Patterson: No. No, we just got the evaluations, we got the modification report done, and we kept an eye on budget and provided a little oversight, and we were done then. We were done, handed it off to the next crew.

9. Pacific Northwest Region.

Storey: Did you have any particular big projects that resulted from your work there?

Patterson: Well, let's see. Some of them they're still working on, believe it or not, because the two that I mentioned that I was the team leader on up in Wyoming, they were two of a whole series of structures on the North Platte, and that thing is kind of in the final stages of what do you need to do to ***all*** of the structures and get going. So they're still working on that. We did a modification up at Pathfinder Dam in [Wyoming] ~~Nebraska~~ when I was there that we got done at the time. But it was a long process to get through the evaluation of 300 or 400 structures, whatever it was. There was a long lead time between picking those priorities and getting on with things.

Storey: Why did you decide to leave the branch chief's position?

"I was asked to apply for a project manager's job in El Paso. It was either that or go to the Departmental Manager Development Program in Washington . . ."

Patterson: I don't know. I was asked to apply for a project manager's job in El Paso. It was either that or go to the Departmental Manager Development Program in Washington, which my boss had convinced me that, "You're a pretty good supervisor. You might have some management potential. Maybe you ought to go off to this charm school."

Became Project Manager in El Paso

I was about convinced that if I had to do that for ten months, fine, I would do it. I really wasn't looking to do anything different. And then the El Paso job was open, and Darrell Webber was the RD in Amarillo, and he was the Assistant RD in L-M[10] for a while, so he knew me. He said, "Yeah, you ought to apply for that job down in El Paso." It was a [GS-]14, and I thought, "Gee, maybe I will." So I threw my name in the hat, and I got it. So then I went to El Paso.

"I was pretty young to be a project manager . . . and the reason I know is because all these old boys in Texas, which is a different kind of world from anywhere else Reclamation works, told me how young I was and how much I didn't know. . . ."

I was pretty young. I must have been about thirty-two or something at the time. I was pretty young to be a project manager, I know that, and the reason I know is because all these old boys in Texas, which is a different kind of world from anywhere else Reclamation works, told me how young I was and how much I didn't know.

Dealing with a Flood on the Rio Grande

I remember it well because the main storage facility on the project is Elephant Butte Dam in New Mexico, and it hadn't filled for over forty years. I hadn't been there very long, and there was 330 percent of normal snow pack up in southern Colorado, up in the upper part of the Rio Grande Basin, and we ran that out and said, "My God, Elephant Butte is going to fill. Not only is it going to fill, it's going to

10. The Lower Missouri Region headquartered in Denver, Colorado.

flood." And the channel downstream was all congested from not having water through it, and the little town of Truth or Consequences is right on the bank.

Fortunately, by then Calhoun, who had been my boss before, he was up in Albuquerque. He was the project manager up there, and I was glad Charley was there, because the two of us worked together, actually got an emergency-type contract and got the channel rehabbed through town kind of in the nick of time. I mean, it wasn't long later when we were having a big celebration on top of the dam and the first floodwater in forty-plus years was going downstream.

And it was not long before that that I can remember going to a meeting with a lot of these farmers and kind of getting to know them, and then telling them as part of what I was all about and how I wanted to work with them that Elephant Butte is going to spill this year. My credibility was pretty low, like here's this guy that doesn't know anything, came from Colorado. It hasn't spilled in forty years, and this guy says it's going to happen. Then when it did, God, then I knew everything. I was in like Flint with those guys. It was great. They thought I was pretty good. So I got lucky. That was good.

Storey: I believe there's one major irrigation district down there out of El Paso.

The Constituents of the El Paso Office

Patterson: Yeah, there's two. There's one in New Mexico, Elephant Butte Irrigation District, which is about 90,000 acres, and the El Paso County Water Improvement District Number One is the main district in Texas. Then we also had a treaty with Mexico that we had to deliver water under, which was first exposure to anything like that. We worked with the International Boundary and Water Commission, whose headquarters–talk about a great deal. Their headquarters was in El Paso, and they were part of the Department of State. You talk about a good job. Here's a water agency in the Department of State. Nobody in Washington could care what they're doing, and their headquarters aren't in Washington. They were in El Paso. And they had a commissioner in charge of it, and, gosh, it was great.

So we worked with them, learned a lot. A lot of problems down there with the encroachment of the city into an irrigation district and the conversion of that water from irrigation to M&I. It wasn't done the way you would want to do. The project was never reauthorized, so there was a lot of little contracts here and there that kind of let things happen over the years, a lot of history.

" . . . we must have had over 300 employees out of that office, because we *ran* the whole system. I mean, we ran it right down to the farmer delivery. And then, I don't know, three or four years before I went there, we had turned all that over to the Districts, and so then we had about sixty-, seventy people. So we were still in sort of the back wave of having turned over a major Reclamation responsibility to the districts and the districts sort of feeling their oats about how they were in charge . . ."

Before I had gone down there, the Bureau had–oh gosh, we must have had

over 300 employees out of that office, because we ***ran*** the whole system. I mean, we ran it right down to the farmer delivery. And then, I don't know, three or four years before I went there, we had turned all that over to the Districts, and so then we had about sixty-, seventy people. So we were still in sort of the back wave of having turned over a major Reclamation responsibility to the districts and the districts sort of feeling their oats about how they were in charge of everything now, and us kind of having the responsibility to make sure everything was done right under the contracts and the treaty and all that stuff. And so there was a little tension. A lot of the staff was still kind of disillusioned with the whole idea of how could Reclamation turn over something that it's had for seventy years, because most of them had never seen anything different. They thought the way to do things was, Reclamation should run the whole thing. Well, that's the way it had been there for seventy years. That wasn't the way it was in the rest of Reclamation, for the most part. We transferred things over shortly after we completed construction. So it was kind of interesting.

"We had a guy there. . . . retired before I got there, got a fifty-year pin. . . . as a ditch rider. . . . comment that he made about, 'It was a pretty good job, but it was sure a lot better before you had to have pickups.'. . ."

But we had people there. We had a guy there. He retired before I got there, got a fifty-year pin. He had been in the same job the whole fifty years as a ditch rider. He started riding ditch by horseback on the border between Mexico and Texas. I remember he was in the office one time after that talking to some of the guys, and I got to meet him. I remember some comment that he made about, "It was a pretty good job, but it was sure a lot better before you had to have pickups." Because they had these little shacks on the border where they would go from one, and then they would ride the next section, and then they'd go into the shack and I guess mark down who was taking water and all this, and it was twenty-four hours a day. There was somebody out there twenty-four hours a day. When you start you had the night shift, it sounded like there was some pretty tough issues they had to deal with, because you had all the illegals coming over, and the canal was right in the middle of it.

Storey: What was his name?

Patterson: I don't remember. I wish I knew. I could probably find out, because I'm sure the personnel records from that region would have it. But there aren't many fifty-year pins. I've only presented one, and that was since I've been here, a lady down in Fresno, who would be good for you to talk to, by the way. ***Her name*** is Polly Wong.

Storey: Polly?

Polly Wong

Patterson: Polly Wong, P-O-L-L-Y W-O-N-G.

Storey: In Fresno?

Patterson: Yes. And I don't know whether she stayed in Fresno. She took the buy-out after fifty-one years, over fifty-one years of service, and I don't know how old Polly was.

She looked young to me, but she's got to be seventy to have that much service. She's wonderful. When Dennis Underwood was commissioner, Dennis and I went down and presented Polly a fifty-year pin, which was kind of neat. We can probably get you Polly's name and address. The guy in El Paso I don't know. I could probably find out. But Polly would be a good one to chat with.

I know there aren't many fifty-year pins handed out, because when we asked to have one sent out from Denver to present to Polly, it didn't come for a while, and I think the reason was they couldn't find one. And then we finally got this, it said fifty on it, a cheap pin and not worthy of Polly. So we had to use our creativity and have a jeweler make up an appropriate fifty-year pin that we presented to her. But that's the only one that I've ever seen.

Joe Friedken and Jesse Gilmer

The commissioner from the International Boundary and Water Commission, his name was Joe Friedken, and he'd been the commissioner for a long time, and he got fifty years for federal service. He was seventy-four years old, I think, when he left, going strong, a wonderful guy.[11]

Storey: Joe Friedken?

Patterson: Joe Friedken, yeah, Commissioner Friedken, really a great guy. The fun part of that job–and the whole time I was there they called me "Boy," which was fine because they called Jesse Gilmer, who was the [Rio Grande River] Compact commissioner and was seventy-four years old, they called Jesse "Boy" too, so I figured it was a term of endearment. But here was Joe Friedken and Jesse Gilmer that were each in their seventies, and they had been working on water issues down there forever, I mean forever. Jesse was Harry Truman's campaign manager–or, not campaign manager, but on Harry Truman's campaign committee or whatever when he ran for president. He was tied into the Texas Democratic Party pretty tight, which was kind of nice, and he was a great storyteller. He's still around. A lot of history with that guy, both of those guys.

Storey: What kind of issues did we have with the International Boundary [and Water] Commission?

International Boundary and Water Commission

Patterson: A couple things. One was, they were entitled to 60,000 acre-feet of water out of the Rio Grande.

Storey: Right there at Juarez, I believe.

". . . we had to get them the water . . . make sure somebody in the United States didn't help themselves to it. And . . . the other side of it with Mexico was, make sure they didn't take any more than that, because they kind of just helped

11. Joseph P. Friedken joined the IBWC in 1934 and served there for some 48 years.

themselves. . . ."

Patterson: Right there at Juarez, right, at American Dam. And so that meant we had to get them the water, so that was one issue is, how to get them that quantity of water, make sure somebody in the United States didn't help themselves to it. And then on the other side of it with Mexico was, make sure they didn't take any more than that, because they kind of just helped themselves.

". . . Juarez . . . a big city, with essentially no treatment facilities. We had almost the sewage from a city of a million people coming right back in downstream to the river. Tremendous water quality problem . . ."

And then the water quality issue on Mexico. I mean, here was Juarez, which was, what, a million people. I don't think anybody knows, but it's a big city, with essentially no treatment facilities. We had almost the sewage from a city of a million people coming right back in downstream to the river. Tremendous water quality problem, which we didn't deal with much in Reclamation.

"It was very, very official, the dealings with Mexico . . . they handled the correspondence from the Boundary Commission to their counterpart. . . . lots of rules that they stuck to. . . ."

It was very, very official, the dealings with Mexico in the way they handled the correspondence from the Boundary Commission to their counterpart. Their National Boundary Water Commission had the U.S. side and the Mexican side, and lots of rules, lots of rules that they stuck to. It was interesting.

Groundwater Issue in El Paso-Juarez

And then there was the groundwater issue, and if you looked at a groundwater map of El Paso-Juarez, it looked like a milkshake with two straws in it, because they were pumping groundwater and they shared the same thing. And so Mexico, you could see on the map where they're pumping water like gangbusters, so they're pulling it down. So the guys on the U.S. side said, "Well, enough of that. We could sit here and complain, but they're going to pump it all out." So they started pumping on their side. You can see these two big depressions in the groundwater, just like two straws in a milkshake going at it. That's one they had to get a handle on. And then, at the time I was there was not too long after–

END OF SIDE 1, TAPE 1. SEPTEMBER 2, 1994.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. SEPTEMBER 2, 1994.

Storey: The Supreme Court decision just before you arrived.

Use of Water Across State Boundaries

Patterson: Yeah. What it was, there was a farmer that owned land on both sides of the Nebraska-Colorado line. I think his name was Sporhase [phonetic] or something like that. He wanted to use water from one state to water his land in another state, and

that treaded on states' rights to allocate water and whatnot. Anyway, it goes all the way to the Supreme Court, and basically, I'm not a lawyer, but as I understand it, the Supreme Court said that, "Yeah, he can do that. The states can't prohibit that, because water is an article of commerce."

That was some little farmer out there, but, boy, it sent shockwaves all over the place. And so when I was in El Paso, El Paso was sitting there not owned by anybody. Texas didn't claim El Paso. New Mexico didn't claim El Paso. Mexico didn't claim El Paso. They're kind of out there pretty much as the ugly cousin. ***They*** needed some water. The closest water was right across the border in New Mexico, and so they went in and filed for permits to pump groundwater from New Mexico and use it in El Paso, and they got the ***best***, ***best*** attorneys from Houston to come out and press their rights on that. The Sporhase decision had just been made, which their attorneys were going, "Hey, it's an article of commerce. New Mexico cannot unrealistically restrict the ability of that water to be used."

Steve Reynolds and El Paso's Claim to Water in New Mexico

Steve Reynolds, and I don't know if you've heard of Steve Reynolds, ***wonderful*** guy, he was the state engineer in New Mexico, a great gentleman, great engineer, smart, good politician, and he'd be damned if he was going to let El Paso get any of New Mexico's water. And so the ***battle*** was on, and the whole time I was there they were fighting. In fact, I think there are still some remaining issues from that. But New Mexico passed some new state laws during the time that restricted, but they argued did not unreasonably restrict, the ability of water to be used outside of the state. It was a real state's rights thing, and I'm not sure I even understood all that was going on when I was there at the time. But it was quite a battle, and it really put a wrench in a lot of the relationship between the states then, because there's nothing worse than having somebody come in and try to steal your water, and that's the way it was viewed in New Mexico.

Steve Reynolds passed away a couple years ago, and maybe a little more than that. But he was a great guy. He worked up right until–he hadn't been retired very long when he finally died. He was a great guy.

Storey: For instance, you talked about the 60,000 acre-feet of water. Was the Boundary Commission responsible for providing that water?

Patterson: Yeah. It was kind of convoluted. Yes, the Boundary Commission was responsible to get it to ~~New~~ Mexico. The water actually came, then, out of the Bureau of Reclamation facility, Elephant Butte, up in New Mexico.

Storey: So Reclamation provided it to the Boundary Commission, that then sent it to ~~New~~ Mexico?

Patterson: Right.

Storey: Who was checking to make sure they weren't getting more than they were supposed to?

". . . we went out on the Rio Grande and we were at this diversion dam. It's called Riverside Diversion Dam. I noticed there were like four gauges . . . I said, 'What's the deal? . . . Are we running some kind of a test?' 'No. No, no, no. That one's ours. That one belongs to the irrigation district. That belongs to the city. The Mexicans put that one in.'. . ."

Patterson: The Boundary Commission. We kept an eye on it, too. That was another thing. My first trip down to El Paso, we went out on the Rio Grande and we were at this diversion dam. It's called Riverside Diversion Dam. I noticed there were like four gauges around there, and I was used to one. In Colorado, we'd have one gauge that maybe the state'd run it and the Bureau would get information and USGS would use the information and the state would use it and all that. I said, "What's the deal? There are four things here? Are we running some kind of a test?"

"No. No, no, no. That one's ours. That one belongs to the irrigation district. That belongs to the city. The Mexicans put that one in."

I said, "What's the deal here, people don't trust each other?"

"It was obvious. Of course you needed to have all of this, because you couldn't trust the data that came from anybody else. . . ."

Of course you don't trust each other. I thought I'd figured it out. It was obvious. Of course you needed to have all of this, because you couldn't trust the data that came from anybody else.

"Well, if there's anything you know about water, the only thing worse than not having any data is to have more than one set of data . . ."

Well, if there's anything you know about water, the only thing worse than not having any data is to have more than one set of data, because they will never agree, even if the same guy's collecting it. So you always had these battles about, "You were taking this much."

"No, I wasn't. I was measuring. Here's the records to prove it."

". . . you had to look around to see if there was any extra mud attached to the float that would cause it to weigh in their favor. Oh, it was a circus. Truly, I hadn't seen anything like that before, but it was the way it was. . . ."

Well, you had to look around to see if there was any extra mud attached to the float that would cause it to weigh in their favor. Oh, it was a circus. Truly, I hadn't seen anything like that before, but it was the way it was. That's that way it was.

Storey: And you were in the middle of it?

Patterson: Oh, yeah, we were in the middle of it. It was great.

Storey: One or both of the water districts down there has a reputation of being sort of

litigious.

Patterson: Yeah, that's right. Elephant Butte has ***now*** pushed legislation through Congress to take over title to their facilities. The interesting thing, when I was there, the manager ran the district, and I've kept up with them because I see those guys at NWRA and other places, and it wasn't too long after that that the manager was not an attorney, but ***clearly*** the attorneys were calling the shots, no question about that. But at the time, there was not any really legal action going on between Reclamation and those districts. All the legal stuff was kind of this El Paso thing.

The bigger issues then were how much cost they were having to take from Reclamation, and now that they were in charge, why should they be paying any of our costs, and a lot of that kind of stuff. But they now have a lot of influence being brought by their attorneys. Now, they had attorneys on staff before. In fact, the guy that was the attorney for the El Paso District, a guy named Jim Spear [phonetic] out of El Paso, he was a pretty smart guy. His two main clients were the El Paso County Water Improvement District and [Clint] Murchison [Jr.], who was the owner of the Dallas Cowboys. That was his other client. He was part of that, so I figured he had a good deal. He got free football tickets and I'm sure made a lot of money on that, and got to come and harass us over water stuff. It was a pretty strange mix.

At the Time There Weren't Any Big Lawsuits

No, we didn't really have any big lawsuits when I was down there, but I know that they've since acquired that reputation. And you could see at the time there was some rumblings going on.

"They wanted to raise a lot of issues about their entitlements to revenues that had been collected in the past and all that kind of stuff. . . ."

They wanted to raise a lot of issues about their entitlements to revenues that had been collected in the past and all that kind of stuff.

Storey: Did that make them particularly hard to get along with when you were there?

"They couldn't stand each other, the Texas district and the New Mexico district, and the last thing you wanted to do was get in the middle of that one. So, yeah, they're kind of hard to get along with. . . ."

Patterson: Yeah, they were kind of hard to get along with. But I don't know, I think there was a fairly good deal of respect, but, at the same time, their interest was different than ours. And they fought between each other. They couldn't stand each other, the Texas district and the New Mexico district, and the last thing you wanted to do was get in the middle of that one. So, yeah, they're kind of hard to get along with.

Storey: Down there, of course, you have a very high Hispano population. Did that inject any issues into Reclamation's project down there?

". . . the culture of the area . . . was different for me. . . . in Denver . . . you had all

these professionals working for you, and we'd have a staff meeting and I would suggest or somebody would suggest . . . 'Maybe we ought to . . .' and it always got done. . . . turned into somebody going in and figuring it out and doing it. I was in El Paso about three months, and I didn't understand what was going on. I called this guy in, Bert Cortez, and I said, '. . . I've been here three months, and nobody's done anything I've asked them to do.' He said, 'You haven't asked them to do anything.' . . . '. . . you didn't say, "Do this. You do it, and here's how you do it."' I said, 'Wow, that's what has to happen?'. . ."

Patterson: Well, our staff was probably two-thirds Hispanic, I would guess, because the city of El Paso was two-thirds Hispanic, and we were reflective of that. It was a neat culture, though, for Reclamation. We were just another organization there, and there wasn't any, any more than anyplace else, conflict amongst the staff because of the Hispanic population and whatnot. It was more just the culture of the area, which was different for me.

I said when I took over that branch in Denver it was fortunate that you had all these professionals working for you, and we'd have a staff meeting and I would suggest or somebody would suggest, "Gee, maybe we ought to look into that" or "Maybe we ought to consider doing this," and it always got done. "We ought to think about it" turned into somebody going in and figuring it out and doing it.

I was in El Paso about three months, and I didn't understand what was going on. I called this guy in, Bert Cortez,[12] and I said, "Bert, help me understand this. I've been here three months, and nobody's done anything I've asked them to do."

He said, "You haven't asked them to do anything."

I said, "What do you mean? We talked about we needed to do this and we needed to do that."

He said, "Yeah, that's right. But you didn't say, 'Do this. You do it, and here's how you do it.'"

I said, "Wow, that's what has to happen?"

He said, "Yeah. They follow orders around here."

I said, "Well, that's not my style, but we'll work on it together," kind of a thing. It was different. I mean, it was the culture of the organization. It didn't have much to do with Hispanic versus non-Hispanic. It was just that was a ***top-down*** operation, and it had been, and that's the way it was supposed to be, wait for orders from the top. I thought, "Gee, if that's the way it works, I sure aren't going to be really effective. Need all you guys."

Storey: Did it work out okay?

12. Filiberto Cortez.

Patterson: It worked out great. Yeah, it worked out great. It was a good job.

Storey: Who was Bert Cortez?

Patterson: He was the branch chief in, I don't know, I think our Engineering Branch. He'd been there for a long time. He was about the same age as me. He just happened to be the guy I saw. I said, "Bert, help me understand this." He enlightened me, which to him was very clear. To me it wasn't very clear, until after he told me, and then it started becoming more clear.

Storey: You understood.

Patterson: Yeah.

Storey: How did you like living down there? You had a family.

Sent Their Kids to a Baptist Preschool in El Paso

Patterson: My kids were real young. I have two girls, and they were like three and four when we moved down there. My wife taught right on the border down at Pasadeo [phonetic] Elementary, which was about 95 percent Hispanic. The girls went–the public schools down there were not very good. When I say "very good," they had problems, particularly a lot of their scores weren't high and all sorts of things. Linda taught in the public school, and then our kids, we needed them in preschool, so they ended up actually going to a Baptist preschool called Immanuel Baptist, which turned out to be a wonderful school.

Principal of the School Where Wife Taught Had a Cabin on the Lake at Elephant Butte

But it was neat. We were talking about it the other night. It was a great experience. In fact, Linda's principal at the time was a lady that had been there quite a while, and she happened to have a cabin up at Elephant Butte on the lake, and we got to know her real well. In fact, she called me last week from Elephant Butte, and we talked this weekend for a half hour. But she loved the lake up there, and she had been going up there for forty years to the lake. Of course, once she got to know the head dog for Reclamation, "Come on up and stay in the cabin and we'll go water skiing and whatnot." We got to be good friends with them and a lot of other people, just a friendly bunch.

But she was a real hit then with all of her friends up at the lake because she could get tours of the powerplant anytime, and she was a real historian kind of in how Elephant Butte came about and all of the politics of it. She loved that kind of stuff. So we'd take her down and people, give them a hot-shot tour of the powerplant, and any of her relatives that were in town, because we had public tours down there they loved to do. She would watch the top of the dam, because we had all those old-fashioned lights, and when they burn out, she'd make sure she gave a call to somebody and let the Bureau know that, "You got that big powerplant down there, and it just doesn't seem right you have a light bulb that isn't lit."

It was a neat culture. You found the Mexican food was great and acquired a taste there that can't get rid of. It was kind of fun.

Storey: You mentioned a cabin on Elephant Butte. Did we have problems with concessionaires and so on up there?

Issues with Lease Lots on the Lake at Elephant Butte Dam

Patterson: Yeah, we had a real problem up there, because there were–kind of like a lot of things. One time Reclamation figured that we could open up lease lots around our lakes, and it was sort of, "You all come out here, and for 25 bucks for a year, you can have a lease lot." Well, we had 300-and-some cabins around Elephant Butte Lake, cabin using the word loosely. Most of them were trailers, some of which were in really bad shape. It turned out some of them were below the high water level.

Storey: And you had high water.

Patterson: Yeah, well, we found out there. I could show you a picture of this one that was about a third full of water.

". . . the state of New Mexico, they were supposedly our manager for recreation, and they'd kind of taken the part they liked, that didn't have the cabins in it, and sort of left Reclamation stuck with some of what they didn't like. It's being a landlord, which is a tough job . . ."

But the state of New Mexico, they were supposedly our manager for recreation, and they'd kind of taken the part they liked, that didn't have the cabins in it, and sort of left Reclamation stuck with some of what they didn't like. It's being a landlord, which is a tough job, so there were lots of problems associated with those cabins up there.

The people that lived there were great, and they loved the lake, and they were there, but they truly felt like they owned that lot there on the lake that their cabin was setting on. When we came in and said, "Gee, we think we need to raise your rent by twenty times," they thought we were nuts.

"What's wrong with $25 a year?"

"The taxpayer's not getting a fair return."

"Taxpayer heck. I was here before you were born, Sonny, and they told us this was a good deal, and for $25 a year we could be here as long as we wanted to be," which is probably what they were told, I don't know.

So anyway, there was the issue with setting fees up there and all that kind of stuff. And some of them, they laid out lots and apparently had a bust in the survey or something, but several of the lots, part of the lot was below the high water mark, and a couple of them, their cabin was actually below the high water mark. So for those

guys we said, "You've got to move. There's another lot that's vacant way up high," which they didn't like because that was behind two other guys, but we managed to work those out.

Storey: Did we have concessionaires down there?

Handling the Concessionaire at Elephant Butte

Patterson: Yeah, we did. We had a concessionaire, a pretty good concessionaire actually, although he thought he was in charge of the world. We worked with him pretty well. Tom Schroeder [phonetic] was the guy that worked in the office. He's now down in Boulder City. He handled all that stuff, and he had a way of getting along with them. Wes Green [phonetic] was up at the lake, and Wes works up in Boise now. They kind of schmoozed those guys and made everything work, and it worked out okay.

Storey: It's symptomatic, I guess, of a problem that permeates a lot of our areas.

Patterson: Yeah, it is.

Storey: Berryessa now, for instance.

Lake Berryessa Issues

Patterson: Oh, Berryessa, yeah. You go out to Berryessa on a holiday weekend and you'll think you're at the state fair. I mean, big problems. What's happened there is that Solano County at one time managed Berryessa for Reclamation. It was such a headache, and the cost, that they gave it back to us, so now we manage it. But, yeah, you combine a holiday weekend, 100-degree weather with thousands of boats and tens of thousands of people and add a little beer and whatever else, mix it all up, and you've got problems.

Storey: What about water quality problems? Any either there or at Berryessa because of the encroachment?

Patterson: Yeah. That's a good question, because a lot of those cabins, a lot of them the sewer'd would run right down into the lake. When I was in Billings, we had the same thing. I think we had 300 or so cabins up around Canyon Ferry. What they needed, they needed to have some kind of a general water treatment system, where they could all funnel all the stuff together and have some kind of little treatment facility. But, hey, it costs money.

See, those cabins were supposed to be occupied part time. They're supposed to be for recreation. Well, what happened is, I'll bet over half of them, people liked living out at the lake, sold their house in town, lived out there full time. So they became full-time residences for people, and Reclamation's idea was summer cabin. That was the idea. So lots of problems.

Storey: Were there any other big issues down at El Paso while you were there?

The Armendaris Corporation and Harold Oppenheimer Wanted to Develop Condominiums on the East Side of the Lake

Patterson: We had a major controversy with who owned the lake, which was kind of silly, but there was a company called Armendaris[13] Corporation. You've heard of Oppenheimer, whatever. Oppenheimer and Armendaris, they were together, and there'd been this big ranch, like a 100,000-acre ranch, this big ranch. It wasn't that big, but it was a big ranch, and the Elephant Butte Lake, a large part of it came from that ranch. They claimed that they still owned basically from the, this would be the east side of the reservoir that they, Armanderis Corporation and Oppenheimer, owned all of that land on the east side of the lake and actually owned down to the old river bed. Of course, we contested that and whatever.

But Oppenheimers, they had this idea they were going to build these expensive luxury condominiums over there on the east side of the lake on ***our*** property. They said it was their property. So we fought about that with them and argued about it, and actually one of their top guys, he's a general, General Oppenheimer, he was going to get this thing resolved, and it's kind of funny. In fact, I have a book that he autographed for me. I shouldn't take time, but I want to show you this. This is kind of funny. It's called *Cowboy Economics*.[14]

Storey: *Cowboy Economics*?

Patterson: Yeah. This guy, it was great. I don't know who the guy was, other than he was General Oppenheimer and he was the representative of this thing, and he was going to get the Bureau of Reclamation straightened out and get them to understand how they did own that land and they could develop these condominiums and all that stuff.

Anyway, he came and met with me, and he laid this book on the table and he said, "I want you to have a copy of this book."

I said, "Oh, gee, that's great." I'm trying to find the page.

He said, "Turn to page whatever it is." If I find it, I'll show you. And he said, "That's going to be you."

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13. Also spelled Armendariz, this large ranch dates from a Spanish land grant of 1819–the largest Spanish land grant in New Mexico. Patented in U.S. Courts in 1881, William Bell (Presumably William A. Bell, a business associate of William Jackson Palmer who founded the Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation, the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railway, Colorado Springs, and many other western enterprises) purchased the grant in 1895 and sold it in 1903. The Armendaris Corporation bought the ranch in 1968, and Ted Turner took ownership in 1994. At one time the ranch was as large as 492,266.06 acres when surveyed by the U.S. General Land Office in 1871. When Ted Turner bought the ranch, the reported size was 338,000 acres. Sources: http://www.amerisurv.com/content/view/6099/136/ and http://www.caminorealheritage.org/PH/0509_armendaris.pdf accessed about 5:00 P.M. on September 26, 2011.

14. Harold L. Oppenheimer, *Cowboy Economics: Rural Land as an Investment*. Danville, Illinois: Interstate Printers & Publishers, 1976. Harold Laurence Oppenheimer retired from the U.S. Marine Corps as a brigadier general, having served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. He founded Oppenheimer Industries and established the firm as one of the largest cattle investment and land management firms in the United States. He died of cancer in 1985 at the age of 66. Source: http://www.elmwoodcem-kc.org/family_history/elmwoodce-o/pafn01.htm accessed on September 27, 2011, at about 10:00 A.M.

And what it is, this *Cowboy Economics* book, there's a butchered beef hanging there, and there's a picture of it. He said, "Turn to page. I thought it was 211. Turn to page 211."

And I look at this thing. I mean, I grew up in a farm. I've butchered beef before, and I knew a fresh side of beef. There it is. He said, "Take a look at that."

Of course, there isn't any page number on it. I finally found it, and I looked at it and I said, "Yeah."

He said, "That's going to be you." (laughter)

Here's this general who was in sixties, a real gentleman and whatnot, I thought. I was kind of impressed that he gave me a copy of his book and the whole thing. He showed me that, and that beef hanging there with no head on it, and he said, "That's going to be you."

I said, "Well, it sounds like we're going to have a problem reaching agreement, General."

Storey: This was something he had written?

Patterson: Yeah, he authored that.

Storey: Harold L. Oppenheimer.

Patterson: Right.

Storey: *Cowboy Economics: Rural Land as an Investment*.

Patterson: Right. So he started explaining all this to me and he was going to convince me of this and whatnot after his strong-arm approach, and that was fine. At one point, I don't know, but I was talking to him on the phone and he said, "Wouldn't you like to have one of those lots over there? Those are going to be beautiful lots, and we're going to have very expensive condominiums."

And I kind of swallowed hard and said, "No, that's fine. I have a friend with a cabin, a trailer, on the other side of the lake which is just fine."

Then he died. He died not too long after that and before this whole thing was settled, and they had some other people in the expensive suits that were working on it for them. I laughed. Their claim was not very legitimate that they really owned the land, and the whole idea died, as far as I know, as far as they were going to build these condos over there. But it was one of the experiences from El Paso that I ***remember very well***.

Storey: Did you have politicians coming into the office when you were down in El Paso?

Patterson: Well, one thing in Texas, everybody's a politician. No, just the locals, just the mayor

and the local congressmen. Ron Coleman, who as far as I know is still a congressman from there. [Senator] Pete Domenici was the New Mexico guy. Whenever Steve Reynolds needed Pete Domenici to weigh in on something for New Mexico, he would weigh in.

One of the attorneys there was a guy named Travis Johnson. He was actually on the board of directors for Southwest Airlines, which at the time Southwest was sort of getting going and paid Travis a lot of money. He'd invite me over to the El Paso Club for lunch up on top of one of the bank buildings and tell me about this great airline. I wish I had some money and bought some stock.

"Not going to have boarding passes," and they didn't. Now they have a little plastic thing they hand out. When they started, man, it was free-for-all. They'd call the plane number, and 120 people would try and get on the plane. After a couple years, it was a real cattle car and they–because I can remember the first boarding passes they put out, where they'd call the first thirty. Well, the numbers on the boarding passes were so small, all you did was put your thumb over the number, and 120 people still charged the gate. So then they went to those plastic ones with the big numbers, four big numbers on them. Because I flew on Southwest all the time when I was down there. It was fun.

Storey: Yeah. One of the trends, I think, on that project is the urbanization of El Paso reaching out into the project areas.

Patterson: Yeah.

Storey: Did that cause us any problems?

". . . we really didn't have authority for the Rio Grande Project to deliver urban water. And so what they were doing, they would *buy* the land, and then they would convert the water . . . deliver it to the city. It started in 1964, sometime in there . . . Then there was a contract that would allow the city to convert and use that water for M&I. And it worked as far as mechanics, but at some point you need to say, 'Okay, well, that's obviously going to continue more and more, and you probably ought to re-authorize the project and clearly have an M&I function and apply interest to it . . .'"

Patterson: Yeah, it did, because we really didn't have authority for the Rio Grande Project to deliver urban water. And so what they were doing, they would ***buy*** the land, and then they would convert the water attached to the land and they would deliver it to the city. It started in 1964, sometime in there, and it just kept getting worse.

Then you had these they call the *colonias*[15] that were really areas that didn't have any water supply. They would spring up in the sort of the un-zoned parts

15. 42 U.S.C. § 1479 ". . . defines a colonia as a community that (1) is in the state of Arizona, California, New Mexico, or Texas; (2) is within 150 miles (240 km) of the U.S.-Mexico border, except for any metropolitan area exceeding one million people; (3) on the basis of objective criteria, lacks adequate sewage systems and lacks decent, safe, and sanitary housing; and (4) existed as a colonia before November 28, 1990. . . ." Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colonia_(United_States) accessed on September 27, 2011, at about 10:20 A.M.

around the city, and they had no water. They had no water, no sewer, whatever, and people would buy a ***lot*** in there like that. It was really something else. So that was an issue that was sort of starting when I was down there. Yeah, urbanization, it was a big problem.

Storey: So that would be waterspreading,[16] is that right?

Patterson: Well, in one context there'd be waterspreading in the fact that you were using "agricultural water" for urban purposes.

Storey: How did you approach that problem?

Patterson: Basically tried to ignore it. It was one that, when it started, it was on a set path of the way it would work when they took over land, when the city annexed land and whatnot, and it went out of agriculture. Then there was a contract that would allow the city to convert and use that water for M&I. And it worked as far as mechanics, but at some point you need to say, "Okay, well, that's obviously going to continue more and more, and you probably ought to re-authorize the project and clearly have an M&I function and apply interest to it[17] and do it in a little more straightforward way." I didn't solve it when I was there, that's for sure.

Storey: How long were you in El Paso?

Patterson: Three years. All of this happened in three years, believe it or not. Then I went to Billings in the summer of '86.

Storey: Why did you decide to go to Billings?

"They'd consolidated Upper and Lower Missouri in Billings, which I was sent down Southwest and I *knew* that the Southwest Region was on this path to go out of business, and having worked in Denver, I was *struck* by the fact that they located the regional office in Billings, because it . . . didn't look right . . ."

Patterson: I didn't decide to go there either, except Billy Martin[18] was the R-D [regional director] up there. They'd consolidated Upper and Lower Missouri in Billings, which I was sent down Southwest and I ***knew*** that the Southwest Region was on this path to go out of business, and having worked in Denver, I was ***struck*** by the fact that they located the regional office in Billings, because it looked like something–it didn't look right, not just for that region, but Southwest was on this glide path to go out of business, whatever.

". . . Billy was the R-D, and he'd been the R-D when I was in Lower Missouri and he asked if I was interested in applying for the assistant regional director's job. . . ."

16. Waterspreading most often refers to the use of water from a Reclamation project outside the authorized boundaries of the project, and it may, as in this case, refer to other unauthorized uses of project water.
17. One key difference in Reclamation law is that irrigation (agricultural) water repayment does not pay interest on the project cost. Municipal and industrial water repayment does require payment of interest.
18. Reclamation's oral history program includes several interviews with Mr. Martin.

But anyway, Billy was the R-D, and he'd been the R-D when I was in Lower Missouri and he asked if I was interested in applying for the assistant regional director's job. I don't know, "I guess I could apply." I figured it wouldn't do any harm to apply.

". . . I thought, 'How tough can this be? I'm going to meet Bill. I know Bill. . . . ' . . . I had about an hour, and I thought, "Well, maybe I ought to think about what I'd say . . ." He put me through the damnedest interview . . . did a great interview, and I thought, 'God, it's a good thing I had that extra time . . .' because I wasn't prepared. . . . It was tough, and he asked all the right questions. . . ."

Then I knew Bill, and then he wanted to interview me, and it was great. We met in the old Lower Missouri area, and there were only like one or two people still around. We met down by what used to be the regional director's office, but at the time, this looked like a warehouse, Building 20, right. And I thought, "How tough can this be? I'm going to meet Bill. I know Bill. He knows me well. This can't be tough for an interview." I had about an hour. I got in early and I had about an hour, and I thought, "Well, maybe I ought to think about what I'd say if he actually asked me a question."

He put me through the damnedest interview, I mean like we had never met before. He worked me over. He had all the questions, did a great interview, and I thought, "God, it's a good thing I had that extra time and I actually gave this a little thought or I would have looked like a fool," because I wasn't prepared. I was coming up there figuring, "Hey, this will be a good chance to see Bill. Maybe we can have lunch, and he can hire somebody else and everything will be fine." He put me through this interview. It was tough, and he asked all the right questions. Fortunately, I'd given it a little bit of thought, and then I ended up with the job. And so it was switching borders from El Paso to Billings, which I'd never been to Billings before. So that's where we went.

Storey: Tell me about the interview questions.

Patterson: Oh, gosh, I don't–

Storey: Or, do you remember any of them?

Patterson: Well, I don't know. But I mean, things that I thought he knew, and I guess he did. He asked me why I was interested in the job. I said, "There's two answers there," I thought. I could either say, (Storey: Well, you called me.) "Well, you asked me if I wanted to apply," ***or*** that, "I think I could bring something to it," you know, give him one of those answers that sound great kind of thing, which is what I did. I'm sure he didn't believe it. But he asked me, "What are you going to bring to the job and why you're interested in it and how this fit in with your career goals," which I really never had any career goals, but I said, "It seems to fit," that kind of stuff.

". . . I didn't expect it from Bill, I truly didn't. But that was good. I was glad. I thought, "That's good," because he was doing it right. So since then I've tried to sort of do it the same way . . ."

But it was good. I didn't expect it from Bill, I truly didn't. But that was good. I was glad. I thought, "That's good," because he was doing it right. So since then I've tried to sort of do it the same way, even with people I know. Bill, he'd been around a lot, and he probably knew a lot that I didn't know. So that's the way it went.

Storey: Now, this assistant regional director's position that you applied for, was it . . .

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. SEPTEMBER 2, 1994.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. SEPTEMBER 2, 1994.

Storey: This is tape two of an interview by Brit Storey with Roger Patterson on September the 2nd, 1994.

It was the assistant regional director for O-&-M.

Moved to Billings as Assistant Regional Director for O&M

Patterson: Yeah, that's what it was supposed to be.

The Other Assistant Regional Directors Were Don Glaser and Gordon Wendler

There were really three Assistant R-Ds. There was this one, and then there was Gordon Wendler, who was one of the assistants, mostly for the construction and design part of the organization. Gordon had lots of years. He was the budget officer when I was in Lower Missouri, a good guy, so I knew him. And then Don Glaser[19] was the assistant for administration. I had met Don before. Of course, Don and I worked a lot together since then–interesting.

So, yeah, that was the job, assistant for O-&-M, and Bill was going to be there a few years. I wasn't sure when he was going to retire.

". . . a pretty big region. And then after we took over the majority of the Southwest Region, it was a *real big* region and took a lot of travel. . . . Billy traveled all the time, and I traveled more than half of the time just to cover all of the territory."

But after being there for a while and whatnot, it seemed like I was the guy that, along with him, did most of the traveling and going out and meeting with people kinds of stuff, which was a pretty big region. And then after we took over the majority of the Southwest Region, it was a ***real big*** region and took a lot of travel. Gordon Wendler kind of stayed home and took care of business. Billy traveled all the time, and I traveled more than half of the time just to cover all of the territory.

Storey: What kind of issues did you have to face when you walked into the job? That would have been '86, I believe.

19. Reclamation's oral history program includes several interviews with Don Glaser.

One Issue Was Getting the Newly Formed Missouri Basin Region to Function as a Region

Patterson: Yeah, that was in '86. Well, it was a new region, because they put things together, so one of the issues was trying to help get it to function as a region, because Upper and Lower Missouri before, and not very many staff moved to Billings.

"When they consolidated the two regions, the E&R Center hired *most* of the Lower Missouri Region's O&M people that wanted to keep working for Reclamation. . . . the assistant R-D and the R-D, had come from that region, so what you had is, all the staff knew the Upper Missouri, and the front office knew the Lower Missouri, and I'd worked in Lower Missouri. . . . Glaser . . . knew the Upper Missouri. . . ."

When they consolidated [the two regions], the E&R Center hired ***most*** of the O&M people that wanted to keep working for Reclamation. So as a result, I don't know how many, but there was probably only six or seven people that moved to Billings. But ***Wendler*** and ***Martin***, the assistant R-D and the R-D, had come from that region, so what you had is, all the staff knew the Upper Missouri, and the front office knew the Lower Missouri, and I'd worked in Lower Missouri. Well, fortunately we had Glaser there, and he knew the Upper Missouri.

When the Southwest Region Consolidated with the Missouri Basin Region to form the Great Plains Region, Very Different Issues Were Added to the Newly Created Region

So one of the issues was trying to get it to function as a regional office, and as we worked on that, then pretty soon we inherited Oklahoma and Texas, which is a true different language than Montana. I mean, it is so different that then to tell the Billings people, "You've got to go down to Texas and work on this issue," is different, because that Texas politics is really different. But we had Garrison. Fortunately, Glaser was there, and he knew everything about Garrison, which was good, but it was ***after*** the reformulation and it had all the problems associated with it and whatnot. We had the Platte River issues with the whooping crane and the endangered species stuff, and we had the Buffalo Bill modification under way. The North Loup Project[20] in Nebraska was cooking along. A lot of the issues that turned up on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming between Indians and farmers and fish were sort of starting to cook.

"There it seemed like there were just many, many issues, none of which took up all your time, but together they were just impossible to deal with, particularly with the geography. . . ."

There were lots of issues. There it seemed like there were just many, many issues, none of which took up all your time, but together they were just impossible to deal with, particularly with the geography. We had two airplanes. At the time, we had two Grand Commanders, and since then they don't have any. I don't know how

20. North Loup Division of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program.

Neil's [Stessman][21] doing that job now, because to get from Billings to wherever, South Dakota, go to Pierre, you couldn't go. If we didn't have our plane, you had to go to Denver and go back to South Dakota. The same way with Casper. The Bureau plane sort of saved us a lot of travel at the time.

And then for me it was kind of an advantage, because I'd worked in Lower Missouri and I'd worked in McCook at that project office, and when I worked there, I knew some of the people in Casper. So it wasn't like just coming into a new region where you didn't have ***any*** idea what the issues were or you didn't know any of the people, because I knew most of the constituents from L-M,[22] because the job I had before involved me working with a lot of those folks, so that was good. It was an advantage having been there before.

Storey: Tell me more about your involvement on the Wind River Reservation and what the issues were there.

Issues on the Wind River Reservation

Patterson: Well, there had been controversy for a long time between the tribes on the reservation, the Arapaho and the Shoshone, and the Midvale Irrigation District, which was a Reclamation project ***right*** in the middle, ***right*** in the middle of the reservation, encouraged to be there by Reclamation, and now the controversy was that the tribes were claiming reserved water rights, that the Indians had some water rights that were senior to the farmers.

It's just interesting when you have that, because we worked for the Department of Interior of the United States and the Department of Justice was arguing the tribe's side of the issue. The state of Wyoming was arguing pretty much the farmers' side of the issue, which was the Reclamation project. The Fish and Wildlife Service was then, you know, "Hey, we need more water in the stream for fish, and that's what the tribes want." And so you had all these interests, which for us was pretty hard, because some of our people thought we should be defending the Reclamation project in Midvale. A few–me, Don, and a few others–thought, "Well, wait a minute. We've got to put on a little bigger hat here and try to meet all of our responsibilities, which we have some trust responsibilities with the tribe, and, yes, we have some responsibilities for Midvale." I'm trying to think through what those were, but it was kind of tough.

It was sort of the first exposure to some of these conflicts that are there and are arising from the tribes when they try to settle their water rights, because many times there's a Reclamation project that, if you settle the tribe's water rights and they put the water to use, the Reclamation project just lost a lot of water, and it's hard, it was kind of hard. I think it had been in court for fourteen years, something like that.

Storey: At that point?

21. Reclamation's oral history program includes several interviews with Neil Stessman.
22. Lower Missouri Region.

Patterson: At that point, yeah. I mean, people spend careers on this stuff. Nothing like Pyramid Lake, but close, you know. It's amazing.

Storey: Was the Narrows Project dead by the time you went to Billings?

The Narrows Project on the South Platte in Colorado Was Dead by the Time He Became Assistant Regional Director

Patterson: Yeah. The sponsors would say not, but the reality is it was dead.

The Power Community Opposed A Proposal to Turn the Colorado-Big Thompson Project over to the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District

One of the things at the time when I was in Billings, that's when we decided we were going to turn over the Colorado-Big Thompson to the Northern Colorado [Water Conservancy] District, which I'm not sure what the motivation of that was, but it certainly didn't come from Billy Martin and us. We ***knew*** there was going to be great resistance to that from the power community, because then you have the water interest running the whole thing, including the power side, and it would set a precedent for the transfer of other Reclamation facilities to what some people saw as a special interest, and caused a lot of heat. Eventually, we pulled the plug on that idea.

Jim Ziglar Supported Transfer of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project

But Jim Ziglar, who was our assistant secretary [for water and science] at the time, was supportive of trying to do the transfer, and, "Jim, I don't think this is going to work." Well, you know, you've got to give it a shot kind of thing. It's a problem when somebody that's one of the political appointees feels like this is the right way to go, and you ***know*** that it might be the right way, it may not even be the right way, but in either event, it's probably not doable. So anyway, that was a problem, because we had 140 people down in the project office. Gee, if Northern takes over, most of them were going to be out of a job, and so you have all that kind of emotional concern. So, it died. It died.

Storey: Did it die a natural death?

". . . as I recall, there was some meeting back in Washington, and APPA, which is the big preference power organization, and NRECA, . . . I went to one of their annual meetings . . . ***big***, big power interests. . . . Jim Ziglar and I don't know who all was there. But there was a meeting, and then the next day it was over. . . ."

Patterson: Kind of unnatural. Well, I guess. Basically, as I recall, there was some meeting back in Washington, and APPA,[23] which is the big preference power organization, and NRECA,[24] National . . . whatever. Anyway, I went to one of their annual meetings, and they have 10,000 people show up at their annual meeting, so these are ***big***, big

23. American Public Power Association.
24. National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

power interests.

They had a meeting, and Jim Ziglar and I don't know who all was there. But there was a meeting, and then the next day it was over. So I don't know what happened. Apparently it was recognized that it was not . . .

Storey: The power interests had problems then, I gather.

Patterson: They blocked it, yeah. They basically blocked it. That was fine.

Storey: There are always those issues about transferring Elephant Butte, transferring C-U-P. Have you watched in any of these issues and sort of thought through where does the public interest begin and end?

Patterson: Oh, yeah.

Storey: What can be done and what shouldn't be done and what should be done and those kinds of issues?

California Proposal to Transfer the Central Valley Project to the State

Patterson: Yeah. Two years ago, here, we were engaged with the state on transferring the Central Valley Project, and this is the biggest project Reclamation has. And the governor, as part of his view for where he wanted to go with water policy in the state of California, was that it only made sense for the state of California to have the C-V-P. It was entirely within the state, served the customers in the state, etc. And so he had written to the [George] Bush administration, Secretary Lujan, and said, "Hey, I'd like to take over C-V-P."

". . . that had been tried at least three times in the past, going back forty years, but Manuel Lujan and those folks were inclined to say, 'Yeah, we'll consider doing that. . . .'"

Well, that had been tried at least three times in the past, going back forty years, but [Manuel] Lujan and those folks were inclined to say, "Yeah, we'll consider doing that. May be able to make some sense out of it." And so we sort of started on that, which was a ***very big*** issue. It was a $3 billion project, not small change involved.

". . . Don and I, along with a lot of our staff and lots of people, tried to think through, if that occurred, how it should occur and how you protect the public interest . . . the state of California is *not like* some special interest group. The state has essentially the same broad array of responsibilities, in many ways, that the Department of Interior does. . . ."

Don Glaser was able to come out and work with us as kind of John Sayre, who was our assistant secretary [for water and science], Don kind of served as John's representative out here, and Don and I, along with a lot of our staff and lots of people, tried to think through, if that occurred, how it should occur and how you protect the

public interest, which I believe could be done, if you set the politics aside and everything else aside, I think there's–the state of California is ***not like*** some special interest group. The state has essentially the same broad array of responsibilities, in many ways, [that] the Department of Interior does. You can say, "Well, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, there's something different, because we're concerned with birds from Mexico all the way through Canada." But the state of California has their own Endangered Species Act. Everything out here is CAL-something, CAL-EPA, CAL-Endangered Species Act. I mean, if the feds have it, California has it at least once, sometimes twice. They can out red tape us, let me tell you.

But you had California with broad responsibilities and probably could represent the public interest. You had the state water project, which lies right next to C-V-P, and so they had the capability to operate a major water project. So, yeah, maybe it makes sense, if you can sort of keep everybody whole in the process of doing that.

Well, lots of things happened. We started on it, and the governor appointed a group of citizen advisors, a lot of well-represented people around the state, and they were advising the state, but also advising us. Glaser and I had to think through a lot of the state's issues, for too it seemed that we were trying to work with them, and here we had a Republican administration and we were trying to work together on this thing.

A Series of Things Made Interior Feel it Should Not Entertain a Transfer until it Dealt with the Reforms Embodied in the Central Valley Project Improvement Act

But at the same time, you had all this major debate going on in the Congress about reauthorizing, reforming the C-V-P, and that eventually, in October of '92, then resulted in the Central Valley Project Improvement Act[25] and [President] Bill Clinton being elected and Dan Beard being appointed as commissioner, and us then going, "It doesn't make any sense to turn C-V-P over to the state, not now, because we've got new major legislation and we feel obligated to implement that and implement all these reforms. And then ***perhaps*** after that's done, it's time to get back to the state."

The agreement that the governor and the secretary signed is still there. It's still in place. 'The new people didn't come in and tear it up and throw it away. They just basically said, "Hey, our priorities now are to implement the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, and that's where we're putting our resources," and, in fact, that's what we're doing.

Where Title Transfer Might and Might Not Work

But, yeah, it caused you to think about the public interest, and ***here*** I think you could make it work. You take some of those smaller projects, where you have a lot of people that like to go out and fish and you may have a few cabins around the

25. The Central Valley Project Improvement Act of 1992 is included in the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of October 30, 1992 as Title XXXIV. (Public Law 102-575; 43 U.S.C. 371; 106 Stat. 4706-4731).

lake. You got recreators, you got some competition for the water. To turn title to a lot of those over to some special interest, which is what an irrigation district would be, gives me some personal heartburn. I don't think that's what Reclamation needs to do.

Now, where you have a canal system and you only have one user, I think absolutely we ought to turn title of that over to them and get out of it. What can we do? We aren't going to repossess it anyway. What are we going to do, rip it out, take it to the bank? Those kinds of things, I think we need to turn over. But these things that provide multiple benefits to the public, I'm not saying Reclamation needs to run them, but somebody that can represent the public interest needs to be calling those shots, and not a special interest.

Storey: What kinds of problems did you run into when you had to incorporate the region out of Amarillo? That was Southwest, was it?

Logistics Proved to Be a Major Issue When Reclamation Created the Great Plains Region by Consolidating the Missouri Basin Region with the Southwest Region and Put the Regional Office in Billings

Patterson: Southwest Region.

Storey: Into Great Plains?

Patterson: It was logistics, hard to get there . . . from Billings. Try to go to a Monday morning meeting in Houston. You leave at 9:05 on Sunday.

Storey: In the morning?

Patterson: Yeah, in the morning. Yeah, my wife would remind me that it was in the morning.

You know, logistically it was difficult to get to. There were not major programs down there with a lot of money associated with them, so it wasn't that you had a big office. So we ended up with a couple little offices in Amarillo and in Oklahoma City that didn't have enough program, really, to support as many people as you would need. There's a lot of work. I think there's a lot of problems that Reclamation could help with down in that area, particularly Texas, a lot of very complicated issues that we could help with, but we were so far away.

". . . for people from Billings to understand the cultural political part of dealing with things down in Texas was really hard. . . ."

So a lot of logistical things, and, as I said earlier, for people from Billings to understand the cultural political part of dealing with things down in Texas was really hard. If I hadn't of worked in El Paso and sort of learned a ***little bit*** of the ropes, we would've really had a problem. So it was different.

". . . it's too big of a region. . . ."

It's too big, it's too big of a region. I've been the regional director of that region, and the last year I was the R-D, I was only home two weeks out of the whole year, two full weeks. I mean, a couple weeks I wasn't gone the whole time. But that's not good. That's not good. That is a killer, personally is a killer and just not good.

Storey: Why did they put it in Billings? Why not Denver?

Patterson: I honestly don't know. You know, I honestly don't know, because at the time we had a Republican administration, the [Ronald] Reagan administration, and Billings had an entire Democrat delegation from Montana, both their senators, their one congressman. I guess they had two. That is basically a Democrat delegation up there, the Republican administration. I think politics influenced this, I don't know. It must not have. But I think it came down to, we had the E-&-R Center in Denver. The Bureau had a couple thousand people in Denver. And you could close the regional office with 250 people and not have a major impact locally. I bet you Reclamation was the biggest employer in Billings, probably, and there were a lot of good people worked in Billings. They wouldn't have moved. And I don't know, maybe that influenced things a lot to say, "Hey, we pull out of Billings, it's a big impact. We're going to lose a lot of people. The people in L-M that want to work for Reclamation, a lot of them went to work for the E&R Center." As opposed to from a ***program*** standpoint, it's sure easier to get around out of Denver. Garrison was kind of an unknown, though, how big Garrison was going to be and how big a program it was going to be. Reality is, you can get there easier from Denver than Billings, but it just seemed Billings was in the neighborhood. So I don't know. You need to ask some of those guys that made that decision, because I know I was sitting down in El Paso at the time going, "This is going to be really, really tough."

Storey: Who are some of those guys who made that decision?

Patterson: I guess Billy. I would ask Billy Martin.[26] He lives here in Sacramento. I don't know if you've had chance to interview him yet.

Storey: Yeah, we've spoken twice. We haven't gotten up there yet.

Patterson: Ask him about that, because it kind of baffles me. I'm sure they had good data to make it on, but it's sure hard to figure out. But ask Bill. I don't know who else was part of that decision.

Storey: Who was commissioner when you went up there? That was '86?

Patterson: I don't know. Who was? Was Broadbent in then?

Storey: It looks like it must have been Dale Duvall.

Patterson: Was he commissioner when I went there? Yeah, he might have been. Dale was the

26. See Billy E. Martin's interviews in the Reclamation oral history program. He talked about this issue and how and why the decisions were made.

guy that, when I became R-D, he was commissioner, so, yeah, he probably was. He was there in '86, yeah.

Storey: Did you become SES when you went there?

Patterson: No, no. I was a [GS-]15.

Storey: Were all the other regional associates?

Evolution of the Front Office in Billings after His Arrival

Patterson: Gordon was a 15, Glaser was a 14. He was assistant [regional director] for administration. Then Gordon retired after forty-two years, and Bill decided that Don and I could do it, just the two of us, so they sort of reshuffled the deck. And then Don got a 15 out of the deal, and Glaser and I then pretty much ran the show with Bill for however long that was. And then Bill went to Denver to take over the assistant commissioner for resource management. They transferred him down there. And then I was acting for him, so Don and I were ***really*** running the show then.

Then [William] Klostermeyer was leaving, who had been our assistant commissioner[-administration and liaison][27] in Washington forever, and ***Don*** still blames me, ***and I didn't sell him out on this***. But they needed somebody to go back to Washington and act for Klostermeyer, and Don was the right guy to go do it. I still tell him this, he was. And I didn't volunteer his name, but Duvall asked me, he said, "I know you and Don are doing three jobs between you. I'd really kind of like to have Don come back and act for Klostermeyer. What do you think?"

Well, I could either tell him, "No, I don't think I'm competent enough to do it without Don," or, "Hey, you're the boss."

So I called Don and I said, "Don, Duvall's going to call you," kind of a thing. He thinks I sold him out. I didn't.

". . . I was doing three jobs for a while, not very well, and then I got appointed the regional director. . . ."

Anyway, so Don got shuffled off to Washington to act and eventually ended up in the job permanently back there. But I was doing three jobs for a while, not very well, and then I got appointed the regional director. It was a pretty wild time there for a while. So I didn't become S-E-S until I took over the R-D's job up there.

Storey: That would have been when?

Patterson: You know, I don't even know. That tells you how screwed up things were. I'm not even sure. It must have been–well, I started acting when Bill went to Denver. That

27. William Klostermeyer served as assistant commissioner for administration from 1981 to 1988. In 1988 the title changed to assistant commissioner-administration and liaison, and Mr. Klostermeyer was in the position until 1989. Reclamation's oral history program includes several interviews with Mr. Klostermeyer.

must have been about–I think Bill went to Denver in like November of ‘88, maybe?

Storey: Yeah, that’s right.

Patterson: That would be right?

Storey: That’s just about right.

Patterson: Okay. Well, then I started acting, and I don’t even remember when I was officially appointed. It was sometime after that, six months later, probably. Because it didn’t matter. Once you’re acting, it didn’t matter when it became permanent. So I don’t remember when it was, but it would have been sometime, then, in ‘89, the summer of ‘89.

Storey: Well, tell me how you and Bill Martin and Don Glaser worked together and how you split up the work.

How the Front Office in Billings Split up the Work

Patterson: Well, we worked together pretty well, Don and I particularly. Bill did a lot of the traveling, so he took a big part of that load, and I helped out. I probably traveled half of the time. Don stayed home more than Bill and I did. Don sort of took on responsibility to be the guy tending the shop and running the regional office and be there to provide the sort of regional perspective to the project managers. Don was the resident expert on Garrison, so he got that part. Don, from a program standpoint, he had Garrison figured out. And since I’d worked in Lower Missouri, I kind of handled a lot of that stuff that came up.

It was pretty undefined. We used to say, “Three people, one brain,” and the staff thought, “Yeah, that’s right.” That wasn’t quite what we meant. What we tried to say is, “Hey, ask any of us, and if we’re doing our job, you’ll get the same answer.” But they thought three people, one brain was about right, and they weren’t sure we had that much between us.

So we just sort of found a balance there to make it work, and it was good. Don is a great thinker, and he helped me a lot in developing in that job and asking questions that I never would have thought of and really helped me put into perspective the responsibilities of the job in the broader sense. It got to the point where we would tell our people that, sometimes we’d have clashes with Fish and Wildlife Service people, we said, “You need to keep in mind, you work for the same boss.” And Don was great at doing that. People had never thought about that before, ***had never*** thought about that, that the guy you’re fighting with at Fish and Wildlife, you have the same boss. That’s the secretary of interior, and you’re doing their job. So Don was great to put a different perspective, and he could ask very probing questions and make you do your homework.

“His best question, which I just hate . . ‘Did you read this?’ And you couldn’t answer it, because if you said yes, then you must be crazy, because there’s a problem in it, and if you read it and then agreed with it, you must be nuts. And if

you said no, then you were irresponsible for not reading it. . . ."

His best question, which I just hate, and I finally told him I'm never going to answer it again, is, he would bring something in and he would say, "Did you read this?" And you couldn't answer it, because if you said yes, then you must be crazy, because there's a problem in it, and if you read it and then agreed with it, you must be nuts. And if you said no, then you were irresponsible for not reading it. So we used to have a great time. I said, "Glaser, if you ask one more time if I've read it, I'm not going to answer that. You've trapped me many, many times with that question," which became a standing joke between us.

But Don would ask ***all*** the critical questions, and we had pretty good chemistry that worked between us, and that's what paid off when Bill left then and kind of it was the two of us for a while. It was good. We tried to get out of the "You've got this part of the organization and you have this part," because that really didn't work very well.

Storey: How was Bill as a manager?

Bill Martin as a Manager

Patterson: Very clear, very clear. You always knew where you stood with Bill. I thought he was great. I liked to pick on him and make him chuckle. But people were scared of him. I mean, people were scared of him, and he didn't leave his office. When he was in his office, I mean, he stayed in his office; and then when he traveled, he traveled. But most of the staff, they were scared to death of him. He's very imposing. He's all guy, and he's got these great eyes and that flat top and hadn't changed for years.

But for me, it was great. He'd let you do everything you had capable of doing, and you didn't even know it at the time, but he was kind of back there, in case you were going to fall, he'd grab you by the nape of the neck. But he wouldn't grab you until you were falling and about halfway down, and then he'd kind of rescue you. But he was great to work for, I thought.

Don had a lot of great political insight, more than Bill did and more than I did.

END OF SIDE 1, TAPE 2. SEPTEMBER 2, 1994.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2. SEPTEMBER 2, 1994.

Patterson: Bill had the best memory, I'll tell you. If he said, "You know, in 19 so and so, I think we sent a letter to somebody and told them this," he was right. I couldn't remember what we sent to somebody two weeks before that, but Bill had a great memory, and that was good. You could rely on that. And he had a good eye. He'd find things that I wouldn't be able to find.

Storey: When you say that Don Glaser had good political insights, where did that come from, do you think?

Patterson: I don't know, because he was a personnel officer. I don't know where Don got that.

He should be a politician. I don't know where he developed it, but he has it, and he had it at the time, and it was good.

Don Glaser Started to Improve Relations Between Reclamation and the Fish and Wildlife Service

The other thing that he did is, Don helped a lot to start working on a healthier relationship with Fish and Wildlife Service. And I said, he had the same boss. And I did too, but Don was the one that sort of saw that we needed to do that. In fact, I wrote a retirement note today to Bob Jacobson [phonetic] in Denver with Fish and Wildlife Service. He's leaving. But we had a lot of tough issues with Fish and Wildlife on Garrison. Garrison was a big battle between Fish and Wildlife and Reclamation for years, and Don put a lot of energy into working on making that relationship better, and it was good. It kind of taught me the value of trying to do that.

"Don was great on ideas. Now, he wasn't so good on implementation. . . ."

Don was great on ideas. Now, he wasn't so good on implementation. That's what I used to tell him, "Yeah, well, we'll sit around after work and we'll come up with a great idea, and then you better leave it to me to go get it implemented." Hey, everybody's got their strengths, and Don's strength is ***not*** follow-through. That's okay if you're working with somebody that's good at that, and that's why we worked good together, because I was usually pretty good at being able to follow things through and figure out how to make them work. So it was good.

Storey: Did he have any contacts among the politicians?

Contacts with Politicians in Billings

Patterson: Well, yeah. Up there, I'll tell you, in that environment you really had to know a lot of the politicians on a first-name basis, because if you didn't, in Wyoming everybody knew [Congressman] Dick Cheney on a first-name basis. There are only 450,000 people in the state. And so if you didn't, when one of the constituents called up and said, "Dick, the Bureau of Reclamation is jacking me over on so and so," you had to know him, too, and have enough credibility to deal with him.

Don knew the Montana and North Dakota people by first name. I mean, Glaser and I have been to the governor's house and had breakfast in Bismarck and that kind of stuff. Senator [Conrad] Burns went to the same church as Don, so go back to Washington and drop in and see Conrad, "You old son of a gun, how ya doing?" So, yeah, we got to know a lot of those guys pretty well–[Senator Alan] Simpson and [Senator Malcolm] Wallop and Cheney. And Mrs. Smith[28] was a big supporter of Reclamation. She'd been on our appropriations committee forever, so I knew her pretty well. So did Billy.

28. Virginia Dodd Smith served as a Republican member of the House of Representatives from Nebraska from January 3, 1975, until January 3, 1989.

Yeah, you get to know those people, which here, I couldn't get in to see the governor here if I had to. There, in that region, Don and I could have called up at least half of the governors in our region and they'd answer the phone. It's just different.

Storey: Yeah, it sure is.

Patterson: Yeah. I mean, I can remember calling Governor [Michael] Sullivan in Wyoming, and he answered the phone. He'd given me his number right at his desk, which was kind of interesting.

Storey: I think now would be a good time to stop. Our time is almost up.

Patterson: Okay, that's good.

Storey: We're sort of at a natural breaking point, I think. I'd like to ask you again if the information included on the tapes and the transcripts from this interview can be used by researchers from within Reclamation and from outside Reclamation.

Patterson: Yeah, everybody but Glaser. (laughter) No, that's fine. No problem.

Storey: Good. Thank you.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. September 2, 1994.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 1. APRIL 12, 1995.

Storey: This is Brit Allan Storey, senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Regional Director Roger Patterson in his offices at the Mid-Pacific Region of the Bureau of Reclamation in Sacramento, California, on April the 12th, 1995, at about nine o'clock in the morning. This is tape one.

Transitioning from Assistant Regional Director to Regional Director

Last time, we had discussed your work as assistant regional director up in Billings, and now I'd like to talk about how you transitioned to become regional director up there.

Patterson: Oh, that was fun, because I was abandoned, so I didn't have any choice. Bill Martin was reassigned to Denver. He was going to be assistant commissioner[-resources management]. And Glaser and I were in Billings, and I was named as acting.

How Don Glaser Became Bill Klostermeyer's Replacement

And a few months down the road is when Bill Klostermeyer decided to retire, and I remember the R-Ds getting together with the commissioner–I guess it was Duvall at the time–and we were trying to find somebody to go act in Washington for Klostermeyer, and the obvious person that came up to everybody's mind at the same time was Don Glaser.

Since Don and I were supposed to be running the region, they kind of deferred to me rather than just say, "Yeah, yeah, Don's the guy. Let's send him back." It was, "Well, do you think you could get by without Don?" like they were challenging my ability, right?

I said, "No, I don't think so. I really don't." I told them, "I think that's going to be a problem. But if we couldn't get anybody else, we need to see if Don would be interested."

". . . to this day, Don accuses me of selling out at that meeting, because he went to Washington acting and then ended up getting the job and getting stuck in Washington. . . ."

But to this day, Don accuses me of selling out at that meeting, because he went to Washington acting and then ended up getting the job and getting stuck in Washington. So he blames me for all that. That's all well and good.

Appointment as Regional Director

Anyway, he did that, and I was acting regional director for–I mean, those take a long time to fill. It must have been–I don't remember. I think I started acting maybe in the fall, like October-, November, and I was acting till in the next summer, whenever that was, I don't remember. So I was acting probably nine months or so, and then Larry Hancock and I got named as regional directors at the same time, Larry here in Sacramento and me in Billings, and that must have been '89. It must have been the summer of '89.

So I was there about two years as the full-fledged regional director, and Don was gone so I ended up having to fill some of the assistant jobs, and had a lot of fun issues going on at the same time. We had Texas and Oklahoma, which we had learned how difficult it was to deal with those issues out of Billings. It would take all day. There's a nine o'clock flight on Sunday to go to Texas, which I took many too many times.

Storey: Nine in the morning?

Patterson: Nine in the morning, yeah, which my wife didn't particularly like, and I didn't like either. But if you had to be in Texas for any kind of meetings on Monday, you basically shot your Sunday getting there.

"So *that* was the hardest part of that job was all of the travel. . . . I don't think the other folks around Reclamation and the other regional directors really have an appreciation for how difficult that job is from a travel standpoint. You have parts of nine states, and it's just hard to stay in touch with all the constituencies. . . ."

So ***that*** was the hardest part of that job was all of the travel. In fact, the last year I was the regional director there, I was home two weeks out of the whole year. I was traveling fifty weeks. Not all of the time, but some part during those fifty weeks I was gone at least one night, and ***that*** got to be kind of a burden. I don't think the

other folks around Reclamation and the other regional directors really have an appreciation for how difficult that job is from a travel standpoint. You have parts of nine states, and it's just hard to stay in touch with all the constituencies. A lot of the constituencies aren't big and almighty powerful like some of them are out here in California, but yet they all have their little idiosyncracies and they need some attention and whatnot. So it just took a lot of time to stay out there with them supporting the project manager types. It was the hardest part of the job, probably.

Storey: What were the major issues while you were regional director there?

Garrison Project

Patterson: Oh, Garrison is always an issue in that region. They had done the reformulation on Garrison, and it seemed like every year we went through terminating the project to Congress, then writing in money and those kinds of things. We were still working with the Canadians to see how we were going to build the Sykeston Canal and if it was really what we were going to do and how could we protect against biota transferring to Canada. So we did some work–and I was never an expert on Garrison. Neil Stessman came over as the project manager in Bismarck, and I was involved in Garrison, but I never claimed to be an expert on it. I went to a lot of the meetings and went into Winnipeg a few times, which was always fun.

Our timing was always lousy, because you talk about cold. I remember leaving on the Bureau plane in Winnipeg. We got out to the airport, and I don't know how cold it was, but it was cold, and they had these old air blower things they were blowing into the plane to warm it up, because we couldn't get it in the hangar. For some reason, we couldn't get our plane in the hangar that night, so it sat outside all night. Dick Kennington [phonetic] was our pilot, and we got all loaded up on one of Commanders, N-615. It was cold in there, but at least they'd been blowing the air in.

He got the engine started. We started taxiing, and I looked out and the dang wheel wasn't turning. I mean, these wheels were flat on the bottom. They were just sliding on the ice. I said, "Dick, the wheels aren't turning. Does that matter?"

And he said, "Here we go," and he hit the gas. Finally, clunk, clunk, and away we went. It was so miserably cold, I couldn't believe it. We had a bunch of Bureau guys and a couple of Fish and Wildlife guys, as I recall, on there. But venturing into Canada, I think the word there is, go in the summer. It was cold.

I remember the night before when we got in, and the Customs guy comes out, and we open the door. I mean, this guy looked like a polar bear. He had one of these big hoods that stick out in front, and all you could see was his eyes in there. And it was night, and he had a flashlight. He kind of shines it in, "All American citizens?" When he opened the door, I mean, "Yeah." We would have said anything, it was so dang cold. "Yeah, yeah, yeah, that's fine," and then we loaded into a van and got out of there. That was one of those Winnipeg trips that were fun.

Platte River Issues

Then we had Platte River stuff, which is still going on. That dealt with everything from whooping cranes in Nebraska to allocation of the water in the Upper Basin.

". . . when I was still acting as regional director, it turned out to be the first time ever the Bureau of Reclamation had put the call on the North Platte River, which means that we advised the state of Wyoming that we wanted to invoke our senior water rights . . ."

Unfortunately, when I was still acting as regional director, it turned out to be the first time ever the Bureau of Reclamation had put the call on the North Platte River, which means that we advised the state of Wyoming that we wanted to invoke our senior water rights, which never happened. The Platte system is, what, going on ninety years old. That turned out to be a very controversial thing.

Dave Wilde was the project manager down in Casper, and Dave's passed away since then, but he was a great guy. But he was an independent cuss, and he sort of [never] bothered to tell the acting regional director that he was putting the call on the river. I first got a call from the state engineer, wanting to know what in the hell we thought we were doing, and I talked to Dave and Dave explained to me in a very logical fashion why this made sense, because it was one of the driest years in history and it was just the way things ought to work, which was hard to argue with.

Dick Cheney, Malcolm Wallop, and Al Simpson

I got invited, and the commissioner, Duvall, was invited, to meet with Dick Cheney, who was then the lone Congressman from Wyoming and a very powerful individual, to explain to him why the Bureau had made this decision, and I guess to see if we wanted to change our mind. I remember going to Washington, and I talked to Duvall the afternoon before and told him that, "Yeah, we've done it," and sort of here's why it happened. These were sort of the downsides of it, too. We had this meeting then the next day, and I knew we were going to get clobbered. It was one of the few times that I didn't sleep that involved work. I mean, I was wrasslin around all night, "How am I going to explain this to the Congressman so that it makes sense, and what am I going to tell him we're going to do to sort of get out of this pickle?" I mean, I literally didn't get any sleep that night, and it was so funny. I was acting, and I didn't quite know how to deal with these things.

So we get over. We call that morning to find out for sure where the meeting is. Well, it turns out the meeting's in the Capitol in Al Simpson's office, who was the Minority Whip in the Senate at the time. We walk in the office, Duvall and I. There sits Malcolm Wallop, who was the senior Senator; Al Simpson, who was the Minority Whip; and Dick Cheney sitting behind the big desk in Al Simpson's chair. They invited us to sit down, and the congressman looked at the commissioner and said, "You know, this is very serious, and I ***hope*** that the Bureau of Reclamation has a good explanation for this."

The commissioner, without missing a lick, says, "Congressman, we certainly do, and Roger's going to tell you what it is." (laughter)

We hadn't talked about the strategy at all, because he didn't have any ideas, and all I had was one I had cranking around in my brain all night the night before. And so I took a breath, and it seemed like ten minutes–it was probably five minutes–I literally did not stop talking. I looked the Congressman right in the eye and just told him how it was and that I thought we needed to go up and meet with all of the people up the river who are going to be impacted and see if there isn't some way we could [get] through the year and work with the state engineer kind of a thing. I mean, literally I don't think I took a breath for five minutes.

He looked at me and he said, "Well, that's not too bad, but you better be able to pull it off."

". . . Simpson started in on, 'You've got to let us know on these things, because, you know, we have people out there who expect us to be connected to what's going on, and we cannot stand to be blind sided . . .'"

Then Simpson started in on, "You've got to let us know on these things, because, you know, we have people out there who expect us to be connected to what's going on, and we cannot stand to be blind sided," and all this stuff.

So what do you do? You apologize and say, "We'll try to help work the thing out of here." So we committed to go to Saratoga, Wyoming, and meet with the people in the Upper Basin [of the North Platte River] who were some of the junior water users, who weren't going to get their water if we called it through down the system. I figured, "Well, Dave Wilde got us into this thing, so Dave Wilde and I are going to go to Saratoga."

We went up there, and it was one of the darnedest things. We had the state engineer, Jeff Fassett, who wasn't on our side. He thought maybe this was a dumb decision. And there must have been 500 people in the gymnasium. The only place in Saratoga to meet was in the gymnasium. We went in there, and it felt like–they didn't have the ropes hanging from the backboard with our name on it, but it was that kind of atmosphere. The Bureau of Reclamation, step up. We're going to hang you. We don't need to know anything else.

It was one of those meetings that you couldn't win. All you could do is ask them to see if we could find a group of them that we could be working with to get through this very difficult year kind of a thing, and try to get out of there with our life, which is about all we were successful at doing.

"We ended up getting through the year and finding a way that the people in the Upper Basin could take enough water to sort of meet their minimum requirements . . ."

We ended up getting through the year and finding a way that the people in the Upper Basin could take enough water to sort of meet their minimum requirements and all this kind of stuff, and we sort of finessed our way through it. There were times when I thought, "This is not the business I want to be in," because it wasn't very pleasant.

Issues on the Wind River

So the Platte River was an issue. The Wind River, we'd had the final court decision after, what, fourteen years on the Wind River, and they had decided that the Indian tribes, the Shoshone and the Arapaho, did have some entitlement to water on the Wind River. We had several issues associated with how do we honor, now, the recognized rights and quantities of water to the tribe and make it consistent with our other obligation, which is the Midvale Project and the Midvale Irrigation District.[29]

". . . it was probably when it first ever started to sink into me the responsibilities that you have as a Department of Interior employee for Indian tribes. I never really heard anyone talk about that before. It was always our principal constituency was the irrigators . . ."

That was an interesting issue, and it was probably when it first ever started to sink into me the responsibilities that you have as a Department of Interior employee for Indian tribes. I never really heard anyone talk about that before. It was always our principal constituency was the irrigators and whatever. As I got into the Wind River thing is when I started to appreciate the fact that it's not BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs] only that has responsibility to Indian tribes, but it's any of us that work for the Department of Interior, and how do you match that with the relationship you've had with the irrigation districts and make that work and whatever, and that was enlightening, I guess, and beneficial, actually, to me in some of the issues that I've had to work with since.

". . . two members in that region in Congress that were on appropriations, Virginia Smith from Nebraska and Wes Watkins from Oklahoma. They were both on our appropriations, and if we even thought we needed money, they put it in our budget . . ."

Then we had all sorts of cats and dogs around. We had two members in that region in Congress that were on appropriations, Virginia Smith from Nebraska and Wes Watkins from Oklahoma. They were both on our appropriations, and if we even thought we needed money, they put it in our budget, continually money, money, money coming from Watkins and Congresswoman Smith. We tried to stay fairly close to them so that what they provided us money for was something we actually could do and that we needed. But they were good at getting money in those times.

Legislative Issues for the Great Plains Region

Then we had also when I was in Billings, we had several legislative things that sort of came to a head that we needed new legislation from the Congress, and the one that started it was the cost ceiling increase on Buffalo Bill. We had a partnership between the Bureau of Rec and the state of Wyoming to do 100-plus million dollar enlargement and new powerplant, etc., at Buffalo Bill Reservoir, and the cost ceiling, we were coming up against the cost ceiling and we were going to need something like

29. This is apparently on the Riverton Unit of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program.

a $12 million increase in cost ceiling to complete the project. And so we worked out how to split that and make it work with the state of Wyoming, and seemed to have pretty good support from everybody to do it. And it turned out that Buffalo Bill then became Title I of Public Law 102-575,[30] which is the forty-title thing that C-V-P-I-A, Central Valley Project Improvement Act, and all these other things became part of, and little did I know at the time this Buffalo Bill Title I was going to grow into this monster.

I remember going back to Washington to explain what we needed to do for Buffalo Bill legislation to the staff director in the House, which was Dan Beard. I had talked to Dan several times on the phone, and we knew each other, but not real well. Of course, he, on behalf of George Miller, had held the Bureau's feet to the fire and been very critical of some of our things. So I go in there, and I have my little picture and my little presentation prepared, and I walked through this with Dan, "Here's what we need to do. Here's why we have the problems. The state's going to come in for roughly 50 percent of it," gave him this whole pitch.

He kind of looked at it. He didn't say anything immediately. And he looked at me, and I said, "Well?"

He said, "Let me just say this. That's not near as dumb as most of the things you guys usually want to do."

And I said, "Can I take that as your endorsement?"

He said, "Yeah. This isn't too bad."

It was so funny. I've reminded him of that since, and he says, "I told you that?"

I said, "Oh, yeah, I remember, because I was just ***waiting*** for the reaction from you, and that's what it was, 'This is not near as dumb as what you guys usually try to do.'"

So anyway, I worked on that. Our region had about the next five titles in that bill, too. We had a project in Texas, Lake Meredith, and we had a deal we've worked out with the state of Kansas on Cedar Bluff Reservoir, and the Leadville Drainage Tunnel legislation was part of that. So our region really had about the first five or six pieces of what then grew into Public Law 102-575, and we became what was referred to as a lot of the hostages that were taken to reform the Central Valley Project out here in California, because those projects were there, and by having one in Texas, one in Kansas, one in Wyoming, one in Colorado, we had all the states there that were easily captured then as the drama played out on 575. It was fun. Learned a lot.

Storey: What kind of reputation did Dan Beard have at that time among Reclamation employees?

30. Title I of the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of October 30, 1992 as Title XXXIV. (Public Law 102-575; 43 U.S.C. 371; 106 Stat. 4706-4731).

Dan Beard's Reputation among Reclamation Employees

Patterson: He didn't. He was somebody that was not our friend. That was his general reputation. George Miller was a critic of the Bureau, and Dan Beard was his principal guy, and so he was not a friend to Reclamation.

". . . Dan, actually the guy was pretty straightforward. He'd always tell you where he was. . . ."

Those of us that had a chance to deal with Dan, actually the guy was pretty straightforward. He'd always tell you where he was. It's just like this thing on Buffalo Bill. If he'd have thought it was really stupid, he'd say, "We aren't going to support that." But by talking to him, you really always knew pretty much where he would be and where George Miller would be, and you could save yourself a lot of time and frustration if you'd just take the time to talk to him. While you didn't like the positions he may have taken a lot, the guy was–he'd talk to anybody, anytime. Set a meeting up with him. He didn't push you off to his staff if you wanted to meet with him. I met with him several times, and it wasn't a case when you'd get there, "Oh, Dan's tied up. Can you meet with Steve Laniker [phonetic]? Can you meet with Charlene or somebody?" Of course, I know him now a lot better than I did then.

". . . generally he was not viewed as a friend to Reclamation. . . ."

But, no, generally he was not viewed as a friend to Reclamation.

Storey: But it sounds to me as if he did business then the way he does it now.

Patterson: I think he did. You know, he's the same guy. I think the difference is, the job he has now he's finding is much more difficult, much more difficult, because when you can advocate a certain position, that's one thing, which he had with George Miller.

When you have to implement a program, you have to ***not*** create great controversy with any particular area that can stop from moving ahead, and there has to be more consensus around things. But he has certain principles that he will not compromise, but he's a ***very good*** politician and he ***always*** views issues from a political standpoint. They do the doable. Well, he's pretty good at that.

But, yeah, as far as personally doing business with him, I think he seems to be the same guy. And he's a realist. I mean, R-R-A is a good example. I would have thought that he was the greatest champion in the world of the principles behind Reclamation reform and acreage limitation and eliminating subsidies and whatever. Since he's become commissioner, he's seen how maybe that is not as important to trying to be a good water manager as he thought before. I mean, he said that. I think he's right.

Storey: What else was going on in Great Plains?

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Great Plains Disposed of its Two Planes

Patterson: We had two airplanes. That was great. Couldn't afford them. You do what you always do, "Let's get a committee to look at the cost of these planes and hope that it comes out we can afford them." Well, we couldn't. See, the reason we had two is, Billings and Denver had consolidated regions, and Denver had Commander 615, which we had purchased new, and then Billings had 613, I think, but it was another Commander that they picked up somewhere and they'd done a rehab on it and whatever. So we had those two Commanders for a while, which was kind of nice. ***But***, the committee said, "Can't afford these. Let's cut down to one and charter the overload," so that's what we did, which still worked pretty good for me. But now since then, Neil's gotten rid of the other plane. But the Bureau, we always had those airplanes, and it was great most of the time.

One night it wasn't too good. We were out in Cawker City, Kansas. We had a meeting. It got over about eleven-thirty at night. And for some reason, we had to take Bob Dole's staff guy and I think another state guy on the plane with us, which was all legitimate. You know the rules. No sweat. They're involved in the issue, and it was all fine. There's not a lot going on in Cawker City, and you would think at eleven-thirty at night nothing would be happening. But who shows up, the local newspaper guy with his photographer as we're leaving Cawker City on the Bureau plane with these people, and I thought, "This is going to be a great story." Here we were, down there with all these guys that didn't have any money for this, and the Bureau flies in in this jet-prop airplane, and we've got Dole's people on there. I was really glad it didn't say "Bureau of Reclamation" on the side of the plane.

But it turned out they didn't do a story on the airplane. They did a story on how good it was that we were willing to come down and talk to the local people about what they were doing, and they didn't show the airplane. But I thought, "Oh, jeez, that would have been a trick."

Storey: When did you start becoming aware of the implications of newspapers and Reclamation, and the way they looked at us, and all that kind of stuff?

Dealing with the Media

Patterson: Oh, I don't know. My first exposure to that was–I always believed everything I read in the newspaper. I mean, truly I thought if you read it in the newspaper, it must be true. When I was the head of water operations–or I wasn't the head of it. I was the water operations guy in McCook. They let me talk to the local newspaper guy just to give him some basic stuff on operations and lake elevations and whatever, and they screwed it up. They had the lake like twenty feet higher than it really was, which to anybody but me probably wasn't a big deal, but that was a big deal to me.

So I called this guy back and I said, "You screwed this up. I told you this."

His reaction was, "Well, whatever. It doesn't really matter for the story."

Okay, maybe he's right. Maybe it doesn't matter for the story. But it factually was not correct, and I gave him the right information, and he didn't seem like it was a big deal. So, gee, I wonder if there's any of this other stuff in the

newspaper that's not exactly correct. Well, now I know. Yeah, right. I know now that much of what is in the newspaper is not correct.

But that was sort of my lone first experience, and until I really was in El Paso as their project manager down there, project superintendent, which then we dealt with the media some, I didn't have much of an appreciation for not only how they viewed government and how they viewed the Bureau of Reclamation, but how they could influence issues by not only the regular stories they wrote, but more so by their editorial page and what they chose to publish as letters to the editor and things like that. So probably when I was in El Paso I started getting an appreciation for why they were important to us and why it was important that we establish a relationship with them and had an opportunity to get our side of the story in, right or wrong, we always had an opportunity to get our side represented, and why you needed to be available.

The worst thing is to have the media passed around. They needed to know you can call this person and they will get you the information immediately, because they move fast, compared to us. They have a deadline and they need to meet it, and if you want your information in there, you better respond and you better respond quickly. Since then, we've found the merit in trying to meet with editorial boards and let them know sort of what's going on. It doesn't produce an immediate story, but it helps them to understand the issues better, I think, if they're inclined to, certainly on something. It probably won't change their mind, but you do what you can.

Of course, out here the media is a big part of what we do. They're involved in conveying messages on water in California unlike anyplace I've ever been. This is a whole other league compared to my experiences in Billings or El Paso. This is something else.

Storey: It seems like there're so many potential media organizations. How do you pick and choose which ones? I wouldn't think it would be possible to deal with all of them.

Patterson: Well, the way I do it is, I have Jeff McCracken here who works for me, who is just the best at knowing that, and he has relationships with people, and I was fortunate he was here when I came. But he had worked outside. He was an anchor person on one of the San Francisco TV stations. He had his own business for a while, where he did consulting work for media and companies and whatever, and he's outstanding. He's the reason we've been able to sort of turn things around. He's really good, not just for me, but on a lot of the Bay-Delta[31] things. He helped Betsy Reike get into the editorial boards and talk to people. He's good.

I think that's the secret, is you've got to have somebody that knows that business, because it's just as complicated as engineering or economics or anything else in this day and age. I'm really proud of our shop over here. They've got staff that not only does the media stuff, but they've moved into a whole other league now in public involvement. They're going a fantastic job. And they don't do it alone.

31. Referring to the delta of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers in the northeast quadrant of the San Francisco Bay/San Pablo Bay.

They get the program people out there, but they create the right form for it to work. And so you need professionals in that field, I guess more than we used to, at least in my view more than we used to. They're important.

In fact, we've got a CBS film crew today out here. We're going to be on with Connie Chung sometime in the next, I don't know, whatever. They're going to be out filming, and Lowell Plass, as head of operations, is going to go out and show them a full lake. I have no idea what the story will be, but they asked us to do that. First I was going to do it, and then I said, "No, Moe ought to be the guy out there showing them that full lake, because he's head of operations." So we'll see what comes out of that.

I was there one night with Tom Brokaw, and my aunt from Atlanta called and said, "My gosh, I saw you on TV with Tom Brokaw."

I said, "That's good, because I never met him."

She said, "Well, how can that be? You were right–

I said, "Look, the way that works is, we were at some meeting. NBC had a film crew there. They got some footage."

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. APRIL 12, 1995.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. APRIL 12, 1995.

Patterson: I was rambling.

Storey: Oh, about newspapers.

Patterson: Oh, newspapers, yeah, media.

Storey: Did you ever run into a situation where the newspapers went off and they just put a slant on an article that upset you badly, and you felt put Reclamation in a bad light?

When the Media Gets it Wrong or Slants the Story to Put Reclamation in a Bad Light

Patterson: Oh, yeah, it happens all the time. It does. I mean, it happens, and about all you can do is get back to them immediately and tell them that–and Jeff does this usually, as opposed to me. But let them know that you think they characterized the facts wrong–usually have to be around the facts–characterized the facts wrong and try to get the best you can. Once it's said, you can't really un-ring the bell, but sometimes they'll actually, you know, "That's right" they'll write a retraction, or, "We'll do a follow-up story on that," kind of a thing. Sometimes you can get that. And sometimes it's, "Hey, we're the one writing the story. We don't care."

Jeff, though, has worked ***enough*** with many of the people out here that a lot of times we will get the general flavor of something before it goes out, and I'm not quite sure how he does that. But recently they had a film crew out, and he listens

very closely to what they're asking us and he has enough connections with the state of California and others that if we detect that a story's taking the wrong shape, that we think is unfair or inaccurate, then Jeff knows enough of the editors or the whatever you call it in the TV industry that he can go to them and say, "You really need to look at this, because as near as I can tell, it's shaping up this way." He'll work on the reporter first, and ***that*** is probably the best way, because once it's published, once it's been aired, there's not a whole lot you can do. But if you can figure out that you think it's going the wrong direction and try to influence it beforehand, he's been successful in just stopping things. I don't know how he does it all, but he's good.

Storey: Are there any, let's see how should I phrase this, are they any techniques or approaches you use to try to make sure that the media understand what you're saying and to get them to understand what Reclamation's message is, or have you already discussed those kinds of techniques?

". . . I think what helps is if you make yourself available, be honest, and follow up on any commitments you make. If you tell them . . . 'I can get you something on that,' make sure you do it, and then just pray that it comes out right. And don't take it, you know, it ain't the end of the world if you get a bad story. . . ."

Patterson: I honestly don't know. I think if you try to make yourself available, make the organization available, and above all, be honest. If you ever, ***ever, ever*** try to distort things coming from us or you don't know the full story, these guys are professionals, they would know that. And I think what helps is if you make yourself available, be honest, and follow up on any commitments you make. If you tell them something and you say, "I can get you something on that," make sure you do it, and then just pray that it comes out right. And don't take it, you know, it ain't the end of the world if you get a bad story. I mean, it happens. It happens to everybody.

Storey: Well, a lot of these folks don't feel that it's worth having a story unless they've got something sensationalist and all that.

"A lot of the stuff that really you would like the public to know is just boring stuff. It doesn't make for a good story. So you've got to have something controversial, and that causes things to get overplayed kind of from all sides. . . . We don't usually say outrageous things, so . . . 'The regional director of the Bureau of Reclamation said this,' and it's some boring thing that's actually true and accurate. It's not one of those real quotable lines. . . ."

Patterson: That's the problem. A lot of the stuff that really you would like the public to know is just boring stuff. It doesn't make for a good story. So you've got to have something controversial, and that causes things to get overplayed kind of from all sides. In a way, it's been divisive, the media's been divisive in some of the California issues, because they would get a quote from the various perspectives that would be as far to one side as you may be able to find, so that's been sort of hard. We don't usually say outrageous things, so to get a quote from us, it has to be, "The regional director of the Bureau of Reclamation said this," and it's some boring thing that's actually true and accurate. It's not one of those real quotable lines.

Storey: Do we ever do anything like maybe an annual meeting to brief the press or anything like that?

Water Education Foundation and Rita Sudman

Patterson: Yeah, we do. We've got what's called the Water Education Foundation out here, and they are a real good ally of ours. Their goal is to get out good information on water in California. And Rita Sudman heads that up, and she has a reporter background and she and Jeff work real well together. And so we always get invited. It's usually twice a year, and they'll have thirty or forty reporters show up from San Diego. San Diego comes up, and it's all throughout California. We usually get a half hour or forty minutes where we're on the program, and we'll give them ten minutes of what we sort of want to tell them and then spend twenty minutes responding to questions, so it's a good forum to do that.

Storey: And is that just a forum for Reclamation?

Patterson: No. They'll have somebody from the state come in and do it, also. Rita will have a topic that the foundation's working on, maybe groundwater, and they'll make a presentation and answer questions. So that works pretty well.

And then they have the Association of California Water Agencies, called ACWA [pronounced aqua]. They have two meetings a year, and since Steve Hall has taken over as their executive director, we have done an availability thing to the media as part of those conferences, and those are twice a year. Usually Dave Kennedy, who heads up D-W-R [California Department of Water Resources], will be there and I will there, Steve Hall will be there. The next one, we'll probably have Lester Snow, who's going to run the joint state/federal delta thing, maybe get Lester to participate. I've had Fish and Wildlife. I've asked them, and Steve's included them in the past as part of it. And again, a lot of the water stuff's going on, the water people are all there, and for what media is attending the conference, this gives them a chance to come in.

There's some of the water reporters are really good. They're real hard core. They've been doing it for a lot of years, and they understand the issues pretty well. So dealing with them, you just can sort of go to the bottom line, because they don't want to waste time with a bunch of stuff they're not interested. They just want to know. But then you get a new reporter just coming into water, and they're going, "This is the most complex subject. It was a lot easier covering the crime or the local community issues."

Storey: Weddings, obituaries.

Patterson: Right. It's just so complicated that it takes them forever. So we have those kinds of forums we take advantage of.

Storey: In California, it's even a little more complex than a lot of the other Western states, because in addition to appropriated rights, you have riparian rights.

California ". . . has very limited groundwater law, which is fairly amazing to me that the state, with such a great groundwater resource, has the limited groundwater laws it does. Lots of overdrafted areas and problems that are created by that, such as subsidence, or if you get close to the coast, intrusion of seawater into the groundwater aquifers . . ."

Patterson: Yeah, that's right. And it has very limited groundwater law, which is fairly amazing to me that the state, with such a great groundwater resource, has the limited groundwater laws it does. Lots of overdrafted areas and problems that are created by that, such as subsidence, or if you get close to the coast, intrusion of seawater into the groundwater aquifers is a problem. So the groundwater issue, I think, is going to be maybe ***the*** next big water issue in California is, how do we protect and regulate groundwater, which is a dirty word.

Storey: You mean, the protect and regulate?

Patterson: Regulate it. That means the government must be sticking their nose in, whether it's the state government, federal government, county government. "It's under my land. I own it." That's the attitude, and it's hard to deal with. And with the general political climate being leaning towards protection of private property rights and all those things, I don't think I would touch this one for a while. And it's not Reclamation's role. It's really a state responsibility. But if I were the state, I'm not sure I'd want to jump in now, because the sentiment is going the opposite direction.

Water users ". . . overdrafted, I don't know, something like 11 or 12 million acre-feet during the last drought, *overdraft* out of the groundwater aquifer in the San Joaquin Valley. . . . It will take decades to replace that. . . ."

The fact of the matter is, we overdrafted, I don't know, something like 11 or 12 million acre-feet during the last drought, ***overdraft*** out of the groundwater aquifer in the San Joaquin Valley. Well, that's a lot of water. It will take decades to replace that.

Storey: If ever.

Patterson: If ever. If ever.

Storey: Well, a similar question to the last major one, when did congressmen and senators sort of swim into your view and governors and politicians in general?

In El Paso Began to Work with Politicians

Patterson: Well, probably not really until I took the job down in El Paso, and before then I'd been an operations guy in the project office, and once in a while I'd get a chance to talk to a staff person, but that was about it. That was pretty easy. A little bit in Denver I had opportunity to visit with some of the people, but it was mainly relaying information kind of things. But then when I went to El Paso is when I started figuring out the influence that the elected officials had, ***why*** they were interested in what we did, and how they could impact what we did. It's when I actually got to

meet some of the real congressmen and people like that. And, then, of course, when I went to Billings it became abundantly clear how it all worked, and we started dealing a lot more directly with some of the elected officials.

Storey: As the assistant regional director?

Patterson: Even as assistant regional director, yeah.

Storey: Tell me why they're interested and how they influence us and what the impacts are.

Patterson: Well, they're interested–I have this theory. It's not my theory, but . . .

Storey: It's one you subscribe to.

". . . I subscribe to [this theory] . . . Congress passes a law, and they leave it vague by design. They pass it off to us to implement . . . so he will be needed again *always* to straighten out the government agency . . . So then we can make him look like he's got influence by straightening us out. . . ."

Patterson: It's one I subscribe to, yeah. It sort of goes like this. Congress passes a law, and they leave it vague by design. They pass it off to us to implement the law, with the idea that no matter what we do, it's probably going to offend certain people that are voters in the district of the congressmen that passed the law, and so he will be needed again ***always*** to straighten out the government agency, because obviously they missed the mark in interpreting what Congress intended when they passed the law. So then we can make him look like he's got influence by straightening us out.

I mean, we play that game all the time. Maybe it's not a game, but it sort of seems that they've set up this up as a winner, "Okay, let me talk to the Bureau of Reclamation. I know these guys, and I'll see if I can get your problem dealt with." And they call us and say, "Hey, anything we can do about this?" And I usually try to help them. If there's a legitimate way to make it look like they're responsive, hey, no problem. So we usually try to design some way that, "Yeah, it looks like you can help them," and then they get back and they make the constituent happy, and everything's well and good. So you have this big circle of things going on.

And then if things get so fouled up eventually on implementation of the law and so many people are upset, then the Congressman will say that, "These guys are botching the law so bad, I think we need to amend the law," and then they move back over here and their next goal is to amend the law and fix those problems legislatively, which leaves other things vague, which–big circle.

Also, we spend a lot of money on projects, all of which are in somebody's congressional district. The congressmen like to take credit for bringing home the federal budget back to their district, so if we have an accomplishment, you know, groundbreakings, or some kind of a partnership we formed, or whatever, the congressmen are always interested in being part of that if it's good, if it's going to be viewed as good, and we usually, regardless of party, we usually try to, if they deserve some credit or if they've been involved in it, we are always amenable to try to work

out some kind of a public whatever with them or participate in something they're doing. Usually some constituency is putting something together, which we both participate in. You know, they're there, and they're an integral part of government, and I try to appreciate that.

Politicians Showing up for a Hearing on Public Law 102-575

When we had our first hearing on some of these bills, the first bills that became Public Law 102-575,[32] it was kind of neat. It turned out to be Senator [Bill] Bradley's first hearing as subcommittee chairman in the Senate, and I don't know quite how we managed to do it, but we worked with the constituencies and some of the congressional offices to try to get some of the members show up at the hearing, which always seems the constituencies like to see their members showing up at the hearing. And usually the congressman or senator, if they truly believe what you're doing has merit, they want to show up, and it shows the folks back home that they're supporting their projects.

Anyway, this first hearing with Bradley was really funny, because it turned out sort of beyond my wildest dreams. We had the South Dakota Project, and it turned out we had Senator [Larry] Pressler, Senator [Thomas] Daschle, who's now the majority leader, and Tim Johnson, who's the lone congressman. They all showed up at the hearing to testify. Tim Wirth, was the senator from Colorado, showed up. And then the two really big guys at the time, we had Bob Dole and Lloyd Bentsen both come to this hearing. It even got Bradley's attention when Bob Dole and Lloyd Bentsen came walking in to testify.

"I remember Bill Bradley sitting up very straight. . . he definitely noted those guys coming in to testify, neither of which probably had much clue at all as to what they were testifying on. Their staff had given them something to say and, 'This is a good project for my folks back home, and I hope, Mr. Chairman, that we can make this work' kind of a thing, and, poof, out the door. . . ."

I remember Bill Bradley sitting up very straight in his chair, which he's a tall guy, and when he sits up straight, he's a big guy. But he definitely noted those guys coming in to testify, neither of which probably had much clue at all as to what they were testifying on. Their staff had given them something to say and, "This is a good project for my folks back home, and I hope, Mr. Chairman, that we can make this work" kind of a thing, and, poof, out the door. I was sitting there by Bob Dole. He had his pencil in his hand, the way he always carry it. I thought, "Wow, how did we get all these important people to come in here and testify in favor of these little Bureau of Reclamation projects?" But it was good.

Storey: So, Reclamation had a hand in that?

Patterson: Oh, yeah. We tried to get them there.

Storey: How would we do that?

32. See footnote on page 58.

Patterson: By talking to their staff and letting them know that we've got this deal put together or whatever, and then by talking to the state or the constituents who were interested in, and they had their contacts with these folks. We didn't go all out to get them to show up, but we did ***try*** to get as many of the members to come and testify as possible, because it's got to help, right?

Storey: Uh-huh.

Patterson: Yeah, it was kind of interesting.

Storey: Now, this would have been while you were regional director?

Patterson: Yeah.

Storey: Did you do anything up there annually, say, to keep the Congress informed of what was going on?

Tried to Visit with Interested Members of Congress in Washington, D.C., Several Times a Year

Patterson: No, you really couldn't. I mean, I would go back to Washington a few times a year and try to visit with the people involved in our issues. The problem with that region is, you had eighteen senators, and you had a lot of congressmen, some of which were equivalent to a senator. I mean, South Dakota, Wyoming. Dick Cheney was as powerful as any senator. He had the whole state, and South Dakota had the whole state and North Dakota had the whole state. Montana had two at the time. So you had congressmen with these vast districts.

Not all of the congressmen were interested in water issues, particularly in Texas, because Texas, they had lots and lots of congressional districts. But by and large, no matter where you were in Colorado or Kansas or Nebraska, North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, South Dakota, you probably had some water issues you need to know a little bit about. You get into Texas, and some of the people did and some didn't. Both Bentsen and [Senator Phil] Gramm sort of stayed tuned in to the water issues, and then some of the congressmen, depending on where it was.

So I really just worked to try to make sure that we knew their principal staff people on water and that they knew they could call us anytime and get information. Sometimes I'd meet with some of the members, but usually it was with the staff. But you couldn't get them all together, because they didn't even know each other, hardly. The people from Texas had nothing in common with people from Montana, and so you had to do whatever in Washington to try to get them information.

Storey: You wouldn't do a publication or anything like that?

Patterson: Well, we put together something on our region. Yeah, it was a regional overview book that we would provide to people that mainly showed here's the Bureau people, here's their phone numbers, and these are some of the issues. So if you're interested in the Platte River, call John Lawson or call Patterson, that kind of a thing, just to sort

of make sure they knew who to get hold of.

And then we always tried to maintain–you know, Tom Jensen [phonetic] was Bradley's key guy in the Senate, so I would talk to Tom once or more a month so that he knew sort of what we were doing. A lot of the legislation he had was from our region, so I'd stay in touch with him. And I talked to Dan Beard occasionally or Steve Lanich, because the staff people really, on the committee staff, they really influenced a lot what happens. They're the ones that really have the time and the responsibility, I guess, to understand the issues, and so you try to maintain some contact with them.

Here it's just totally different. The first time I went back as the regional director here, I remember I was in one of the congressional offices and I was kind of waiting to meet with–actually it turned out it was the congressman. He had a map of his district on the wall, and I was thinking, "This wouldn't even make a good county in Wyoming or Montana." The district was so ***small*** compared to what I was used to, where a congressman or two may have the whole state. Here's this little, dinky district. You go, "Well, it goes from E Street over to the county line over here and up to this river and down." I thought, "Wow, no wonder they need fifty Congressmen in California. They all have these little tiny districts."

Storey: And lots of population.

". . . even in California, there are probably only a half dozen of the congressional districts that are really involved in water stuff . . ."

Patterson: Lots of population, yeah, that's right. So it's different from that standpoint. But even in California, there are probably only a half dozen of the congressional districts that are really involved in water stuff, and Senator [Dianne] Feinstein is from the Senate side, and [Senator Barbara] Boxer sort of has some people out here that stay tuned in. You take the fifty congressmen, forty of them we very seldom have anything to do with, because they're in southern California, which isn't in my region, for one reason, or they just don't have any real water issues that involve the Bureau in their district.

Storey: What about Nevada?

Patterson: Nevada, Senator [Harry] Reid is very, very interested in what happens on the Truckee-Carson/Pyramid Lake issues. He was a principal sponsor of legislation to reform the Truckee-Carson, and there are continuing problems that he's gone so far as to sponsor facilitated discussions to look for solutions to things. And so he's very involved in issues in Nevada.

In Oregon, Bob Smith was the congressman that had the district in Oregon that has Klamath, which is ours, and he decided not to run again. Of course, if he had run, he would now be the committee chairman, our committee chairman in the House, as opposed to Don Young. But he chose not to run. Whether he ever thought the Republicans would win the Congress or not or whether he would even want to be chairman, I don't know. It would have kind of been nice to have the chairman of our committee who ***really*** was interested in water stuff and was a pretty good supporter of

Reclamation, based on what we did at Klamath.

We don't have him anymore, so we got a freshman congressman, a guy named Wes Cooley, who's interested. He's going to come visit the district. Dan Beard said he'd come out with him, and we'll go up and sort of kick around and get the new congressman familiar with some of the water stuff. So he seems interested and inclined to want to do that.

Vic Fazio

Vic Fazio is on appropriations for Reclamation, and he's the congressman from Sacramento and up the Valley here, and we've done a lot of things with him. They changed his district substantially two years ago, and he went from mainly a lot of the Sacramento urban area to less of Sacramento, but took in all that farming community up in the Sac Valley, which changed it from a pretty predominant Democratic district to now about a 50-50, and he had a tough race. I mean, here he is number five in the House, and he had a real tough race this last time. He's been very good to Reclamation as far as appropriations and supporting us on issues. But with that new district he has, he's got to win over some of these new constituents. He's doing it.

Storey: What did you learn from the call on the river?

Patterson: Talk fast, tell the truth. What I learned–and I don't know if Dave Wilde learned a thing. I learned that things are not quite black and white. I regret that I would even think like a politician, but that sometimes things are not quite as straightforward as you think and that maybe getting 90 percent of the loaf is better than going for 100 and failing and making everybody mad in the process.

"I learned then that you've got to really think about these and talk to people ahead of time. Al Simpson saying, 'You've got to let us know before you do things. Maybe we can help you,' kind of stuck with me. . . ."

But Dave was right. You looked at it and you said, "Oh, yeah, yeah, that's clearly what you would do." But I don't know. I learned then that you've got to really think about these and talk to people ahead of time. Al Simpson saying, "You've got to let us know before you do things. Maybe we can help you," kind of stuck with me.

"The last thing a politician wants is a surprise. I learned that. The last thing the regional director wants is a surprise, and I learned that. . . ."

The last thing a politician wants is a surprise. I learned that. The last thing the regional director wants is a surprise, and I learned that.

Storey: Yeah. (laughter)

"I also learned, don't expect the commissioner to bail you out, at least the commissioner at that time . . ."

Patterson: I also learned, don't expect the commissioner to bail you out, at least the commissioner at that time, because I was sort of on my own there, which was fine. I didn't expect him to try to save my tail. I mean, we got ourselves into that jam. But I don't want to do that again.

Storey: What else was going on up in Great Plains?

Proposed Sale of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project

Patterson: Oh, I don't know. One time we had a proposal to sell the Colorado-Big Thompson. The local people wanted to buy it, and I thought it was a dumb idea at the time. I think Billy Martin did, too. Ziglar was the assistant secretary then, and I don't know, it seemed like Ziglar and Joe Hall were thinking maybe this was something that would work out. They underestimated the political influence of the power community, because the local district was going to take over the whole nine yards, including the power facilities.

It turned out, that Ziglar met with a bunch of folks in Washington. I'm not sure who, but I know that the national public power organizations, like APPA, the American Public Power Association, folks were there, and I remember a call shortly after the meeting from Ziglar to Billy Martin saying, "Maybe this wasn't going to be a good plan, that we were not going to do it." So that kind of put a stop to that one.

The other thing that I learned there, and I learned a lot of this from Glaser and a guy named Bob Jacobson [phonetic], who was the assistant regional director from Fish and Wildlife, was that's when I saw the value of working together as Interior agencies with Fish and Wildlife, who in a lot of cases had been our enemies and stuff. Ron sort of helped me understand that, and Jake happened to be the kind of guy you could work with, and he's a good guy because he owned mules and he's a great guy. That's something I learned as part of that job, which I think has been good, because they were involved in the Platte River stuff.

Field Managers Are Very Important to Reclamation

Also, another thing I learned wasn't something that was going on, but what I learned in that job is how important it is to have the people that run Reclamation out in the field offices, you know, our project managers, we now call area managers, is to have people out there that truly knew where the organization was going and had the skills to pull it off and to establish credibility with the constituencies and the elected officials and people like that, because you don't have time, as the regional director, to run around all the time and do that stuff. You shouldn't do it. I still put that on the top of the agenda, is get people who have the right skills, background, and ability heading up our field offices to make Reclamation work.

Dave Wilde left not too long after the call on the river. He decided it was time to retire, and I agreed with him it probably was. He was getting ready to do it anyway, but that was almost too much.

John Lawson

So anyway, so I'm sitting around, "Oh, gosh, Dave's not around. We've got to get somebody down there in Casper, because that is a den of snakes, and it's going to be in the future." And old John Lawson, bless his heart, he was our planning officer. He came in about six o'clock one evening and I was sitting there, and he said, "What are you going to do in Casper?"

I said, "Oh, man, I don't know. I'll tell you, I wouldn't wish that on my worst enemy."

He said, "What about sending me down there?"

I said, "Are you serious? You would be willing to go to Casper?"

"Yeah. Yeah, I think I would."

He was a 14. He was the planning officer. It was a 14. I said, "Have you talked to your wife about this, because that sounds like a pretty good idea."

He said, "Yeah. She'd be willing to do that."

I said, "All right, we're going to do it."

And so we did. We sent John down there, which turned out absolutely the right guy at the right time, and he's still there. I've tried to get him out of there since, saying, "Gee, haven't you had enough of that? Wouldn't you like to work on California stuff? It's really fun."

He said, "No, no, no. This is just right."

"To get in to see the governor of California is about as difficult as the president. . . ."

John was the right guy. The fact that the governor will call John Lawson up personally means that he's got credibility, and he does, which in that region you could actually call the governor. To get in to see the governor of California is about as difficult as the president. But I could call at least three or four of the governors, when I was in that job, directly. I had Mike Sullivan's own phone. It must have been the one on his desk, because he answered it one time when I called him. That was interesting. You get out here and it's just about like Washington, D.C.

Anyway, getting somebody like John Lawson, that sort of showed me that that is the right way to go, and it sure makes life easier for me and for the commissioner if you have people sort of on the front line that have sort of the political skills to deal with a lot of that.

Storey: You mentioned that the guy in Casper maybe didn't have all the skills he needed.

Patterson: Well, he was a good engineer and he always did the right thing.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. APRIL 12, 1995.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. APRIL 12, 1995.

Storey: This is tape two of an interview by Brit Storey with Roger Patterson on April the 12th, 1995.

You were saying that this guy was a good engineer and everything.

Patterson: Yeah, he was great. He was a good guy, he was a good engineer, he was smart. He was a tremendous resource. In fact, after he retired we kept him on for a couple years, specifically to work on our Supreme Court litigation. We had the *Nebraska versus Wyoming* Supreme Court case going on, and Dave was just a tremendous resource. We had him work on that for a couple of years after he retired.

But things had gotten more complicated, and to me they were not always quite black and white, and we needed to pick and choose the issues that we were going to take on and when we took them on, and Dave wasn't–I don't think he was really interested in that. I never asked him to retire, you know. He decided after the call on the river and some of that harassment, and we had the litigation going on and whatever. He said he was going to go ahead and retire at the end of the year.

And that's when I was kind of in a dilemma. I got Lawson to go down there, and we decided we'd ask Dave if he'd stay and help do this. I don't know whether he did it as a contractor or rehired annuitant, but he did. So he was a great resource in that regard, but probably much better than if he'd stayed on as the project manager. Maybe it would have been fine. It did rain the next year, so maybe we'd have been fine. But then the year after that–in fact, I think Lawson put the call on the river a year later, and it was fine, it went okay, because he had talked to the governor and he'd worked with people, and they'd been in shell shock from the time before that we actually made it work. And John had figured out some exemptions for local municipal systems and I don't know what, and he got the state engineer on board. So John worked the politics of it and did it without everything blowing up, which was a credit to him and sort of again showed why you needed people out there like that that could deal with an issue that way.

Storey: Were there other adjustments that needed to be made?

Patterson: Personnel-wise?

Storey: Yeah.

". . . trying to select somebody to go into a key job is really, for me it's really difficult, because I think it's about the most important thing that top management does is put people in jobs, and I take it very serious. You never know how things are going to work out. . . ."

Patterson: Yeah, probably. It seems like there are always adjustments personnel-wise. People

leave, and then trying to select somebody to go into a key job is really, for me it's really difficult, because I think it's about the most important thing that top management does is put people in jobs, and I take it very serious. You never know how things are going to work out.

Combining Reclamation's Field Offices in Montana

When I was up there, we had a ***lot*** of little dinky offices. Like we had three in Montana, three offices, one that handled stuff up on the Milk River and another one that was Yellowtail and another one that was Canyon Ferry, and they all reported directly into the front office. I thought ***that was not*** the way I wanted to do it, so we changed and we put them together as the Montana office. And that's when I asked Jim Wedeward [phonetic] if he'd go over and do that, and he then established direct relationships directly with the governor's office.

It made our life so much easier by getting those offices, because their focus was on running the facility or whatever, but any political issue sort of wasn't what they did, or any bigger resource issue, they didn't quite have the skills out there. So we put those offices together and put a manager in charge and tasked him with building some relationships with some of the congressional offices and the governor's office, and that worked out actually pretty well. Well, they've still got the same basic arrangement now. Jim's not in there, but Katherine Jabs, that what she does as the area manager. So we made a change there.

Jim Rawlings

Jim Rawlings, [33]when I was there we had all these Indian issues brewing. And Jim had been in the same job. We called it the 400 Division for a long time. I asked Jim if he would take on sort of a special assistant job to work on some of the Indian stuff, and he did. He knew that he had gotten a little stale in some of the 400 stuff. His dad was the division chief, and Jim had been there a long time. I thought the world of Jim. He's a great guy. But he'd been in the job too long.

"My theory is, no matter how good you are, if you've been in a job five-, six-, seven-, eight years, unless you're a *real* exception, you probably need to do something else. . . . it's just like a chess game in a way. It's trying to get the right people in the right spot. . . ."

My theory is, no matter how good you are, if you've been in a job five-, six-, seven-, eight years, unless you're a ***real*** exception, you probably need to do something else. And Jim was in that category, and so he did that. So we made some changes that way. Nothing that was real dramatic, I guess, but it was sort of–it's just like a chess game in a way. It's trying to get the right people in the right spot. Sort of the same thing since I've been here.

That's important, and I don't think we give enough, we don't recognize strongly enough how important it is to get the right people in the right jobs, because

33. Reclamation's oral history program includes interviews with Jim Rawlings.

the wrong person in a job can kill you, just can create controversy that you don't need, and it affects the employees that work for them, it affects their morale, their productivity, their initiative. It affects the credibility of the Bureau if you've got the wrong person in the job with the outside world and things get delegated up. To me, it's really important that we do that, and that's not to say that I do it all the time, because I don't think anybody is perfect when it comes to selecting people and putting them in the job and supporting them, but it's important that we do that.

Storey: Have you ever had a person that needed to have a change of job?

Tom Aiken

Patterson: Well, Jim Rawlings was one that I thought he needed a change of job. Tom Aiken[34] here. Tom had been the assistant regional director for administration for like twelve years, and when Tom and I would talk, he wanted to do something else at some point, but it wasn't real obvious what he ought to do. Having been a project manager, I told him–he was setting over there one day. I said, "You know what you ought to do? You ought to go be a project manager."

He said, "I'm an administrative guy."

I said, "So."

He said, "Well, jeez. I'll think about that kind of thing."

That was as far as we went that day. The next time I talked to him, he said, "You know, maybe you're right. That might be kind of fun. But how would that appear to the organization if I went from the front office to go head up a field office?"

This was just as we were changing the view towards the field offices. In fact, we were about six months ahead of Beard and his C-PORT[35] on getting the area offices established and this whole delegation idea. I had in mind how we were going to do that, and we had a team ready to go.

I said, "I don't know, Tom. I guess it depends on how you view things. My view is that the action in the future is going to be with the project managers and the people that head up the field offices." If you talk to him now, I'll bet he's as happy as a clam. He's busier than a one-arm paperhanger, but it's great. I mean, he has really risen to the occasion, and he was just stagnant doing what he was doing.

Storey: He went out to the office at Folsom?

Patterson: Yeah. He's doing great. And he's taken a couple of things. I've sort of given him some pretty complicated political things and said to people, "Hey, Tom's your guy. He'll figure this thing out." He's done an amazingly good job. So to me, that just

34. Reclamation's oral history program includes interviews with Tom Aiken.
35. Commonly referred to as CPORT (pronounced "see port"), this was the *Report of the Commissioner's Program and Organization Review Team* of August 1993.

shows that–you know. And he was stagnant, and he will say that, yeah, he'd been in the job too long, but where else are you going to go? So that shows me something.

We took this trip to Herman Miller recently, and they do what was really kind of neat. They had a guy that we talked to who is now their "vice president for people." That's what they call him. Sort of a weird title, but he's a weird guy. He had been their vice president for manufacturing, he had been their director of operations in Southeast Asia, and now he was their vice president for people, which is sort of like a personnel officer, but a little different. So they took managers laterally into the administrative side, into the program side. It would be like us taking an assistant regional director and making him a personnel officer, then making him an area manager, then making him something in Denver. The Bureau, we haven't–I learned something from that, that I think we need to be a little broader in our thinking in using the capability of people. Just because they've always been a water operations guy doesn't mean that they can only aspire to be a water and land guy or whatever. Maybe we'll really shake them up sometime and make an area manager or a personnel officer and see what happens. I think Greg will fall out of his chair.

View on Lateral Reassignments

But anyway, yeah, I think we don't do enough thinking that way. We're starting to do more of it. My experience has always been, if you take a lateral reassignment, it's probably because you screwed up where you were and management decided to move you. I think we need to turn it around to where taking a lateral reassignment is viewed as a positive career development thing. It'll take a while before we get to that point.

There was an article I was reading the other day, and it's called "No Place to Go," kind of a thing, which basically says that people that think you start out at the rung on the ladder and climb your way to the top are going to be very frustrated employees in the future, because what it's really going to be about is building your whole arsenal of skills, which means taking different jobs at the same level. Rather than going up like this, you sort of go along like this, and you might even go out of the organization. I think we've got to get people to start thinking a little more that way or they're going to be pounding against this ceiling and become frustrated.

But the fact is, we have fewer higher graded jobs than we used to, so there's going to be fewer opportunities for people to get 14s. We just took our administrative function here, and we had five 14s and now we have two. In the future we'll probably have one. There's all these people that have worked in there and worked their way up, and they saw five 14s they would have a shot at someday going to one. "Wow, how am I going to get ahead?" Well, it depends on what you define as getting ahead. So I don't know. I think it's something that, not just Reclamation, but other organizations are experiencing the same thing. What we can't let it do is cause it to be a frustration for employees so that they lose their interest or their willingness to work at things because they don't see it as having any potential payoff. I think that's going to be a big challenge.

Storey: I've run into two sort of attitudes about management in Reclamation. One is that by

the time you get to division chief, you don't ***need*** any particular ***technical*** skills. What you need are management skills. I've also run into the attitude that every step of the way you have to be an engineer. Where do you think it works out practically?

Views on the Skills Managers Need

Patterson: Well, I'm an engineer, but I agree with the first. I think that 90 percent of the skills you need as a manager are non-technical. We've got ***great*** technical people that work for us. The managers do not need to be technical. No, I am strongly in the camp of not needing any particular technical background to be division chief, regional director, assistant regional director, area manager.

And I would even go further than that. In fact, we sort of got chewed out this week, but we've created a consolidated Department of Interior personnel function in Sacramento, and we are recruiting for a manager to run it. We're supposed to in personnel sort in the 300 Series, which is manager. Dick Riegel [phonetic] calls Curtis [Smith][36] and wants to know if we're losing it out here. What is the problem? Don't you know you need somebody that has a strong technical personnel background in order to head something like that up?

We said, "We thought long and hard about that, and the collective decision of the Interior folks' executive group, which is me and Ed Hasty [phonetic] from BLM and Ron Jaeger [phonetic] from BIA and Dave Nally [phonetic] from the Solicitor's Office, is, "No, we don't need a personnelist to run this. We need somebody that can manage people and that can manage programs." I hope we're right. We'll find out.

"So . . . you've got a group of five people, this guy's really good at this technical area and this group sort of does those technical things, so you put him in there, and the old story, you lose a good technician and create a lousy manager . . ."

So I am definitely in that camp. But to get ahead, I did not get selected to my first job as a supervisor, which was really a 13 Branch Chief, because I had ***any*** skills at management or supervision. I mean, I know that. I was just a pretty good guy technically, because nobody would know. So we always take the guy that, you've got a group of five people, this guy's really good at this technical area and this group sort of does those technical things, so you put him in there, and the old story, you lose a good technician and create a lousy manager applies many, many times. I've seen it.

So that's the camp I'm in, and I think that camp is growing, probably, over the old camp, but maybe not.

Storey: Well, we've wandered a little ways away from Billings.

Patterson: Yeah, I noticed that. I'm sorry.

Storey: No, it's been very interesting, and I'm glad that we did it. But let's go back to Billings. You sort of took a glancing blow at one of the topics I definitely want to

36. Reclamation's oral history program includes an interview with Curtis Smith.

talk about, and that is that you are recognized and known around Reclamation as the first environmental regional director, (Patterson: Oh.) and Neil [Stessman] (Patterson: And Neil, right.) as the second, and I presume he learned at your elbow.

Reputation as an Environmental Regional Director

Neil Stessman

Patterson: No, I learned a lot from Neil, actually. Neil was that way before he became regional director. Neil has always had this certain appreciation for environmental values that I sort of had to learn. But, yeah, that's probably fair.

Storey: Where did it come from and ***why*** did it come?

Don Glaser Began to Show Him Environmental Issues

Patterson: Well, I have to say that I think Glaser helped me a lot, and he sort of cracked the door open enough that I then started–I'm pretty inquisitive, and Don just helped me recognize that this is something the Bureau hasn't given enough consideration to in the past. When he said it, it rang as true as it could be. I said, "Yeah, that's right, and why is that?" We sat around talking a lot. When I say I learned a lot from him, it's because we talk and sort of share ideas, and, yeah, that's right.

Working with the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Environmental Protection Agency

We had some issues that environmental–the conflicts between development or some of the Reclamation current things, the things that we'd done in the past, were really in conflict with environmental values. That's sort of what Garrison reformulation was about, and Don had been part of that. And that, coupled with sort of recognizing that Fish and Wildlife, the Bureau of Reclamation, both worked for the same boss, made me think that Fish and Wildlife needed to be–we needed to start talking to those guys. And that's when Bob Jacobson, who was one of the guys in Fish and Wildlife involved in a lot of our issues, just started working with him and understanding why they were trying to do what they were, and I think he and some of his people got a little better appreciation for us and what we were trying to do. Did some work with EPA [Environmental Protection Agency]. Max Dawson's [phonetic] still their director of water in Denver, and Max was one of the U.S. members of some of the groups that were working Garrison stuff, and so I got to spend a little time with Max. I mean, actually EPA paid my way through grad school. I went on a free ride through grad school at EPA's expense. They happened to have these grants. And so I thought, "Well, gee. These guys, they took care of me and got me through grad school. They can't be all bad, right?"

Exchange of Zealots Program

It sort of started with some of ***that***, and then Don and I got this idea that we needed to–that a lot of the problems just was not understanding other people's perspectives, we created our Exchange of Zealots Program, which was bring in a Fish

and Wildlife guy and work in a Bureau job for a month or two weeks or two months, and send a Bureau of Reclamation guy to a Fish and Wildlife office and have them work, or send a Bureau guy to EPA. We started doing some of that, and every Fish and Wildlife person–I mean, we had Joe Medlin [phonetic] come in and Dave Bowman. These people would come in and spend a little time with us, and then you would interview them when they left. Every one of them said, "You know, this was really amazing. You guys are just like us. Your people are just like us in their commitment to what they're doing and all of this."

It was really kind of interesting to see that, because we'd sort of started to break down the barrier. We should have done a lot more on that, but we had several of those. We had a Bureau guy actually head up one of the Fish and Wildlife offices down in Manhattan, Kansas, for, gosh, two or three months, and he had to make some decisions for Fish and Wildlife that he did. It turned out okay.

"It was interesting to see where in the environmental community their legitimate concerns sort of started to fade out and the posturing started . . ."

So I don't know, it was kind of a slow learning thing, but a lot of it had to do with just starting to talk to people we didn't talk to before and finding out sort of what drove them. It was interesting to see where in the environmental community their legitimate concerns sort of started to fade out and the posturing started to start. It happens on the water side. It happens with any interest that, "Yeah, we have some concerns, but in order to achieve our concerns, we may have to take a much harder, firmer position over here to get this part."

Platte River was one. In fact, the Platte River and Garrison, we had to deal with the "two Eds," Ed Osann and Ed Pembleton [phonetic]. Everywhere you went were the two Eds. We'd go down to Casper, Glaser and Lawson and I. I remember meeting in Casper with the two Eds, and they were dead-set they were going to drag us into endangered species consultation under Section 7 on the Platte River, because that was the best way to get water out of the upper system down into the Central Platte. We told them we didn't think that was a good idea, that we acknowledged that things needed to change, but it was going to take years to change and you're going to have to bring people along, and all that was going to do was get us into premature lawsuits. We didn't have as good data as we needed. And they backed off of that. They continued to work and sort of hound and whatever, but they did not–we made some progress, because the commitments we made, we tried to live up to.

We got invited then, Lawson and I got invited to a conference of the Audubon people in Casper. It was all Audubon guys, and here was Lawson and I. We went down to that, and John and I made some commitments to try to spend money to modify Glendo Dam and Pathfinder Dam so you could get fish flows through it. When they were built, there was no consideration for making low flows for fisheries. I mean, hell that wasn't important. Water was all going to go through the powerplant and whatever. So John and I committed at that meeting in Casper with the Audubon people that we would work with the Fish and Game folks in Wyoming and everybody else, Fish and Wildlife, to try to design a way to get flows back in the North Platte River. And I left, but John followed through, and now we have flows below Glendo

in the Platte River.

If you make a commitment with those guys, as anybody else, you have to see it through. But I think as you do it, you start getting maybe a little credibility. You're always going to have hounding, because they want more, more, more. But you can at least start to build a little bit of credibility, maybe, and that's sort of what we started doing there. But Neil was very good at that, and Don was good at it, Lawson subscribed to it, and we sort of worked on those.

I'm probably not viewed as an environmentalist, but I have been able to work with some of the environmental community. That's about it, not an environmentalist. Neil's more of an environmentalist than I am, I think.

Storey: What about other projects that were undertaken?

Edwards Aquifer in Texas

Patterson: Oh, we had this little nasty thing–it was called the Edwards Aquifer in Texas, and we were sort of getting drug into the middle of that thing.

Storey: This is on the Edwards Plateau?

Patterson: Yeah. It's called the Edwards Aquifer. Yeah, it's down south of Austin, San Antonio, Austin. Edwards Aquifer is in there. And they've got all these listed species down the aquifer and these caverns in there and all this kind of stuff.

That's when I first got to know Mike Spear [phonetic]. He was the regional director in Albuquerque for Fish and Wildlife, and he's now the regional director of Portland. In fact, he's the one that's in our conference room today meeting with a bunch of people. But the Bureau relationship with the Albuquerque office of Fish and Wildlife had not been very good. Neither Spear or Russ Ernest [phonetic], who was his deputy, probably thought much of us. We had some issues that would cause us to have to work together on Edwards Aquifer, and we managed to work them out. We never quite got real cozy, but sort of I gained a respect for Mike and his responsibilities and he was willing to work with us without taking as hard a line as Fish and Wildlife could, and we sort of messed our way through some things.

The Formosa Plastics Project in Texas

We took a few other stands that caused us great heartburn. Texas, we determined in Texas that we could not grant a permit for water out of one of the Bureau reservoirs to this big industrial complex. God, what the heck was it called? Oh, jeez, I thought I'd never forget. Anyway, it was about a $2 billion plant going in, 4,000 jobs and whatever, and we had to grant a permit, which to the first time ever of certain people of Texas we said we had to do some environmental evaluation of impacts before we granted the permit, and it was a very unpleasant experience. Formosa Plastics.

Storey: Formosa Plastics was the project?

Patterson: Yeah, that was the thing. And I remember going to a meeting, and a guy named Buck Wynne–and everybody in Texas was Buck, Buddy, Billy Joe. Buck Wynne happened to be the chairman of the Texas Water Commission, and we were down there. I went down, and I don't remember who I had with me, but a guy named Emmett Gloina [phonetic] was the district manager. Emmett Gloina used to be the Bureau of Reclamation Texas representative back when we had representatives in the states. So he was our Texas guy and he spoke Texan and he knew how the Bureau used to be and all of this stuff. Fortunately, I had worked in El Paso and worked with Emmett, and we were friends. We got along. Thank God that I had worked in Texas.

But old Buck Wynne and a bunch of other fairly high-level folks in government in Texas and in the constituencies down there explained to me one day that we were screwing around where George like to hunt. And I thought, "Okay. Oh, George Bush is President, and, yeah, he used to live in Texas, and we're screwing around where George likes to hunt." I thought, "Okay, this is interesting."

So I told Buck, I said, "Okay, look, I understand that. We've got some responsibilities, and if George calls me and tells me to knock it off, then I will take that very serious. But otherwise, I don't know how we're going to get through this. We can't just ignore our responsibilities under NEPA, because we've got people telling us they're going to file a lawsuit if we do. So it seems to me what we need to do is figure out some way to get through this responsibly, in a reasonable amount of time, and see how she falls out."

That wasn't a very acceptable plan. We eventually held our ground and managed to work our way through it. And Emmett was my constant phone pal. He would call me. He called me one day, and he sounded kind of–I said, "Emmett, what's the matter?"

He said, "Oh, Jesus. I got bit by a snake."

I said, "What!"

He said, "Yeah. I'm at home right now. I was out in the back yard and I got bit by one of these little cottonmouths." It was a poisonous snake in his back yard.

I said, "Is that worse than having to deal with us on this damn pipeline project?"

He said, "It's about the same." But he said, "I think the swelling in my arms are going to go away before I get my permit from you guys," which turned out to be the case.

Anyway, that was the stand we took, because it was the right thing to do, but it was not a very pleasant thing at the time. It worked out, but it caused a lot of problems. A little loss of hair and a little loss of skin on my part, but never had any second thoughts about it, just tried to finesse our way through it.

Storey: Do you remember how to spell Buck Wynne's last name?

Patterson: Oh, I think it was [Wynne.] ~~W-I-N-N~~. I think it was something like that. I honestly don't know. He's a young guy, too. See, I talked to him on the phone. Buck Wynne is the head of the Texas Water Commission, or whatever it was called. He's got to be around a long time, right? So I go down there. He's younger than me. He's a young guy. He's a smart guy. He's actually kind of neat. He became unbelievable. He went from this, advocating that, "You're screwing around down here where George likes to hunt, and this unacceptable to the state of Texas. And we didn't really want to join the Union in the first damn place." I mean, this was sort of the tone that he had.

He became the regional administrator for EPA under Bush's last couple of years. I couldn't believe it. Now he was in charge of EPA down there, and EPA also had to grant a permit for this Formosa Plastic thing. I don't know how all that turned out. I mean, I was glad I finally got out of that. But they got the plant built, they're getting their water from us, so I guess we've worked our way through it.

But he was just another character. In Texas, there were a lot of them. I was glad I had worked in Texas, because I think being from Montana you are not off to a good start, because those guys were just different. I remember the first time–Neil was the assistant regional director, and Neil goes down there to work on something. I think it was this issue, Formosa Plastics. And Neil, you know, he's, "We were morally right in what we were doing," all this kind of thing.

He came back, and he was sort of shaking his head, going, "Those guys don't see things the way we see them."

And then I got a call from Emmett, and he said, "Don't send that Neil guy down here again. He doesn't see things the way we see them."

I said, "Yeah, I know. He told me." I mean, there was an instant non-communication.

But having worked down there a little bit sort of helped, because some of the same people were still around. They're just different. They're as close to California as any of the other states that I've worked in.

Storey: Did you send Neil back?

Patterson: I don't think so. I don't think so. I don't remember. Neil stayed involved in the issue, but I think he stayed involved from Billings, and I did most of the talking with them directly.

We had Jerry Wright [phonetic]. He's another character. He was the project manager down there in Oklahoma City, and Jerry was the wheeler and dealer of all times. So Jerry was sort of our guy down there on the front line, and I dealt with them by phone.

Storey: You've already mentioned how far away it was and everything.

Patterson: Yeah.

Storey: Did you . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 2. APRIL 12, 1995.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2. APRIL 12, 1995.

Storey: You were saying to compensate for the size of Great Plains [Region], you traveled more.

Patterson: Yeah, I traveled more, because it just took longer to get across the region. The other thing is, the fact that the regional office was located in Billings, you wanted to let people in the other states know that their issues were important to you, so I sort of went out of my way to try to talk to the folks in Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, let them know that just because we're in Billings, we're only as close as the phone, plus we can come meet with you any time, any place.

Great Plains Region is ". . . too big, and when we put it in Billings, that was not helpful at all, because at least from Denver . . . But at least in Denver it was sort of central. You could fan out and get places a little easier. . . "

And we tried to have somebody in local office in charge of as many issues as we possibly could they could deal directly with. But it was hard, because it's too big. The region's too big. I still think that. Neil probably thinks that, I don't know. We've talked about it in the past. It's too big, and when we put it in Billings, that was not helpful at all, because at least from Denver–of course, now you have the new airport. It's as far to the new airport as it was to Texas. (laughter) But at least in Denver it was sort of central. You could fan out and get places a little easier. But from Billings, you couldn't get anywhere without going to either Denver, Salt Lake, or Minneapolis first. Even to go to Bismarck, you'd have to go to Denver and fly back. But we had our plane when I was there, and that saved a lot of travel time.

Storey: Well, I'd like to keep going, but our time is up, and I don't want to throw your schedule off. So I'd like to ask again if you're willing for the information in these tapes and the resulting transcripts to be used by researchers inside and outside Reclamation.

Patterson: Yeah. Anything useful, they can have that.

Storey: Thank you.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. APRIL 12, 1995.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 1. MAY 19, 1998.

Storey: [This is Brit Allan Storey,] the senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Regional Director Roger Patterson, in his office in the Mid-Pacific Region of the Bureau of Reclamation in Sacramento, California, on May the 19th, 1998, at about nine o'clock in the morning. This is tape one.

One of the first things I wanted to ask you is whether you planned your career. Did you purposely decide to go into management, and did you do it early, and all that kind of thing?

Did Not Plan His Career

Patterson: No, I would have to say probably not. I'm sort of one of these guys that went with the flow and kind of took opportunities as they came down the road, and that's how I moved through Reclamation. It was no grand plan.

"I never planned to be even a manager, let alone an area manager or a regional director, but I was always interested in that stuff, so I did a lot of volunteering every time there was a team that came up . . . and I got to know a lot of people in Reclamation that way. . . . I would get folks asking me if I was thinking about applying . . . that's basically how I moved through and around the organization. . . ."

I never planned to be even a manager, let alone an area manager or a regional director, but I was always interested in that stuff, so I did a lot of volunteering every time there was a team that came up, they were looking for some sucker to serve on the team, I volunteered to do that, and I got to know a lot of people in Reclamation that way. And then that sort of led to, as things came up throughout the organization, I would get folks asking me if I was thinking about applying, and that's sort of how, that's basically how I moved through and around the organization.

Storey: One of the things about Reclamation, in the past, it's been almost military in the way it's been a ***control***-oriented organization. Then Dan Beard showed up, and it's been quite a substantial change, is my impression, in the organization. First of all, do you agree that it's been a change? And second of all, how has it affected the organization?

Change in Reclamation

Patterson: You know, I think there has been a change. I wouldn't key it as a certain way, pre-Beard, and then this radical change, post-Beard, like maybe some folks would like to characterize things. It has changed over the years, I think, but other organizations have changed over the years as well. And certainly from when I started with the organization, we did have a more top-down, a more controlled, rule-driven kind of an operation, and I think it's much less so that way now. And Dan did contribute to that. I mean, Dan was definitely, "Let's move the regulations aside and let's move decisionmaking down in the organization." A lot of that was going on sort of before Dan, but he did help to accelerate that, and in some cases, we went too far, I think, and we're seeing that now. We're seeing the organization say, "Gosh, if we don't need Reclamation instructions maybe like we had before, we certainly need some guidance for some consistency in how we're handling things." I think particularly in our design and construction area, and safety-of-dams area, hey, a few rules there are not all bad. We cannot afford to have a mishap and have something fall through the crack just because we supposedly empowered somebody. So we're, I think, gradually moving a little bit back in the other direction, but ***not*** to where we were

before.

Storey: Am I hearing you say that you think it's more a characteristic of a slow evolution that maybe is characteristic of the government or something?

Patterson: Yeah. I think it's probably been a little faster evolution than you will find in some other government agencies, particularly, you know, other organizations as large as Reclamation. I think we put a ***lot*** of energy, starting in the mid-eighties, into what we were going to be when we grew up, and probably moved things faster than a lot of folks have, but it wasn't something that happened over a couple-of-year period.

I mean, I started serving on these teams in probably '85 or '86, when we started looking at where's Reclamation going with its mission and how should we be organized and how should we do business? Assessment '87 we put out, and I worked on that a couple of years before that was done, and so, you know, that's been ten-plus years that we've been doing this.

Storey: Twelve years ago, more or less.

Patterson: Twelve years ago.

Storey: Twelve-, thirteen.

Patterson: Well, hey, time flies.

Storey: What about the flattening of the organization? I believe when I first came and started interviewing you in '93, '94, you had three assistant regional directors. Now you have one deputy.

Patterson: Right.

Storey: How's that affecting business, as it were?

Patterson: Mostly positive, I think. I mean, again, some of the philosophy was trying to move decision making down in the organization. We were looking at ways to save money and streamline, and we were plugged into the national performance review stuff, and there were certain things floating out of that, some of which seemed to work for us, and others that I'm not sure we spent much time on. ***But***, looking at the number of layers of management was one we looked at.

Like in our region, we basically said we didn't want to see more than three layers between any employee in the region and the front office. We looked at the number of these mid-level managers, and then we looked at our assistant regional directors. I like the way we're set up now. I like this deputy operation.

If you talk to Kirk Rodgers, who's my deputy, he might tell you it's a lousy deal, but I think not. I think for us it works well, in that if you have one person where three used to be, sort of by definition, you're either not doing certain things or they're being done lower in the organization, and it's helped, I think, push things down in the

organization. I think it works. I like it.

Having worked in a number of different regions, I wouldn't try to tell other people how to organize, and I suggest they not tell us how to do it, because it's different. For at least the MP Region, having a deputy, having the divisions the way we have them, and our area managers, seems to be working pretty well.

Storey: If you think back to when you came here as a regional director, how much did you travel, do you think?

Travel Was a Consideration in Moving from Billings to Sacramento

Patterson: Well, I traveled less than I did in my last job when I was in Billings as the regional director, which is actually one of the reasons I came out here. I know that last year I was in Billings, and I didn't realize it, but my wife did. She said, "You know, do you know how many weeks you were home last year?" And I said, "Well, no." She said, "Well, two." I said, "Two!" She said, "You were here two full weeks and the other fifty weeks, if you weren't on leave, you were either gone all week, or most of the week." And that really registered. And so when I came out here, part of the consideration was family. My kids were going into junior high, and I figured I couldn't stick with the job in Billings to get them through high school. So even though I had never wanted to work in MP, particularly, because I'd sort of migrated up and down the lower Missouri, upper Missouri, Southwest ***stuff***, I knew this was a challenge, but I also knew it was a smaller region, and ***thought*** it would probably take less travel, which it does.

"The only hard trip I have from here is back to Washington, D.C. The in-region travel I can do, for the most part, in a day. . . ."

The only hard trip I have from here is back to Washington, D.C. The in-region travel I can do, for the most part, in a day. You can get to Klamath Falls in a day, you can get to Carson City in a day, you can get to Fresno in a day. The hub of the activity that I'm involved with is really in Sacramento, because that's where the state government is, and the other Federal agencies are around here. So the travel in this job is a lot less than it was in the Billings job, but it's still plenty.

Storey: Has it increased after the reorganization?

Patterson: No, I don't think so. There are a lot of trips to Washington. I mean, sometimes it'll be an every-month thing to Washington, and then sometimes you'll get a reprieve and not have to go back for three or four months, but generally that's a pretty frequent trip. But other than that, it's not bad.

Storey: Okay. I was just wondering. It had sort of been my observation, without talking to anybody, that it was much harder to get appointments and to have those appointments kept when I showed up, and I was just wondering if this was a sign of stress in the organization.

Patterson: No, it's not from travel; it's from a lot of stuff. I mean, the scheduling of meetings

here is quite a task, and you need to have a Ph.D. in scheduling, I think, to be able to do it. Particularly the last couple of years, we've had this [John] Garamendi process going on, and so a lot of my time–

Storey: This is Grass Valley, is it?

Patterson: Well, it's the Central Valley Project Improvement Act [CVPIA] stuff, and Deputy Secretary Garamendi was sort of the sponsor of that, and I spent a lot of time on it. So there was a lot of control of my schedule that was not mine, and so I was at the request of the Department [of the Interior], in many cases. And so, you know, they say we're going to do something on a certain time, and you're going to do it, and that means you try to rearrange folks that you otherwise were going to be spending time with. And so the scheduling is unbelievable.

"While Billings was a travel nightmare, this job is a scheduling nightmare, just for things going on right here. . . ."

While Billings was a travel nightmare, this job is a scheduling nightmare, just for things going on right here. It works. I mean, we make the best of it.

Storey: Let's talk about C-V-P-I-A and all of that. I think that law was passed about the time we started talking, but we didn't discuss it much.

Central Valley Project Improvement Act

Patterson: Well, it has been, yeah, it's been quite an experience, I guess, for me. I came out here in '91, and there had been years of debate at that time over reform of the Central Valley Project, and at the tail end of the [George H. W.] Bush Administration, the C-V-P-I-A, as it came to be known, was actually moving ahead. It was part of this larger package that became Public Law 102-575, but it had about forty titles, and C-V-P-I-A was only one of those, Title 34.

". . . I came out here and inherited, as it turned out, C-V-P-I-A, which was part of this package, and actually *had to be* a package because of the political strategy that was used to pass C-V-P-I-A. It, I think, needed to be wrapped into projects in other states to gather the support . . ."

The ***irony*** in all of this is Title I was Buffalo Bill. In fact, the first several titles in that law were things that I had worked on very hard to try to get authorized in my ***previous*** job in ***Billings***, and I came out here and inherited, as it turned out, C-V-P-I-A, which was part of this package, and actually ***had to be*** a package because of the political strategy that was used to pass C-V-P-I-A. It, I think, needed to be wrapped into projects in other states to gather the support, etc., etc.

Governor Pete Wilson of California Tried to Persuade President George H. W. Bush to Veto Public Law 102-575

And so at the end of the Bush Administration, this thing was moving. ***That*** administration was not particularly supportive of C-V-P-I-A, but there were other

titles in that package that the administration did support, and ultimately, when it passed the Congress, Pete Wilson was a Senator at that time, and I think he had just become governor. He flew someplace, I think it was down to Florida or someplace, and met with President Bush and asked him to veto the bill, and the president did not. He signed it into law.

Patterson Became Responsible to Implement CVPIA under a Commissioner Who Was a Principal Author of That Title of the Act

So, in October of '92, we had this major new law for the C-V-P that a lot of people out here had fought for and against for a number of years. And lo and behold, it became our responsibility–mine, to a large degree–to implement this new law, as sort of somebody that had not been part of the fight, coming into it. And having a commissioner, then, in Dan Beard, who was a principal ***author*** in writing C-V-P-I-A, it was interesting, and I thought, "Okay, well, this will be good, because Dan, having been involved in it, will be very helpful to me in being able to explain what some of this stuff was really all about." Dan left the majority of the implementation of the act to me and to the regional director of the Fish and Wildlife Service out here, and, as I found out, everybody understood clearly what the act meant, except for us, and folks on the outside all had a very definitive recollection of exactly what this was intended to do.

Unfortunately, depending on who you were talking to, the views were at a 180-degree odds. And in many cases, we found even the staff people in Washington that worked on the act didn't have a comprehensive view of it. I can remember Beard saying, "Well, I think that was a Tom Jensen part. I think Tom's the one that worked on that." Or Roger Guinn, who was Vic Fazio's staffer at the time. And so I would call Tom or Roger and say, "Can you help me understand exactly what this is about?" They'd say, "You know, I think Dan Beard was the guy that worked on that part." (laughter)

And so, I guess like any piece of legislation, once it becomes law, it's going to take some sorting out to do, and I've spent the last five years, a lot of my time, trying to do that. We've been in lawsuits and out of lawsuits, and we've been in rule-making, and we've been in public processes to no end. We prepared a twenty-million-dollar environmental impact statement. Let's just say it's been quite an experience.

Storey: Hmm. What are the major components, from your point of view?

Dedication of 800,000 Acre Feet of Project Water to Fish and Wildlife Issues

Patterson: There are several. There was a dedication of part of the C-V-P supply to fish and wildlife.

Storey: That was 800,000?

Patterson: That's an 800,000 acre-feet issue. Section 3406.b.2, dedicated 800,000 acre-feet of the C-V-P yield to fish and wildlife purposes. There has been a tremendous battle

over exactly what that meant. It's not as simple as it sounds. How do you account for the water? How do you measure it? What is yield versus "wet water" in any given year?

". . . we put out sort of a *final* policy paper on what does the 800,000 acre-feet mean, how's it going to be used, etcetera, etcetera. The day after we put it out, we were taken to court by a number of the C-V-P water users. Since then, several of the folks in the environmental community have filed a lawsuit sort of on the other side of the issues . . ."

To this date, that issue is still not fully resolved. It's in the court right now. Last November we put out sort of a ***final*** policy paper on what does the 800,000 acre-feet mean, how's it going to be used, etc. etc. The day after we put it out, we were taken to court by a number of the C-V-P water users. Since then, several of the folks in the environmental community have filed a lawsuit sort of on the other side of the issues, and so the courts now at least have before them the same issue we've been looking at for the last five years. So that part's very controversial.

CVPIA Imposed a Surcharge on Water and Power Sold from the CVP to Create a Restoration Fund

There's also a restoration fund that was created that is essentially a surcharge on the water and power that we sell from the C-V-P. Generates around forty million dollars a year that comes to us. The money then is to be used to basically implement restoration projects–fish screens, etc., water acquisitions, those kinds of things.

CVPIA Altered Contracting Procedures for the CVP

And then there's pretty fundamental reform of the contracts and contracting procedures for C-V-P. For instance, the term of new contracts is limited to twenty-five years, as opposed to forty years that we had in the past. There was a requirement in Section 3409 to do a programmatic environmental impact statement ***before*** we renewed long-term contracts. We're still in the process of finishing that document. There's a draft done, and a final will be done next spring.

So in the meantime, we've had several contracts expire, and C-V-P-I-A limited us to interim contracts of three years or two years, between the expiration of the long term and the new long terms that we can enter into once this programmatic environmental impact statement is done. So, major reforms in contracting procedures, along with a restoration fund, plus this fish and wildlife dedication. And then tons of other little pieces here and there that we've had fun trying to sort out.

Storey: For instance, the 800,000 acre-feet, it's a lot of water.

Patterson: It is a lot of water. Depending on how you want to characterize it, it's either a tenth of the C-V-P supply, or a third. (laughter) And it's been called both.

Storey: By which different groups?

Patterson: Well, the environmental community tends to talk about it as being only about a tenth of the supply, because in wet years, when you make full deliveries to all of the contractors and you include the Friant people, we deliver, you know, roughly eight million acre-feet. The water users in the San Joaquin Valley, on the west side, talk more about it being a third, because it's specifically tied to the 1928 to 1934 drought period, which is the design period for the C-V-P, and during a dry period like that, 800,000 acre-feet of yield is roughly a third of the water supply that's going south of the Delta.

So depending on your public rhetoric, you can hear it's a tenth, it's a third. I'm not sure which it is. It's probably both, depending on your view.

Storey: Have we actually taken the 800,000 acre-feet yet?

Issues and Lawsuits Regarding the 800,000 Acre Feet Allocation

Patterson: Yes, we have. Yes, we dedicated, the first year in 1993, we made the first dedication of water to fish and wildlife purposes, out of the 800,000 acre-feet. It's sort of the way that worked. Fish and Wildlife Service had certain fish objectives they wanted to see, like flows in certain rivers. Like on the Sacramento, they wanted to see flows of "X" amount that was higher than had historically been there.

So we started meeting those objectives and received a lawsuit essentially that first year, out of the Westlands Water District, that challenged our ability to dedicate the water until we had done NEPA [National Environmental Protection Act] compliance. So we had that issue, and we were successful in defending it, primarily because the statute says "upon enactment, dedicate and manage 800,000 acre-feet."

So we took the position that Congress understood that this was to happen immediately and not wait until some NEPA compliance had been completed, which they had spelled out a requirement for that in another section of the act. So we were successful in defending our decision to dedicate, essentially upon enactment, certain waters for fish and wildlife, or basically achieve fishery flows.

But there's been an argument about whether we dedicated it all, or part, whether we dedicated too much, and that gets down to how you interpret the language in the act, as to how you measure it, etc., and that's part of what's still going on in the court right now.

Storey: I was down at California Water Symposium before the ABA thing down in San Diego.

Patterson: Oh yes, in San Diego, right.

Storey: Delta-Mendota seems to feel that it has been disproportionately hurt.

Delta-Mendota Issues

Patterson: And I think that's a fair argument, and it comes about for a lot of reasons, but the C-

V-P has I guess what I would call ***categories*** of contractors, and inherent in their contracts and their status are certain priorities. For instance, you have a group of water-rights settlement contractors in the Sacramento Valley, and these were people that were using water prior to the C-V-P.

Storey: And those were riparian rights, right?

Patterson: Some are riparian, but for the most part, they're not, but they're not fully adjudicated. So essentially the way it worked is, we wanted to build the C-V-P, these guys were using water on the Sacramento River. Rather than slug it out in a state board adjudication, we entered into settlement contracts that said, "Okay, you agree to use 'X' amount, we agree that you can use 'X' amount," and so we entered into forty-year contracts with all of these contractors that essentially said they had priority. They were there before the C-V-P, and as long as they only used these amounts, that was fine. So we have them.

Down in the San Joaquin Valley, we have what's called the "exchange contractors," which ***happen*** to be a group of people that were using water, but in this case, they were using water on the San Joaquin River, and the Bureau wanted to build the Friant Division, to use the waters of the San Joaquin. So what we agreed to do, under contract, was to supply these exchange contractors an alternative supply, out of the Delta.

So we entered into a contract, and it's for nine hundred and some thousand acre-feet total, that we will deliver from the Delta, through the Delta-Mendota Canal and that system, these exchange contractors' water, and the Friant Division will divert the San Joaquin water that they previously used, for use in the Friant Division.

There's a provision in the contract that says if for some reason we are ***unable*** to deliver the substitute supply, the exchange contractors can go back to the San Joaquin and make a call on the river, which means then that would put the Friant Division at peril, because they would be taking the water.

So you have sort of the senior category of folks are the exchange and the Sacramento settlement contracts. They're kind of senior to the project; therefore, they get their supply first. And by contract, they can only be shorted twenty-five percent. So in other words, no matter how dry it gets, they get at least a seventy-five percent supply.

So then you have the C-V-P water service contracts and you have a couple of categories of those. Let's say, M&I and irrigation. The M&I contractors receive a firmer supply than irrigation, and we've had different policy over the years, but by and large, it results in, in times of drought, the cities get more water than irrigation, under the theory that they have a sort of a higher need.

Storey: You mean more water proportionately?

Patterson: More water proportionately, yes. They get a higher allocation. And generally what they get, it amounts to about seventy-five percent of their historic use. And so you

take that off the top. So you take Sac River off the top, the exchange contract supply off the top, you meet the city's M&I needs, ***then*** you get into the irrigation water service contractors. You have different geographic areas. You have north of the Delta and south of the Delta.

Those north of the Delta, their needs are a little easier to meet, because you don't have the restrictions of moving water through the Delta, and as long as you have storage in, say, Shasta Reservoir, you can probably deliver a reasonable supply to the water service irrigation contractors on the Tehama-Colusa Canal, which is where most of those are. So they'll tend to get a little higher allocation than south of the Delta.

The Friant system kind of operates independently. It's not really a fully integrated supply. So the Friant folks sort of live on whatever develops at the San Joaquin. So what you have left then are the Delta-Mendota, San Luis aggregate of people, which is Westlands Water District and other water districts that not only are of the lowest contract priority–i.e., C-V-P, ag irrigation–but they're also south of the Delta, which means that restrictions in getting water out of the Delta, because of fishery protections and water-quality standards, further restrict the supply that they can get.

So when they say, "It seems like we're the low guys on the totem pole," in fact, they are. And it's not probably fair that that's the way it works, but unfortunately, that's sort of where we find ourselves right now. And of course, that's why they have an interest in CALFED and finding some Delta solutions that can hopefully take some of the pressure off of them.

Storey: I've forgotten this woman's name, but she worked for us and for the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Patterson: Is that Laura King? Does that sound right?

Storey: Yes, it may have been.

Patterson: Laura worked for me for a while as a special assistant. In fact, this was her office. She previously had worked for N-R-D-C, which is the Natural Resource Defense Council, for a number of years.

Storey: Yes. She sounds like–that's the right mix of experience.

Patterson: Well, she's quite a person, and, yeah, she had spent several years in the environmental community, working for N-R-D-C. She had then gone to work for a large municipality, East Bay Municipal Utility District, over in Oakland. And then she came to Reclamation under an intergovernmental assignment, one of these IPAs,[37] and worked here for, I don't know, a year, a year and a half, and then went to

37. Intergovernmental Personnel Act. "The Intergovernmental Personnel Act Mobility Program provides for the temporary assignment of personnel between the Federal Government and state and local governments, colleges (continued...)

work for the Delta-Mendota-San Luis Authority. So she's had quite a diverse experience of employers.

Storey: She's seen all sides of the issue.

Patterson: She's seen all sides of the issue and probably more so than maybe anybody else I can think of that works in the water business out here.

Storey: One of the things I sort of vividly remember about her discussion was, she seemed to imply that Delta-Mendota should be made whole, at its former water rates. Has this come up yet, and if so, how can we react? What kind of constraints are there on our reaction to that kind of a claim?

Patterson: Well, that's probably unrealistic, in that they will never be whole as far as the water rates are concerned. I think C-V-P-I-A turned a corner that will not be turned back on water rates. It just is not going to happen in the future. I think to try to restore their water supply to the reliability they had prior to C-V-P-I-A maybe is a possibility. It is something that we should try to do, and is something that may be able to come out of this CALFED process. So I think if they could get a reliable supply somewhat close to what they had before, **even** at higher water rates, that's about as good as they could hope to get.

Storey: It was interesting watching this panel, because on the one hand we had the gentleman representing the municipalities in the state, saying, "There's no new water." On the other hand, we had the guy representing the environmental groups saying, "What do you mean there's no new water? They're proposing six million new acre-feet of water." What's going on?

CALFED Program

Patterson: Well, this is sort of like it depends on which end of the pipe you're looking on. It's a work in progress, and I think the good news is that we have a partnership collaborative process that's under way. As difficult as it is, this thing that's been created, called CALFED, which is really . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. MAY 19, 1998.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. MAY 19, 1998.

Patterson: One of the central parts of CALFED is sixteen state and Federal agencies that have jointly taken on the task of finding a solution to the Delta problems. As the Governor said several years ago, "The Delta is broke and we need to find a fix," that's really what CALFED is about. So you've got these sixteen state and Federal agencies working together to try to do that, which has its own struggles, given, you know, we on the Federal side work for a Democratic administration, and those folks on the state side work for a Republican administration, and it's sort of remarkable to me how,

37. (...continued)
and universities, Indian tribal governments, federally funded research and development centers, and other eligible organizations. . . ." Source: http://www.opm.gov/programs/ipa/ consulted on September 28, 2011, at about 11:35 A.M.

given that political context, we've managed to work through some pretty tough stuff.

I mean, the accord that was done in '94 was a major accomplishment and basically laid the foundation for this planning effort to find this long-term fix that's still hanging together. So you've got the agencies and then we've got the stakeholders. We sort of have the official and the unofficial. We have a group of citizens' advisors that have been appointed under the Federal Advisory Committee Act that are advising both the state and the Federal governments on how to go, what decisions to make.

Then, in addition, there's a group of stakeholders that are working from their own interests on how do they want to try to influence the process. So it's out of those stakeholders that you will hear different things at different times, such as strong support for storage or against storage, strong support for a canal or a diversion facility, the old Peripheral Canal idea, although it's much different at this point as to whether that's good or bad, it should be part of the mix or not part of the mix. The environmental community pushing very strongly for doing more on the demand management side. Should land retirement be a bigger part of the picture?

Lester Snow Hired to Head CALFED

That's the debate that's going on now. These sixteen agencies, the way they decided to do the work, was to hire a joint staff, and so we went out and recruited the best person to head that up that we could find. I think found a real winner when we hired Lester Snow from the San Diego County Water Authority to head up CALFED. Built him a staff that came largely from the CALFED agencies, so we've got E-P-A [Environmental Protection Agency] folks and Fish and Wildlife folks, Bureau of Reclamation staff, Department of Water Resources, so Lester has a–every time we look, it gets bigger. I think he's got forty to sixty people on his staff. They're actually doing the work of producing technical papers, producing planning documents, environmental documents, or whatever, and recently put out a draft environmental impact statement, environmental impact report, that now is being debated in the public to see where we go from here.

The governor and Secretary [Bruce] Babbitt met last Monday and they have agreed that we're going to try to arrive at a preferred alternative by the end of this calendar year, which is a major task. It means you've got to bring along all of these agencies, and the stakeholders have to have at least some degree of consensus for us to be able to say at the end of the year, "Here's how we see the solution, and here's how we see it coming about over the next several years."

So it's interesting, but it's big stuff, and we kind of get caught up in it, but when people come in from the outside, and most recently, Mike Spear [phonetic], who's the Fish and Wildlife Service regional director, has become deeply engaged in CALFED, and as you talk to him about as crazy as this process looks, how it compares to what he experienced particularly on the Columbia River, he said it's amazing. He says you could not get people together in the same room on the Columbia to even talk, and here we meet every month and people are talking, sometimes yelling, and sharing very strongly their views, but at least they're in the

same room, to a large degree, slugging it out. So I guess I find that encouraging. You get somebody new come in and says, "You may think this is crazy and you're not making progress, but it's really quite a process that you have." So, we'll see.

Storey: I've heard you credited with creating the CALFED process, that it was your idea.

Patterson: No, no, I don't think that's right. It was a lot of people's ideas. When this started, maybe it was the governor that created it, because he criticized the Feds very strongly, because, in his view, we were operating sort of by the seat of our pants, driven largely by the Endangered Species Act decisions.

I don't know when it was, it must have been in about '93, a few of us that were the Feds being criticized said, "You know, maybe we ought to get together and find out, collectively, what we really ***are*** doing and what we have going on." So the regional directors from Marine Fisheries, Fish and Wildlife, and EPA in San Francisco got together in San Francisco with a fairly simple task, it seemed, and that is, "Let's share what we have going on in the Delta and let's try and see if we can't use that maybe to do a little better job coordinating." We hired a facilitator to help us with that, and we rented some room in a hotel, and it was sort of mind-boggling.

By eleven o'clock that night, after working all day, we had this conference room papered with flipcharts that represented activities that these four agencies had going on, a lot of which the other agencies had no idea. And in some cases, ***we*** didn't even know some of the things we were doing as agencies. Out of that came, "We owe it to ourselves and to others to do this stuff in a coordinated way."

It was actually John Weiss [phonetic], I think, who's the deputy regional administrator at EPA, sort of threw out this kind of crazy idea of, "Well, we could call ourselves something like, you know, the 'Fed' or 'Club Fed.'" And we were getting a little goofy by eleven o'clock at night. And anyway, this Club Fed thing ***stuck***, and it wasn't long after that, that we would refer to, collectively, these four Federal agencies as Club Fed.

Betsy Reike, who was starting to come into the picture at that time, she started talking about us as Club Fed, and as silly as that name sounded, it started to represent the desire and effort to coordinate between these Federal agencies, to try to do this stuff together.

Then from that we moved into the '94, the Bay-Delta Accord.[38] The state, as

38. ". . . December 15, 1994 the state/federal agreement on Bay-Delta environmental protection (Bay-Delta Accord) was signed. The agreement resulted from over 12 months of scientific analysis and multi-interest negotiations. In the end, a broad range of stakeholder groups including environmental organizations, business groups, and urban and agricultural water agencies from throughout California signed or supported the Accord. In December of 1997, state and federal representatives agreed to extend the Accord an additional year . . .The signing of the Bay-Delta Accord was a landmark event that ushered in a new era in California water management. It . . . established interim Bay-Delta standards supported by both state and federal governments and allowed the federal government to return primary control over Bay-Delta water management to the state. It committed water users to provide money and water to improve the Bay-Delta ecosystem, and in return guaranteed a three-year reprieve from additional species protection requirements. . . ." Source: http://www.bay-delta.org/done/accord.html accessed on (continued...)

we were forming Club Fed, started to put together a coordinating mechanism on their side. It was the Governor's Water Policy Council. They were much more dignified than we were in the name that they attached. And ***after*** the accord, we agreed to this joint planning effort and it became known as "CALFED," for the California part and the Federal part.

That's sort of how it all came about, but it started out sort of out of self-preservation, from a bunch of us Federal folks trying to figure out what we were doing, and we became the Club Fed, and later, you know, this sort of evolved over time.

Storey: Evolved into CALFED.

Patterson: Evolved into CALFED.

Storey: One of the things that's very interesting to me is this issue of responsibility and sovereignty and so on. How does–I'm not sure exactly how to put this question–how does Reclamation protect itself from CALFED making decisions which run against the responsibilities of Reclamation? That isn't put quite right, but I think you understand the issue I'm trying to get at.

Agency Responsibilities and How They Mesh with CALFED

Patterson: No, that is a good one. That's been sort of a central backdrop to this whole process. Even when the four Federal agencies came together and formed Club Fed, one of our guiding principles was, while we will work very hard to share information, coordinate, and act as one, that each of us has certain statutory responsibilities that we're not giving up, and may have to exercise those in a way that would be inconsistent with, perhaps where the other agencies would want us to be. So you work hard to get to a common spot, but ***each*** agency has certain statutory responsibilities.

For instance, it's clear that the EPA is sort of the final call under the Clean Water Act, and that National Marine Fisheries and Fish and Wildlife Service has responsibilities they can't give up under Endangered Species Act. The Bureau of Reclamation has certain responsibilities under the contracts that we've entered into and even under C-V-P-I-A. So we tried to exercise those in a joint way, and now that gets even more interesting as you form ***CALFED*** and you bring in additional Federal agencies such as the Corps of Engineers and the Forest Service. Western Area Power

38. (...continued)
October 12, 2011, at about 3:45 in the afternoon.

". . . the historic Bay-Delta Accord brought together environmental advocates, urban water users and farm interests to address deterioration of the Bay-Delta system. The Bay-Delta Accord included a firm resolve to find solutions by initiating a process known as CalFed. With over $1 billion in state and federal funds, and the cooperation of fifteen federal and state agencies, CalFed pledged to develop a long-term consensus solution. The framework CalFed agreement signed by all agencies has at its core three goals: develop water quality standards to protect the estuary, coordinate operations of the state and federal water projects, and develop a long-term solution for the delta. . . ." Source: http://daviswiki.org/calfed_bay_delta_accord accessed on October 12, 2011, at about 4:10 in the afternoon.

Administration's at the table there, and then on the state side, you've got the state agencies, that have very different missions and responsibilities amongst themselves. DWR and Cal Fish and Game, as well as the state board.

So that has been a challenge, and it's kind of remarkable how well we've been able do at that. Now, we have our times when it breaks down, but we have presented joint testimony on behalf of the Federal agencies in front of the state board now for going on four years, where we would go down and present from the Federal side, "Here's our testimony as to how we think this stuff ought to work."

There, back in the good old days, we would present different testimony from Reclamation and the Fish and Wildlife Service, just two agencies, let alone multi-agencies, and those were two agencies in the same department. So it's been interesting, and I don't think we've given up a lot, but it's amazing when you talk it through with a lot of other folks, how you find a way, maybe under your rules and laws, to be able to sort of support the common, sort of the common dimension here.

Storey: What kinds of alternatives are being considered to implement C-V-P-I-A and how many of them are coming out of Reclamation, as it were?

Patterson: In the CALFED or C-V-P-I-A? Which are you thinking of? Are you thinking CALFED?

Storey: Well, see, I don't know enough to be able to separate them.

Patterson: Hey, that's good. I'm glad to hear that, because one of the things we hear out here a lot is that we need to have better integration between C-V-P-I-A and what we're doing in CALFED. In CALFED, there's an alternative for everybody, but generally at this point, there are three sort of summary-type alternatives that Reclamation has been in the middle of all the way, along with the other agencies, and I would say we've had our input and influence on those.

CALFED Has Three Basic Alternatives

They vary from something that is closer to the status quo, but has some fairly aggressive environmental restoration kinds of things in it, which is Alternative One has certain things that you would do in the south Delta, with our pumps and screening and those kinds of things. Could have zero up to several million acre-feet of storage associated with it. That's sort of wide open. So that's sort of Alternative One, which is, I guess, the least change from what we have now.

Storey: This is the one that would require increasing storage?

Patterson: All of them have the same storage in them, interestingly enough. All of the alternatives allow for zero up to, like, four and a half million acre-feet of new storage. So they don't differ between the three alternatives. But the three alternatives– Alternative Two primarily has to do with a different way of conveying water through the Delta, and it's sort of a through-Delta type of conveyance, where you would enlarge the channels through the Delta to get to the south Delta pumps.

And then Alternative Three has some work in the central Delta, plus an isolated facility. They call it–somebody says that sounds like a military base out in the desert, and it may be. But it's a canal that would go around the Delta. So that's Alternative Three.

Storey: So that the water wouldn't be mixed with the salt water?

Patterson: Basically, yeah, you would trap the water, divert the water on the Sacramento, just upstream of the Delta, and convey the majority of it around the Delta, and tie directly into the Delta-Mendota Canal and the California Aqueduct, as well as you would do some work in the central Delta, but most of the water would be diverted from the Sacramento around the Delta.

Whereas, in Alternative Two, you do a lot of work in the central Delta to improve the conveyance across the Delta. In Alternative One, you do much less of that. You simply improve the Tracy and Banks fish screens and how you take water in and out of the Delta, and do less work.

But all three of the alternatives have storage that could go from zero up to four and a half million acre-feet, and that's something we'll have to come to closure on over the next several months is, how much storage do we need for the future? What kind of storage should it be? Should it be groundwater conjunctive use storage? Should it be additional surface storage? Where should it be located? Should it be north of the Delta? Should it be south of the Delta? So those are the kinds of issues that are to be debated on storage. Plus, who benefits from the storage? Who should pay for the storage? How will it be operated? I mean, all the good fun stuff.

Storey: Since you raised the issue of who benefits, let's talk about the 4.4 Plan and how it affects any of this, or does it?

Patterson: Off the Colorado?

Storey: Yeah.

Patterson: That's not my area of expertise, but interestingly enough, and I tried to explain this to Senator Malcolm Wallop once, from Wyoming, after I hadn't been out here too long, but I had known him in my previous life. I said, as we were trying to find some money to work on some Delta issue, and I happened to have a chance to visit with him, I said, "You know, Wyoming is connected to the Delta," and after getting this skeptical look off of his face, I told him that Wyoming, which is a basin state of the Colorado River, is interested in what happens in the Colorado River, which means it's interested in how much water California gets ***out*** of the Colorado Basin, and the primary user of that is the metropolitan area down in southern California. Interestingly enough, they're also a primary user out of the Delta, and I figure that they're going to get their water one way or another. And so the degree to which they don't get water out of the Colorado puts more pressure on the Delta, as other things, as it does on recycling, etc. So they are linked, in that California's need for future water supply of both the Delta and the Colorado River, you know, key pieces of that.

So, less water on the Colorado puts more pressure on the Delta.

Storey: Is it David Kennedy, the head of . . .

Patterson: Yes, Dave Kennedy is the head of the Department of Water Resources.

Storey: I heard Mr. Kennedy say they figured they could live within their 4.4 allocation by 2015 or 2020, I think it was.

Patterson: Well, that's what they're working, is the California 4.4 Plan, and that's, how does California get down to its entitlement on the Colorado River. Of course, that's a controversial issue in and of itself.

Storey: But I guess what I think I'm hearing is that it isn't affecting the CALFED process much.

"One thing we're *not* trying to do in CALFED is *balance* the water equation. We're not trying to basically say, 'How much water does California need in thirty years, and CALFED is to go out and make that water available.' That's not what we're doing. . . ."

Patterson: It's not really affecting the CALFED process. One thing we're ***not*** trying to do in CALFED is ***balance*** the water equation. We're not trying to basically say, "How much water does California need in thirty years, and CALFED is to go out and make that water available." That's not what we're doing.

"What we're *trying* to do in CALFED is to *fix* the Delta, which is the central hub for much of California's water supply . . ."

What we're ***trying*** to do in CALFED is to ***fix*** the Delta, which is the central hub for much of California's water supply, and in doing that, we've got several things we're trying to achieve. Levee stability. In fixing it, we want good quality water. So, you start venturing off into reliable water supply as part of the fix. That's one of our stated objectives, and therefore, you start looking at new storage.

But the ***focus*** of CALFED is to ***fix*** the Delta and all of these related things, ***not*** to balance the equation. If the goal was to meet California's water supply thirty years from now, then there would be a much more direct link to this Colorado River thing. But the idea is, once you fix the Delta, if in fact you can do that, then you've got something to build on for ***other*** projects, mechanisms that can help meet the future water supplies. But right now, with the Delta in the situation that it's in, you can't think about these other kinds of things. It doesn't work.

Storey: I can see, though, that this would be highly charged politically. There's been a traditional split between the north and the south, in terms of water politics, within California. Alternatives that sound similar to some of these have been rejected by the voters in the past and so on. How does the CALFED process now ***think*** that things may have changed so that they can propose these kinds of alternatives?

"CALFED is thinking much differently and in a broader way than they have in the past. . . . it's about a comprehensive fix, with . . . *guarantees* that certain things will happen when we commit that they're going to happen, for all sides. . . . so it's just being viewed in a much more comprehensive way than it has in the past, so that every side has assurance on how things are going to work and when they're going to come on line . . ."

Patterson: CALFED is thinking much differently and in a broader way than they have in the past. This is not simply about plumbing or new projects, but it's about a comprehensive fix, with a lot of the success based on assurances, ***guarantees*** that certain things will happen when we commit that they're going to happen, for all sides. Having protections written into the rules for how things are going to work, so it's just being viewed in a much more comprehensive way than it has in the past, so that every side has assurance on how things are going to work and when they're going to come on line, what objectives are going to be met, what level of performance we're going to achieve.

". . . in the past, building a Peripheral Canal, sort of *without* having to think about environmental restoration and what does it mean for the levees in the Delta, and how do you provide assurances on how it's going to operate and that, would be a lot easier. . . ."

Now, that makes it a lot more difficult. I mean, ideas in the past, building a Peripheral Canal, sort of ***without*** having to think about environmental restoration and what does it mean for the levees in the Delta, and how do you provide assurances on how it's going to operate and that, would be a lot easier. Of course it failed because of assurances.

The debates in the past between northern and southern California. I mean, at least now, northern California is at the table, and while I think they have skepticism about how certain alternatives may work in the future, they're putting a lot into wanting to see these guarantees and these assurances, so they're at the table.

We have the rural county areas now involved in the debate, which they really haven't been in the past. So you've broadened the stakeholder group, you've broadened sort of the political discussion, and it makes it more difficult, but it's the only way to go. I think the people involved in this understand that, but it's hard.

Storey: Yeah, I would think it would be really hard. Am I correct in understanding that there are environmental groups represented on this process also?

Bay-Delta Advisory Council

Patterson: Environmental groups. Yes, the environmental groups are central to the discussion. This advisory group that I mentioned earlier–it's called B-DAC [pronounced b dark], it's the Bay-Delta Advisory Council–has several members from the environmental community that sit on that. Certainly, in the more informal discussions that go on, the environmental community is one of ***the*** key interest groups, along with ag, urban, and, more and more so, the business community.

The business community, in fact, just recently has written a letter to the governor and to the president, weighing in on their desire to see a good water market as part of the CALFED solution. So the business community is a player. In fact, they were a key player in leading us to the Bay-Delta Accord.

"The business community basically wrote a letter . . . to both the governor and the president, saying, 'We've got a lot riding on progress in the Delta.' Certain bond ratings were at risk because of . . . either real or perceived, lack of reliability in water supply. . . ."

The business community basically wrote a letter at that time to both the governor and the president, saying, "We've got a lot riding on progress in the Delta." Certain bond ratings were at risk because of the, at least either real or perceived, lack of reliability in water supply.

"Sunne McPeak, who's one of the co-chairs of B-DAC . . . from the business community, says, 'We want to see our money invested wisely and we want to see our water invested wisely.' They don't want to spend more money than they need to, and so they're an influence . . ."

So the business community weighed in pretty heavily, prior to us coming together on the accord, and they're going to be a key player in finding a Bay-Delta solution. Sunne McPeak, who's one of the co-chairs of B-DAC, and has been involved in these issues for a long time, from the business community, says, "We want to see our money invested wisely and we want to see our water invested wisely." They don't want to spend more money than they need to, and so they're an influence, in addition to these other more traditional interest groups.

Storey: But they're not really on the CALFED panel.

Patterson: Well, Sunny co-chairs the B-DAC, and Mike Madigan, who's from southern California, they ***are*** represented on B-DAC, and I think are going to be more and more heard from sort of outside of that in the political arena. There are a lot of players in this thing. I mean, it really is amazing.

Storey: Yes, but, as I said, I don't know quite enough, but when it gets down to voting, who gets to vote?

". . . two government officials that have been given responsibility for *important* stuff like accountability for the money. All of the Federal money going into CALFED has been given to the secretary of interior, and Congress is holding him accountable for what happens on that side. . . ."

Patterson: I don't know. You know, that's one thing we've put off trying to have to decide. Ultimately, on the Federal side, this ends up with the secretary of interior in a lot of ways. And on the state side, it ends up with the secretary of resources, which is Doug Wheeler. Those are the two government officials that have been given responsibility

for ***important*** stuff like accountability for the money. All of the Federal money going into CALFED has been given to the secretary of interior, and Congress is holding him accountable for what happens on that side.

We haven't voted on things. We have tabled issues in the past at CALFED and had some fairly hotly debated discussions–large group, small group, on line, off line, and so far, at least, have been able to achieve consensus on where we're going. Whether we'll be able to continue to do that in the future, I don't know, but I think basically we have to.

". . . you can't afford to lose and have in opposition one of the major entities, Federal organizations, or one of the major stakeholder groups. I mean, you can't leave people behind that really count, and that's the beauty of it, is you've got to have them on board, and when you get them on board, it's a tremendous coalition for political support for solutions and bringing money to the solution . . ."

This is so difficult that you can't afford to lose and have in opposition one of the major entities, Federal organizations, or one of the major stakeholder groups. I mean, you can't leave people behind that really count, and that's the beauty of it, is you've got to have them on board, and when you get them on board, it's a tremendous coalition for political support for solutions and bringing money to the solution, as we've seen so far. But if that all starts to unravel, then you probably don't go anywhere. So we haven't been voting; we've been working to get everybody together.

Storey: With such a diversity of interests, it must be difficult sometimes.

Patterson: Oh, it is, it is, but I guess that's why we do this stuff, and I'm sure a lot of the other folks think the same thing is, if you want to have a good issue to work on professionally if you're in the water business, this is about as good as it gets.

Storey: Must be complex. Where's the money coming from? Who's providing it, and how, and so on?

". . . when you look at the fact that we have secured a billion dollars of state and Federal money for a process that's not a project or even a final plan, it's pretty amazing. . . ."

Patterson: You know, that's amazing. I mean, basically, when you look at the fact that we have secured a billion dollars of state and Federal money for a process that's not a project or even a final plan, it's pretty amazing. I mean, here we are, we have a draft plan on the street, and we've already secured a billion dollars of money, and that's amazing to me.

Where it's come from is, you've got to go back to the Bay-Delta Accord, and at the time we put that together, the water users were saying, "You know, you don't need all this water. We could do habitat improvement, and if we do that, then you need less water." So we said, "Well, that's going to cost money." And, yes, it will.

And so out of the accord, there was agreement on a thing called "category three," which was simply a group of activities that were non-flow related that we would agree to do, and we needed what's called category-three money, and the water users at the time agreed to start putting money into category-three projects, and Metropolitan Water District sort of, at Betsy Reike's insistence, stepped forward and front-ended category-three money, ten million dollars a year for three years. So we've had some water user money.

Then the state put a ballot initiative, Prop. 204, on a statewide ballot for a bond, essentially for water in California, a good part of which was for CALFED. There was $60 million in Prop. 204, for state category-three money, and there was another $390 million for CALFED after this EIR-EIS is certified. So there was 390, plus 60, so there's $450 million of state money now that came on the table because Prop. 204 passed. Passed like sixty-one percent, which is kind of amazing, because bond issues in California generally haven't been very successful.

That was in November, and within a month to six weeks, Congress had very quickly put together a Federal cost-share piece of legislation for $430 million of ***Federal*** money, and ***that*** passed. And so we had, very quickly, state money. Now we had $430 million of Federal money, at least authorized. It wasn't appropriated, but it was authorized. Plus we had some water user money on the table.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. MAY 19, 1998.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. MAY 19, 1998.

Storey: This is tape two of an interview by Brit Storey, with Roger Patterson, on May the 19th, 1998.

Patterson: So we have this billion dollars that's available to be doing projects while we're figuring out the plan. Incredible. You know, I've worked a lot of places in Reclamation, and I run into either my colleagues in Reclamation or, more interestingly, the water users and the state officials in these other states, and they say, "What the heck are you guys doing out there? I mean, we would ***die*** for a billion dollars." And when you explain, "Well, that's sort of the downpayment, because we're really still working on the plan," they just shake their head, and say, "It must be a California thing, because it certainly wouldn't happen in a lot of other places." (laughter]

But you had a strong coalition, particularly behind the state and Federal money, where you had the urban ag and the environmental community all back in Washington, for instance, lobbying for the Federal appropriation. This administration, the [Bill] Clinton Administration, the first year, requested the full amount in the Federal appropriation, which was $143 million, and we had very strong support from all of the stakeholders back here lobbying for money, and we ended up with $85 million. And that's $85 million of new money, not redirected money from elsewhere in the Federal agencies, but ***new*** money coming to this from the Federal side.

Storey: To the secretary?

Patterson: To the secretary of interior.

Storey: Rather than to Reclamation?

Federal Money for All the Bureaus Flows to Reclamation

Patterson: Well, actually, to Reclamation. This is another thing that's interesting, and I guess maybe this was a little bit of our "reinvent government" thinking. There was a lot of debate about sort of the mechanics of how do you get this Federal money. There were some of us, and I was one of them, that said, "Maybe it's time to think about this in a new way as well, and given we have up to ten Federal agencies, if we get each of those Federal agencies seeking appropriations, some will be successful and some won't. We're creating, certainly an accounting and tracking nightmare, probably. So ***maybe*** we ought to think about this Federal money flowing as a block to ***one*** of the Federal agencies that then would work, through the CALFED process, to make that money then available to whichever agency or entity is doing the work."

And so we sort of got on this idea of, yeah, but you have committees and Congress that have jurisdictions and they may have turf issues as well as agencies do. But when all was said and done, the decision was finally made to request the Federal money as a one-block appropriation coming to the Bureau of Reclamation, to be administered for all of the Federal agencies. And that's been interesting. I mean, at first, it was, "Well, hey, how come Reclamation is getting the money?" "Hey, relax, it's only an administrative process here. It's not like this is our money and you're going to have beg for money, but we'll make decisions collectively on what projects will be done and which agency's in the best position to do it, etc." And so that was interesting how that came about. It was a new way of doing business. My view, it was the right kind of approach.

Issues with Reclamation's Appropriation for CALFED

Now it's created a problem amongst the appropriators because the Bureau of Reclamation's appropriation comes through the energy and water appropriation. Some of the other CALFED participants, even in Interior, like Fish and Wildlife and USGS [U.S. Geological Survey], come through the Interior appropriation, and then EPA comes through a different appropriation bill. So, what it's done, at least to our appropriators, they feel like they are having to carry the whole load within the allocation they get for energy and water. They don't believe that it's been raised enough.

In other words, money moved from the allocations to the other subcommittees, and so we've suffered a little bit of grief because of that. But I still think it was the right approach. It comes in block, and on the state side, their money comes in in a block. So if people want to know what are you doing and what you spent the money on, we can tell, and I think that's important, because our credibility in the future, which we will be back. I mean, we're going to need several billion dollars more if we're successful in coming together on a project, so our credibility on how did we secure and spend this money is going to be, I think, instrumental in getting additional money.

Storey: So is this money part of Reclamation's total appropriation?

"It's in the Energy and Water Bill. . . . it is not coming out of Reclamation's ceiling. . . . But there's only so much in the Energy and Water appropriation in total, for Reclamation, Corps of Engineers, Department of Energy, and all those other agencies. And so when you add CALFED, whether it's $140 million or $85 million, it's still money that has to be appropriated out of that block, and that's part of this burden that the appropriators feel. . . ."

Patterson: Yes, sort of. It's in the Energy and Water Bill. It's attached to Reclamation, but it is not coming out of Reclamation's ceiling. It's a little bit like the Central Utah Project appropriation, which comes out of Energy and Water, and it sort of rides right next to Reclamation. But there's only so much in the Energy and Water appropriation in total, for Reclamation, Corps of Engineers, Department of Energy, and all those other agencies. And so when you add CALFED, whether it's $140 million or $85 million, it's still money that has to be appropriated out of that block, and that's part of this burden that the appropriators feel.

But for instance, when we put together, and we just finished the work on the Reclamation 2000 budget, I did not have to consider the CALFED appropriation as part of my budget, and we did not consider it as part of Reclamation's target from OMB [Office of Management and Budget]. We consider it separately.

Storey: So the 745 [million dollars], or whatever we have this year, does not include that.

Patterson: It does not include CALFED. If it did, I would have four other regional directors that ***would not*** be my good friends. (laughter)

Storey: (laughter) Well, that's what I was wondering, because in that case, it would be radically reducing other programs and not showing up the way it would.

Patterson: And that would be wrong. And I've worried about that. That's one of the concerns I had when I was advocating this one-block appropriation and knowing that it may well come to Reclamation. I was concerned that, one, it, in reality, ***could*** impact our program elsewhere, and, two, even if it didn't, that there could be the perception that it does, and so I a lot of preaching about, "It's really not impacting the rest of Reclamation's program."

Storey: And so this money is part of the $450 million authorization.

Patterson: Yeah, 430, right.

Storey: 430?

Patterson: Right.

Storey: They passed a taxing bill in California to authorize this money, and they don't know what they're going to spend it on yet?

"It was essentially a bond bill, which allows the state to issue bonds. . . . We need to get the public out here much more informed . . . But uninformed as the general public is, they did pass this bond issue that starts the money flowing towards a big Delta fix, which is amazing. . . ."

Patterson: It was a bond. It wasn't a tax; it was a bond issue. It was essentially a bond bill, which allows the state to issue bonds. Of course, if you buy the bonds, you get interest, etc. But yes, very interesting. We need to get the public out here much more informed as to what the problem is and why we're going to need money in the future. But ~~maybe as~~ uninformed as the general public is, they did pass this bond issue that starts the money flowing towards a big Delta fix, which is amazing. It's great.

Storey: The Central Valley Project is only one of two major projects in the Central Valley. The other, of course, the California Water Project. How, if at all, is all of this affecting the California Water Project?

The California Water Project and CALFED

Patterson: The state water project is operated by the Department of Water Resources, and the Department of Water Resources is one of the key CALFED agencies, and so the interest of the state water project is certainly on the table and has an interest in the solution because they, like we, export water out of the south Delta, and because of that, at certain times are limited on how much they can export because of fishery or water quality concerns. And so I would say they have a lot of the same interests as the C-V-P.

". . . the C-V-P is looking maybe a little stronger at the CALFED solution as a way to *restore* some of the reliability for our water supply, particularly to our contractors that were impacted by C-V-P-I-A. . . ."

I think a major difference is, there has not been a state Water Project Improvement Act like there was a C-V-P Improvement Act, and therefore the C-V-P is looking maybe a little stronger at the CALFED solution as a way to ***restore*** some of the reliability for our water supply, particularly to our contractors that were impacted by C-V-P-I-A. So maybe the C-V-P's looking a little stronger to the solution to help bring up or improve the reliability of our supply.

". . . the state project and the C-V-P operate pretty much side by side. In fact, if you go over here on Watt Avenue and El Camino, you'll see a joint operations center that we created since the Bay-Delta Accord . . ."

But the state project and the C-V-P operate pretty much side by side. In fact, if you go over here on Watt Avenue and El Camino, you'll see a joint operations center that we created since the Bay-Delta Accord,[39] where Lowell Plass, who's our operator for the C-V-P, sits side by side with the state operators, and they do a good job of working together and coordinating on a daily and hourly basis. So we try to run them together as best we can.

39. See footnote on page 108.

Storey: Of course, Congress didn't reduce their water or anything.

Patterson: No. Some folks in the environmental community have said, "Now what we need is a state Water Project Improvement Act," but that's not really under the purview of the Congress. That's a state water project.

Storey: Are there any tensions because of the C-V-P-I-A, between Reclamation and the DWR?

". . . there are certain things that we have to do . . . under the C-V-P-I-A that takes the cooperation of the state water project. . . . the most difficult is the implementation of these fishery measures as part of the 800,000 acre-foot dedication. Several of the measures that the Fish and Wildlife Service has prescribed affect pumping in the south Delta. Well, there are two major pumping plants, not one, and so we need the state project to cooperate. . . ."

Patterson: Yes. Not major disagreements, but there are certain things that we have to do and are trying to do under the C-V-P-I-A that takes the cooperation of the state water project. For instance, and the most difficult is the implementation of these fishery measures as part of the 800,000 acre-foot dedication. Several of the measures that the Fish and Wildlife Service has prescribed affect pumping in the south Delta. Well, there are two major pumping plants, not one, and so we need the state project to cooperate.

"[When] we're reducing our pumping for a fishery measure, they need to reduce their pumping. Well, they're willing to do that *if* . . . they're not adversely impacted. And so there are limitations on how far the state project is able and willing to go to cooperate with us . . ."

At the same time we're reducing our pumping for a fishery measure, they need to reduce their pumping. Well, they're willing to do that ***if*** they can make that water up, if they're not adversely impacted. And so there are limitations on how far the state project is able and willing to go to cooperate with us, because they have no obligation to give up water for C-V-P-I-A, but some of the things that we are trying to do under C-V-P-I-A impact them, and so that's led to some tension, but I think it's been healthy debate.

". . . some of the folks on the outside are trying to push DWR in a certain direction from maybe what we would like them to do, and so there's tension built up . . ."

Now, some of the folks on the outside are trying to push DWR in a certain direction from maybe what we would like them to do, and so there's tension built up over that, but we're, I'd say for the most part, working our way through these things, slowly but surely.

Storey: What are the fisheries issues?

Fisheries Issues

Patterson: Well, there are a number of them. I would say upstream of the Delta there are a

couple of things. Having adequate flows in the rivers for the fish at certain times is something that's needed and something that Fish and Wildlife has prescribed, and is where a good part of the 800,000 is going to. So for instance, on the American River, right here, outside of Sacramento, there are certain times of the year that Fish and Wildlife wants certain flows, and so we use some of the 800,000 to achieve those flows.

Water Temperature Issues

On the Sacramento issue, and to some degree on the American, temperature is an issue. So we need to control temperature, which generally means providing ***cool*** water at certain times. We're doing that out of Shasta, now with the help of the temperature-control device, which was a part of the C-V-P-I-A, and has been constructed and is actually working quite well, that allows us to better regulate the water temperatures coming out of Shasta, because the fish need fifty-six-degree water at certain times. So temperature's an issue.

Entrainment at Diversions

The other issue on the tributaries is entrainment from diversions. There are lots of diversions, particularly on the Sacramento River, that are unscreened. C-V-P-I-A has a screening program. Also authorized new screens and new diversion structures at some of the big diversions. For instance, Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District is the biggest diverter on the Sacramento River. C-V-P-I-A allowed us to go in and work with them to build a new fish screen, and we just broke ground on that about a month ago, and it's moving along quite well.

"So, upstream it's flows, temperature, and screening. Those are the big issues. When you get to the Delta, it gets more complicated. There are lots of diversions in the Delta besides the two big diversions of Tracy, which is the C-V-P, and Banks, which is the state water project. . . ."

So, upstream it's flows, temperature, and screening. Those are the big issues. When you get to the Delta, it gets more complicated. There are lots of diversions in the Delta besides the two big diversions of Tracy, which is the C-V-P, and Banks, which is the state water project. You have hundreds of little diversions by people that farm in the Delta, on the Delta islands. For the most part, they have unscreened diversions, and so screening those is desirable, but it's not like on the Sacramento where the water just flows by the screen and goes right on downstream, because in the Delta the tide will influence, and all sorts of things are going on in the Delta that make that more difficult.

"Contra Costa Water District diverts out of the south Delta. They're a C-V-P contractor. We are working with them to build a new diversion structure and a fish screen. The fishery issues in the Delta are complicated . . . what you have is water coming down the Sacramento, which is where the majority of the supply for the two projects comes from . . . then move crossways across the Delta to the pumps. That has lots of effects on fisheries . . ."

Contra Costa Water District diverts out of the south Delta. They're a C-V-P contractor. We are working with them to build a new diversion structure and a fish screen. The fishery issues in the Delta are complicated and really are some of the things we're trying to sort out in CALFED. Because what you have is water coming down the Sacramento, which is where the majority of the supply for the two projects comes from, needs to come down the Sacramento and then move crossways across the Delta to the pumps. That has lots of effects on fisheries, not just moving the fish towards the pumps where they may be, you know, sucked into the pumps, but disorienting the fish that would be migrating out to sea, causing problems, perhaps, when the fish come back and return to spawn, those kinds of things. Those are for salmon. There are a lot of species that are only resident in the Delta. That's where they live. They don't go anywhere else, and so what's happening in the Delta affects those fisheries.

Delta Smelt

One of them in particular is the Delta smelt, which has been listed under the Endangered Species Act, so it gets special protections and affects the operation in the south Delta with the pumping.

So the Delta is very complex as it relates to fisheries. Millions of dollars have been spent on trying to understand the needs and what's going on. Millions of more dollars will be spent in the future. That's a lot of what CALFED's about. What's the problem? What's the solution? I'm glad I don't have to figure all that out. That's why we have the fishery agencies as part of CALFED.

Storey: But how much is Reclamation doing internally, in addition to whatever CALFED is doing, studying these kinds of issues?

Patterson: We're not doing much that is by ourselves, but we're doing a lot in cooperation with people. For instance, for twenty years or so, we've had the Interagency Ecological Program, of which Reclamation is a major player on the Federal side. We have put three to four million dollars a year into that. Department of Water Resources is the major funder on the state side. But we've had collectively an eight- to ten-million-dollar program for a number of years, primarily devoted at figuring out some of these fishery issues, and Reclamation has had a lot of people involved in that.

We've had a lot of help from our Denver office through Charlie Liston, understanding and doing research on some of the facilities in the Delta and upstream, and effects on fisheries. So while fisheries may not be our true expertise, we have quite a bit of expertise in that, actually, and are using it working with the other agencies.

Storey: What are the water-quality issues, from your perspective?

Water Quality Issues and Bromides

Patterson: Well, those are complex as well. Sort of the big issue, water-quality wise, that is on the screen at CALFED, is bromides, and bromides are a subject of debate as to what

effects they have when they're treated: when they're either chlorinated or otherwise disinfected, what kinds of byproducts are produced, and what kinds of effects do those have on people and on animals.

That's sort of a key part of where you take the water out of the Delta, and it's part of the debate on whether you continue to take it out of the south Delta, which you're going to take in much more bromide, or you take it off the Sacramento River through a canal, where you're going to have less. So, bromides is an issue.

Salinity as an Issue in the South Delta

Also, salinity is an issue. Obviously, exporting water out of the south Delta, when you have tidal influence, you're going to have pretty high salt loads. That's being diverted and used, in our case, a lot of it for irrigation. Those salts are building up in that land, and it's something people don't notice and maybe we don't think about enough, but eventually, one of two things is going to have to happen. Those salts are going to have to be flushed out, or you're going to start losing production from irrigation, unless there's some new technology that comes in that we don't now know about. So, salinity in the south Delta and in the exports is a water-quality issue.

Storey: You talked about us being sued because we didn't do the environmental statement. I'm interested in the relationship between Reclamation and Justice, and who makes which kinds of decisions about the policy issues and so on. How does that work, from your perspective?

Working with the Justice Department on Legal Issues

Patterson: You know, I would say it works pretty well. I've had some experience with this, with working with Justice over the years. In Billings, I had two Supreme Court cases going on, on the Arkansas and the Platte, and, of course, did a lot of work with Justice.

The Justice Department out here has been, as it relates to these California issues, very easy and very good to work with. Maybe some of that has to do with the fact that they have an office here in Sacramento, and therefore we know the Justice attorneys fairly well, and our cases tend to get assigned to the same two or three or four attorneys as they come up. And while sometimes the Justice Department will have some broader issue, legal issue, than the one that it may appear that we have, and therefore they'll want to take a different position than maybe we would think this instant case would call for, we've been able to work with them pretty well, and I would say, for the most part, it's not uncommon for the Solicitor's office, the Reclamation people, and the Justice attorneys to sit around the table and hammer through "What are we trying to do? What's our view on where we want to end up?" and then they put the legal case to support it. So I don't have much bad to say about the Justice folks here. I think they've been pretty good.

Storey: So it's a cooperative process?

Patterson: It's been cooperative, yes. It's been cooperative. You know, we do lots of

depositions and things like that. Justice is real good about working with us on depositions and objecting at the right point so we don't hang ourselves out to dry. They look out for us pretty well, so they're pretty good.

Storey: Let's see, you talked about rule-making and public processes that had to be set up. Could you talk more about that?

"If we're not the king of public processes, I don't know who would be. That's not to say that they're all successful, but I think we had right around two hundred public meetings in one year, in this region, on primarily C-V-P-I-A, but also Klamath and other issues. When C-V-P-I-A passed, we knew that we had to have some rules for how we were going to operate, and what we decided to do was issue some interim guidelines . . ."

Patterson: If we're not the king of public processes, I don't know who would be. That's not to say that they're all successful, but I think we had right around two hundred public meetings in one year, in this region, on primarily C-V-P-I-A, but also Klamath and other issues. When C-V-P-I-A passed, we knew that we had to have some rules for how we were going to operate, and what we decided to do was issue some interim guidelines, because we knew that doing rule-making was a long, drawn-out process and would take several years. It always does.

". . . we kind of took it issue by issue, things like refuges, as an example, or restoration fund, as an example. We had a lot of informal discussions with stakeholders, but then generally what Reclamation did is we would take a first shot at sort of guidelines for how we're going to operate that piece, and then we took it on the road . . . take that input and we would reissue a new, revised guideline and we would take it back out for public meetings . . ."

So what we did is we kind of took it issue by issue, things like refuges, as an example, or restoration fund, as an example. We had a lot of informal discussions with stakeholders, but then generally what Reclamation did is we would take a first shot at sort of guidelines for how we're going to operate that piece, and then we took it on the road, and we went out and we had public meetings and we allowed people to come in, and, in workshop situations, offer their views on how the restoration fund collection should work.

We would take that input and we would reissue a new, revised guideline and we would take it back out for public meetings, and we would get written comments and oral comments and do all of those kinds of things, and ultimately end up with, for each of the main sections of the act, we would have some kind of an operating rule. We usually called them interim guidelines, that had been developed pretty extensively with the public and in these public meetings.

". . . Mr. Garamendi, when he came in, given that certain things were still in controversy and probably will be for some time, we entered into a very public stakeholder process to kind of go the next generation on this stuff. . . ."

Those we did for the first, I would say, three years, and then Mr. Garamendi,

when he came in, given that certain things were still in controversy and probably will be for some time, we entered into a very public stakeholder process to kind of go the next generation on this stuff. And so we had public meetings all over the state, large and small, where we would hear from people on what they wanted to see, and we would come out with drafts and refine drafts and etcetera, etcetera.

Issues with the Public Meetings

The public has been frustrated, I think, in a lot of ways, because they've been overloaded with meetings, for one thing. In a lot of cases, certain sectors of them, I think, have felt that while they've offered input, it may not have been heard, or if it was heard, it certainly didn't have as much influence as they would like to have. I mean, I'm a real proponent of the government doing its business in public, but I think there's got to be some rhyme and reason to why you have public meetings and how you're going to use the information you get to get a better product, and we've tried to do that, but I would say I'm not fully satisfied.

A lot of it is, you know, you hear left and you hear right in the same public meeting. Well, obviously, you can't do both, and in a lot of cases we tried to do both. And so you end up with the mushy middle, which maybe doesn't help clarify things in a lot of ways. But it's better to do it in public than in the back room, and we've tried to do that and will continue to try to do that.

Storey: What else should we be talking about, about CALFED and the C-V-P-I-A?

Patterson: Gosh, we've covered a lot of the landscape. The one thing we ***didn't*** talk about on C-V-P-I-A was the effort to amend the law, and that might be worth a little bit, because I think it's linked to this Garamendi process. When the Republicans took control of the Congress in–when was that?

Storey: Let's see. He was elected in '92, so it was in '94.

Patterson: Republicans took control of the Congress in '94.

Storey: Well, '95, technically, they came in.

Efforts to Pass the Central Valley Project Reform Act When Republicans Gained Control of the Congress in 1995

Patterson: Yes. They came in in January of '95. There was a great deal of delight amongst our water users with the possibility then presented to fix the C-V-P-I-A, which they did not like in the first place, and quickly set about drafting the C-V-P-R-A, which was the Central Valley Project Reform Act, which would reform the Improvement Act. Given that several Californians were on the key subcommittee, at least, to deal with that, and Mr. Doolittle was chairman, there was a lot of, I would say, strong sentiment in the Congress, and particularly in the subcommittee and the committee to deal with these, that we should and could fix these problems with C-V-P-I-A.

The Clinton Administration came out very strongly against changes to C-V-P-

I-A and essentially took the position that, "While we will acknowledge there are problems and unresolved issues associated with C-V-P-I-A and its implementation, we believe those can be dealt with administratively, rather than legislatively." And that's what spawned the Garamendi process.

So John Garamendi, who was the deputy secretary, was from California, a former state legislator, insurance commissioner, had been involved in this stuff for a long time, was given the lead by the administration for finding administrative solutions to these C-V-P-I-A issues. John testified in front of Mr. Doolittle's subcommittee several times on the progress we were making, and continued to reinforce the idea that they did ***not*** need to change the law; they needed to allow us to continue to work to find resolution on a lot of these issues, and that is what we were trying to do.

Now, lots of folks in the water user community have concluded that that was simply a scam and a mechanism to stall legislation and not really produce real solutions to some of the issues. I don't think we have resolved all of the issues, but at the same time, for whatever reason, the legislative effort stalled and didn't go anywhere. At one point, Mr. Doolittle said that he was essentially setting on it and seeing what progress was being made by Mr. Garamendi and the Interior Department, and then we would relook at this issue later. And that's where we are right now.

Storey: We're sitting on it.

Patterson: So there was this link to this Garamendi process.

END SIDE 1, TAPE 2. MAY 19, 1998.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2. MAY 19, 1998.

Storey: You mentioned Mr. Doolittle. He's a big proponent of building Auburn. Is there anything real going on there, or is that just him, so far?

Representative John Doolittle and Auburn Dam

Patterson: Well, he is the number-one advocate for Auburn. I mean, there's no question about that, and to him, it is real, and he believes that we need Auburn. I think there are others out there that agree with him. But it's interesting in sort of how it's all playing out.

Construction of Auburn Dam ". . . was not to be a reality . . . now or any time in the near future, and so let's not look to it as being part of the solution when we probably can't get there. So it was taken off the table very early on in the CALFED process. . . ."

For instance, in the CALFED deliberations, we early on made a decision that Auburn was not on the table as something we would consider as being part of the solution. A lot of that had to do with, I think, us collectively concluding we couldn't get it. You know, it was not to be a reality, to bring Auburn on line, now or any time in the near future, and so let's not look to it as being part of the solution when we

probably can't get there. So it was taken off the table very early on in the CALFED process.

Studying the Future Water Needs of Water Users in the American River Basin

The other thing, from Reclamation's standpoint, is when, shortly after I came here, we signed a cost-share agreement with a number of water providers on the American River to do a planning study as to how to meet the future water needs in the American River Basin, and it was generally known that that was the Auburn Dam Study. As it turned out, we ended up with sort of two ways you can meet the needs in this basin for the next thirty years, and one was Auburn, a multipurpose Auburn, but we also found that you could do it through a conjunctive use, enlargement of conveyance facilities, operational kinds of things, and concluded, with little fanfare, that either of these would work, and, frankly, we believed it was a local decision to make and not ours, and are just now finishing up the final EIS and the record of decision accordingly. ***Given*** that that study started out as an Auburn Dam Study and has sort of now very quietly been wrapped up, it's kind of amazing.

Flood Control for Sacramento on the American River

Now Auburn is being discussed ***again*** as it relates to flood control for the Sacramento area, and there's a proposal from the local community that would involve some modifications to Folsom Dam and a fortifying of the downstream levees and actually raising of the levees as the next step they want to see in flood protection for Sacramento.

"Given that those failed [proposal for Auburn Dam as a flood control structure] the previous two times . . . they've concluded that they ought to get as high a protection as they can . . . have decided that fortifying the levees and doing some modifications at Folsom is probably the most likely thing they can get . . ."

Two years ago, they supported a flood control facility. It was Auburn as the solution. Two years before that, they supported a flood control facility at Auburn as the solution. Given that those failed the previous two times, and I think primarily because of that, they've concluded that they ought to get as high a protection as they can and in the locals' view here, it's an organization called Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency, as well as the mayor of Sacramento and the county supervisors, etc., have decided that fortifying the levees and doing some modifications at Folsom is probably the most likely thing they can get at this point.

Difference of Opinion Between Congressman Robert Matsui and Congressman John Doolittle about Flood Control for Sacramento

An interesting debate has broken out though, between them, Mr. Matsui, who is the congressman from Sacramento and is pushing legislation that would do their fix, and Mr. Doolittle, who is saying that that is not the right fix, that raising the levees is, in fact, sort of false protection, if you will, and is not the right way to go, and we need to be looking at Auburn. So it's a great local debate.

Storey: So, who does Doolittle represent?

Patterson: His district is primarily the mountain counties and down into the suburbs of Sacramento.

Storey: So it includes Auburn?

Patterson: Oh, yeah. It includes Auburn, definitely.

Storey: I was under a misunderstanding.

Patterson: Yes, yes. His district includes Auburn and includes Folsom. He's a guy that we deal with a lot because he's local. In fact, I live in his district. Plus, he's Reclamation subcommittee chairman, and so we have occasion to visit with him a lot. I would say, for the most part, his political views are different than the Clinton Administration, which makes it not easy for us sometimes out here.

Storey: Well, let me ask whether you're willing for information on these tapes and the resulting transcripts to be used by researchers.

Patterson: Understanding that researchers may be anyone that asks, yes.

Storey: Thank you.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. MAY 19, 1998.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 1. MAY 21, 1998.

Storey: This is Brit Allan Storey, senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Roger Patterson, regional director of the Bureau of Reclamation's Mid-Pacific Office, in his offices in Sacramento, California, on May the 21st, 1998, at about nine o'clock in the morning. This is tape one.

Yesterday you asked me whether I was asking about CALFED or C-V-P-I-A.

Patterson: Oh, yeah.

Storey: So I guess really I'd like for you to talk about where they're similar and where they diverge from one another.

CVPIA, CVP, and CALFED

Patterson: That's a question a lot of people out here have been asking, and I'm not even sure it's all that definitive, even with me. C-V-P-I-A is related specifically to the Central Valley Project; it's the Central Valley Project Improvement Act. So, therefore, a lot of the specifics of it, you know, R-C-V-P-only kinds of issues, for instance, the whole section on how we're going to handle contracting, those are for C-V-P contracts and, thus, are not very related to CALFED. A lot of the projects that were authorized, such as the Shasta temperature control device and Contra Costa fish screen are C-V-P-only.

". . . the Anadromous Fish Screen Program that's authorized to the C-V-P-I-A is complementary of one of the objectives in CALFED . . ."

However, other parts of the C-V-P-I-A, I think, are very compatible and really have the same objectives as CALFED. For instance, the Anadromous Fish Screen Program that's authorized to the C-V-P-I-A is complementary of one of the objectives in CALFED, which is to provide fish screening. So, those overlap. Therefore, what we've tried to do is set the same priority for projects that come in so that we're jointly funding them from C-V-P-I-A and CALFED. We're working basically off the same priority list.

". . . CALFED and C-V-P-I-A are looking to provide more water for fisheries. . . ."

Another area that is pretty common is in the water acquisition area. Both CALFED and C-V-P-I-A are looking to provide more water for fisheries. So, therefore, even at this early stage, in CALFED there's money been earmarked "buy water for fish," and C-V-P-I-A has what's called 3406.b.3, but it's a specific authorization to buy water for fish. So, those overlap.

". . . certain things are C-V-P-I-A-only, but a number of them overlap CALFED. . . . it's those areas that come together that we need to make sure that were integrated with CALFED, getting the most bang for the buck, so to speak. . . ."

I think what you have is certain things are C-V-P-I-A-only, but a number of them overlap CALFED. So these things essentially come together in the middle, and it's those areas that come together that we need to make sure that were integrated with CALFED, getting the most bang for the buck, so to speak.

Storey: C-V-P-I-A is strictly a Reclamation responsibility?

CVPIA Is Reclamation Law, but it Does Direct Activities by the Fish and Wildlife Service Also

Patterson: It's Reclamation law. Certain provisions in there, though, give responsibilities to the secretary of interior and, in some cases, specifically mention the role of the Fish and Wildlife Service. So, sort of from day one, what we agreed to do between Reclamation and Fish and Wildlife is to work it together. We would seek one source of funding that comes through the Bureau of Reclamation's budget. We would formulate that, though, in partnership so that Fish and Wildlife would be part of putting the program together. Certain parts of it, they're the lead, such as the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program. Fish and Wildlife is the lead, deciding how to dedicate the 800,000 acre-feet for fish. They're the lead on that. Other parts, such as water transfers, contracting, fish screen program, those kinds of things, the Bureau's the lead. So while it has had some struggles, I think we've done a pretty good job of trying to implement to act in a coordinated way, which is what the constituents out there, I think, deserve from us.

Storey: One of the things that's on my list to talk about is the Truckee-Carson system, the Newlands Project, and so on. That continues to be an ongoing issue.

Newlands Project Issues

Patterson: Well, it does, and it probably will be far into the future. After I'm long gone, I'm sure the issues will still be percolating over there in Nevada. I don't style myself as much of an expert on the Truckee-Carson issues. That has been managed in a very different way, I guess, in my view, from a lot of the Reclamation programs, and only recently are we seeing some changes. What I mean by that is at least for the last several years, decade or so, the real focal point on Truckee-Carson has been out of the Department [of Interior] in Washington. That's where a lot of the policy direction was coming from and even a lot of the day-to-day decisionmaking was residing in the Department, primarily because when Public Law 101-618[40] was passed, it was a comprehensive law and involved more than just the Bureau of Reclamation and Interior, and I think at the time they wanted to have sort of one place where everything was coming together under that law. So they asked Bill [William] Bettenburg back in Washington to fill that coordination role.

Reclamation Brought in Don Glaser, from Outside Reclamation, to Look at Reclamation's Issues with the Newlands Project

I guess about a year ago, we decided to hire somebody from the outside to come take a look at how we were running issues, managing the situation in Nevada, and we hired Don Glaser to do that. Don, as you know, is a former Reclamation person. We went to him for one reason: he was heading up the commission, Western Water Policy Review [Advisory] Commission or whatever it was called, and they had spent some time looking at Truckee-Carson. So I talked to the assistant secretary, Patty Benecke, and suggested that maybe, given that Don and his commission had done some background work on Truckee-Carson, he would be a good person for us to ask to give the Department some outside view and recommendations on maybe how we could have things work better.

Glaser Proposed Newlands Project Issues Be Managed Within the Line Organization of Reclamation Rather than out of the Secretary of the Interior's Staff

So Don did that. Don basically came back and he said while there has been some value it probably was a good decision early on when we got the new legislation to have it set up the way it was, that it was time to structure the management over there more back in the line organization. So his suggestion was that the decisionmaking in Reclamation be from the area manager to the regional director to the commissioner to the assistant secretary and that the other agencies likewise go through the line organization but that we have an interagency management team set up at both the field level, which would be our area manager level, and at the regional level, which is regional directors. That would meet periodically to make sure that the decisions were being made in a coordinated way.

40. Public Law 101-618, sponsored by Nevada Senator Harry Reid, passed Congress in 1990 and was signed by President George H. W. Bush. It contained two main sections: Title I–Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribal Settlement Act, and Title II–Truckee-Carson-Pyramid Lake Water Rights Settlement Act. Senator Reid has been interviewed by the Newlands Project Series oral history program.

Transitioning to Control in the Line Organization Means He must Now Start Investing Time in Work on the Newlands Project

So we're in the middle of that transition right now on the Federal side to more a line organization but do it in a coordinated way, and I think that's going to be good. The one thing it does for me, though, now, it means I've got to start paying attention to those issues, where before I figured if I wasn't the person accountable for the decisions, I really had a lot going on, and so therefore I wasn't going to invest a lot of time in Truckee-Carson. Well, now I'm clearly in the decisionmaking line, and so therefore I'm spending more time on it.

I'm going over there next week. There's been litigation beyond compare, I think, on that project over the years, and some of it is still active and has gone on for a long time, and we are in–we call it "global negotiations." It's not quite that large, but a number of the court cases we're negotiating between the United States and the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District and the state of Nevada right now. Those are going to produce results or not. We're meeting somewhere between two weeks and a month in negotiation sessions. So I've started to participate in that. Fascinating issues. A lot of great history there and a lot of great personalities there. They migrate to these kinds of issues, and a lot of those folks have been there for a long, long time working on the same issues.

Storey: So we're moving it away from Interior back to Reclamation now? Is that what I'm hearing?

Patterson: Yeah. I would say each of the agencies is now going to be making the decisions that they're responsible for, but doing it in this coordination kind of a mechanism, rather than having decisions made in Washington and then we sort of implement the decisions. So there will be a transition we go through before we get, probably, to where we want to be there.

". . . I think it is significant that we're viewing this different now as to how decisions will be made than it has been in the past. . . ."

To folks on the outside it's probably not a big deal. It's just the way bureaucracy–and all this kind of stuff. But I think it is significant that we're viewing this different now as to how decisions will be made than it has been in the past.

Storey: That project sort of has a reputation for chewing up project managers.

Project Managers Tended Not to Last Long on the Newlands Project

Patterson: It certainly does, and it has in the past. Frankly, I think part of that dynamic had to do with the structure that we've had for decisionmaking. We've had a lot of very good folks go through there, and the tenure has not been very long before either they decided or somebody decided for them it was time to move on. When I say we've

had a lot of good folks, I mean Frank Dimick[41] was over there for a while as the project manager, and then he went to Washington, and he ended up here as one of my assistants. Ann Ball was in the job a couple of years. She took an IPA with the University of Nevada at Reno. Ed Solbus was over there for two or three years, and he's the regional engineer.

"So, yeah, it's a very tough job, and I think it was made more difficult by maybe the way we were managing things on the Federal side. . . ."

So, yeah, it's a very tough job, and I think it was made more difficult by maybe the way we were managing things on the Federal side.

Of course, it's a very political job. Senator [Harry] Reid personally was responsible in a lot of ways for getting Public Law 101-618 passed and was very interested in how it was being implemented.

So, yeah, it's a hard job. I'm not sure it's what I would want.

Storey: You have a new project manager now.

Betsy Rieke Is the New Area Manager

Patterson: Yes. We really hit the jackpot, I think. One of the recommendations that came out of the Glaser Report was to go out and try to recruit a strong area manager to come into the job that would be consistent with the way we were now saying we want to make decisions. So we advertised this thing inside and outside of government, and for some reason, Betsy Rieke,[42] who was our former assistant secretary, got interested in the job. I think ***part*** of the reason she was interested was when she was assistant secretary she worked on these issues, sort of at the tail end of her tenure, and didn't get things resolved to her satisfaction. I think that's always kind of lingered in the back of Betsy's mind, that there was some undone business there in a way. As we started searching for area manager and she said she might be interested, our eyes obviously really lit up at the possibility. As it turned out, she applied, and we've selected her, and she's a Bureau of Reclamation career person now, which is a little different, to have an area manager that was a former assistant secretary.

". . . if you know . . . what motivates Betsy, it's not position; it is the ability and the opportunity to solve the kinds of issues we work on, and she likes working on them at the ground level. . . ."

But if you know Betsy and what motivates Betsy, it's not position; it is the ability and the opportunity to solve the kinds of issues we work on, and she likes working on them at the ground level. Even when she was assistant secretary, she spent her time out working on issues like Bay-Delta with us in the field, and that's what gets her juices flowing, and I think that's what is pushing her back into this thing in Nevada.

41. Interviews with Frank Dimick are included in Reclamation's oral history program.
42. An interview with Betsy Rieke on the Newlands Project is included in the Reclamation oral history program.

So, we're delighted.

Storey: I don't know whether you'll know this. I'm interested in the way the civil service rules work on this.

Patterson: There's a name for it, as far as recruitment, and we've used it several times, where you advertise a job both inside the normal–you know, the normal stuff that we see–advertise it through the department and the Bureau of Reclamation's normal system, and then you also put a separate advertisement together, at the same time, that goes to the outside world and lets people compete even if they have had no previous Federal service. There are lots of rules that come into that. Veterans' preference is a very big issue on that, I know, etcetera, etcetera. But we've used it several times, particularly in hard-to-recruit-for jobs, to find folks from the outside. We went twice internal to the organization. We advertised the job twice and really didn't get what we thought the right person was. Then we said, well, let's go on the outside, and we did, and then that's when Betsy got interested in it. In fact, we've got two other jobs in the region now I think we're advertising the same way, inside and outside.

Storey: Yes. I was more wondering, she was formerly SES [Senior Executive Service].

Patterson: I don't know that she was. I think she was not SES. I think she was Executive Service, probably.

Storey: Oh, that's different?

Patterson: Which is different. Right.

Storey: I wondered if that gave her any status in terms of forcing salary levels or anything like that.

Patterson: No, I don't think it helped her at all. I mean, obviously, the ***work*** she did while assistant secretary was ideal on an application. That helped her a lot. Plus she had been the director of the Department of Water Resources for the State of Arizona, which was exceptionally good experience. But her former status as a Fed or as an appointee, I don't think she got any points for that. She was kind of competing just like anybody else. I know our personnel office said that they had a guy that thought he was extremely qualified because he was running a car wash and that had to do with water and had to do with customers and those kinds of things. (laughter) So she was competing with–you know, it was ***wide*** open.

Storey: (laughter) Yeah, I guess so. One of the things I'm interested in here in Sacramento, you have the–I believe it's the California Water Foundation, with Rita Sudman as its executive.

Water Education Foundation and Rita Sudman

Patterson: Yes, Water Education Foundation, or something like that.

Storey: How does Reclamation relate to that?

Patterson: Probably like a lot of the other water folks in California. We occasionally provide money to support some of the work that they do. We participate in a lot of the forums the foundation puts on. For instance, they do an annual reporters' briefing, those kinds of things, and we usually participate in the program from that standpoint. They do tours. They do wonderful tours of different parts of California–Bay-Delta, the Sac Valley, etcetera, and we support those by providing narrators, folks that ride on the bus and explain to people some of what's going on. So, it's good. They're a real resource to the water business out here. We try to support them where we can.

Storey: Do they see their job as reaching out to the public or to the water users or as a bridge, or how does that work, do you think?

". . . they work really hard to get water issues in front of a broader public. . . ."

Patterson: I think they see it as education and information. I don't think they see it to the waters users, because that's sort of talking to people that already understand the issues. But they work really hard to get water issues in front of a broader public. They work a lot with public education television. For instance, in Nevada they recently completed a piece of work that is on public education television in Nevada. They're doing on now on Bay-Delta, and they're thinking about doing something on Klamath.

Rita Sudman, who heads that up, she's a former reporter and has a lot of contacts in that area. And they've helped CALFED some, too. But I think they view it more as trying to get water education out there with a different group of people.

Storey: Does Reclamation support them with money in any way?

Patterson: We do. Depending on what project they're working on, we may provide grants to them. Not large. We certainly don't provide even the majority of the funding they use on any given project. Like the state of California, other Federal agencies, EPA, Fish and Wildlife, and others will contribute monetarily to some of the work that they do.

Storey: You mentioned conjunctive use yesterday. I guess my understanding of conjunctive use is it's a combination of using surface water and groundwater.

Patterson: Right.

Storey: And you can store water in the ground and things like that. Do we have a lot of projects in this region that involve conjunctive use?

". . . we probably have the biggest project that I know of that I would call a conjunctive use project, and it's the Friant Division of the C-V-P. . . ."

Patterson: You know, I think we probably have the biggest project that I know of that I would call a conjunctive use project, and it's the Friant Division of the C-V-P.

". . . essentially what it does is capture water on the San Joaquin when it's available, use it for irrigation with a good deal of that percolating into the local

groundwater, and in years when there's not much water available . . . quite frequently, then the farmers . . . turn on wells and pump groundwater, a lot of which came from recharge from previous years. . . ."

When you think about it now, it's sort of the "in" thing to talk about conjunctive use and groundwater banking, but when you think about the Friant Division and the foresight that was shown back in the 1930s by Reclamation and others to develop this project, which essentially what it does is capture water on the San Joaquin when it's available, use it for irrigation with a good deal of that percolating into the local groundwater, and in years when there's not much water available on the San Joaquin, which is quite frequently, then the farmers in that area turn on wells and pump groundwater, a lot of which came from recharge from previous years.

"You're getting recharge from irrigation applied to the fields, the orchards, etc., but a lot of the districts have spreading basins interspersed, and so they will divert water into those, and it essentially just sinks into the ground, and it's then available in the groundwater. . . ."

Now the districts in that area are actually developing spreading basins. You're getting recharge from irrigation applied to the fields, the orchards, etc., but a lot of the districts have spreading basins interspersed, and so they will divert water into those, and it essentially just sinks into the ground, and it's then available in the groundwater. It's really a unique project from that standpoint, in that that's the way it works.

"The *storage* on the San Joaquin that we built is really pretty small, so, therefore, the annual fluctuation is great. . . ."

The ***storage*** on the San Joaquin that we built is really pretty small, so, therefore, the annual fluctuation is great. And that's the way they make it up. If it's there in the river, use it and get as much recharge as you can. If it's not in the river, they turn the wells on and pump it. So that was a lot of foresight shown by folks at the time.

That's still being talked about a lot here, and now people are more into what they call "groundwater banking," and essentially what that is, I would describe it as an underground reservoir, where you'll divert water from a river delivered out of a reservoir, out of a canal, and basically sink it into the ground, put it in these big spreading basins and sink it into the ground in a certain area that you've done enough geology work that you know it's going to still be there, it's not going to just run out underground, sink it in either by spreading basins or, in some cases, injection wells where you actually put it in down through the wells, and you bank it. You store it. Then when you need that water in a dry year, you turn on wells that are spread out on the property, pump the wells, put it in a common pipeline or a canal, take it out, and make deliveries. So it's basically an underground reservoir. Some of them are pretty big.

"This Madera Ranch Project I mentioned the other day is 400,000 acre-feet of underground storage, and we'd have the capability to pull out, annually, about

100,000 acre-feet. . . ."

This Madera Ranch Project I mentioned the other day is 400,000 acre-feet of underground storage, and we'd have the capability to pull out, annually, about 100,000 acre-feet. So it's a pretty good-size project.

Storey: Well, not understanding this, it sounds pretty complex to me.

Patterson: It's pretty complex.

Storey: People can stick their straw into your water. (laughter) Your water could flow away. I don't know.

Managing Water Stored Underground

Patterson: They are complicated, and there are several of them around. Metropolitan's built a couple of them in southern California. There's some in northern California. I think what a lot of them have done is get the neighbor landowners together and have kind of an advisory committee. A lot of data is collected so that you're sort of policing the situation, you're monitoring them. Because you can't see it, and, therefore, you're either inclined to ignore it or imagine the worst. So you've got to have some rules, which means you probably need a groundwater management plan that's been developed under state law so that there are some rules that apply so that you don't put your water in and find out somebody else had their straw in the milkshake and took it out.

So, you're right. I mean, they are complicated, ***but*** they have ***advantages*** in that a lot of the normal environmental impacts you would associate with a new reservoir, above-ground reservoir, are not there. There's not on-stream kinds of issues. You don't have the fisheries issues therefore involved. But they're expensive because you're pumping the water. In some cases you're pumping it in and you're pumping it out. So, yes, it's a whole new deal, but it's one that is being looked at pretty favorably in a lot of areas, particularly in the CALFED area.

Storey: Interesting. Are we still having problems with subsidence?

Subsidence in the Region

Patterson: I would say, yes, we are–more isolated than it's been in the past. I'm not an expert on this, but if you talk to Chuck Howard, who is our regional geologist, and folks like that, there are areas down in the San Joaquin Valley that subsided big time in the past; I mean thirty, forty feet. Chuck's got a picture of a telephone pole that's subsided almost the full length of the pole. In fact, in the San Jose area, over in the Santa Clara Valley, I think downtown San Jose has subsided. That area has subsided somewhere between ten and twenty feet. Eighteen feet comes to mind. When we put in the San Felipe unit, that essentially stopped, and I think there's been less than a foot of subsidence over the last twenty years or something. But there are areas in the San Joaquin Valley. I know some of the exchange contractors, canals, they have told me, have subsided maybe a foot or so, where they have to keep building the banks up.

You know, the concern back when, and a lot of the reason the C-V-P was built, was to bring in replacement water so they could not pump as aggressively in the groundwater, which was causing subsidence. And if it gets to be too much, then the aquifer will collapse to the point you can't recharge it. That was the concern. I think that's happened in a few areas, but, by and large, you know, the aquifer is still rechargeable, but it doesn't bring the land back up. So we have areas of the canal, you'll look at it and you'll go, "Gee, that bank looks kind of tall." Well, that's because the canal has subsided, and if you don't build the bank up, water's going to start running out in the wrong spots.

Storey: I'm always interested people, ***some people*** get upset when you say Reclamation's mission is water management now, and they say, "What's water management?" I say to myself, "Isn't that what Reclamation's been doing all along?"

"What really kind of rankles me is this whole discussion of we've changed our mission, which I've never been one to subscribe to that. We've changed the way we carry out our mission maybe in some ways. It's the same thing. What we've done *forever* is basically manage water, and the first step in that is you've got to have some way to control it so you build the dams and the canals and whatever. . . ."

Patterson: That's sort of my view. What really kind of rankles me is this whole discussion of we've changed our mission, which I've never been one to subscribe to that. We've changed the way we carry out our mission maybe in some ways. It's the same thing. What we've done ***forever*** is basically manage water, and the first step in that is you've got to have some way to control it so you build the dams and the canals and whatever. Yes, I guess I'm sort of a little bit in that same camp, that's what we've always done and that's what we've doing now. We're doing it differently now and maybe having different pressures from different areas, more so than we have in the past, but that's what it's all about. So I don't think we've changed our mission. I think we're still doing the same thing we always did; we're just doing it different.

Storey: One of the things you have in water management is flood control, and that's been a significant issue in this region, I believe, in the last five-, ten years. Well, since you've become regional director. What kinds of issues come up for you and for Reclamation because of the flooding?

Flood Control in Mid-Pacific Region

Patterson: Flood control is a ***lot*** different than all the other stuff we do. I mean, it's a big deal. When you really think about it, you've got a lot riding on our ability to do the right thing and make the right decisions in flooding. Those decisions sometimes have to be made on a very short time frame, which, in a way, I really like, because a lot of what we do, we worry ourselves to death, and we review and we consult and we do all of these things which are probably the right things, but it takes forever. When you're in a flood-fight situation, you have to make decisions in a very short time, and you see the result of your decision real quick. It's not one you have to wait for a long time. And there's a lot riding on it–property lines, etcetera. So it is a lot different in many ways than what we do.

"The floods we had in . . . January '97, were some of the biggest that had ever hit this area, and Reclamation, I think, did a great job. . . ."

The floods we had in January a year ago, January '97, were some of the biggest that had ever hit this area, and Reclamation, I think, did a great job. I think Lowell Plass and our people that operate the C-V-P did a wonderful job of operating our facilities. Sometimes you have to get a little bit lucky, and maybe we did in some cases, that the predicted floods actually came in just a little bit less, but it was just enough that it made our decisions really work out.

We're a ***lot more*** sophisticated in this area than we used to be. The whole availability of information has just improved. When I started for the Bureau back in 1974, this was part of my job, and I didn't have any information at the time. I'd talk to the Corps of Engineers, and we'd sort of guess at what we needed to do. Well, ***now*** we have this Joint Operation Center that I think you had a chance to look at, that is an operation center where the Central Valley Project operators and the state water project operators set nearly side by side and they operate facilities. We have a Flood Center there that when we get into flood situations, it goes on twenty-four-hour operation. So the Bureau people, the National Weather Service people, the Corps of Engineers, the Department of Water Resources, and local agencies, they're all sitting around . . .

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Storey: So you have all of these people together.

"It's a Flood Center that is located at the Joint Operations Center. . . ."

Patterson: Yeah. It's a Flood Center that is located at the Joint Operations Center. When we get into a flood situation, we put this into twenty-four-hour operation. We have all the agency folks setting around the table from the Bureau and the Corps and the Department of Water Resources and National Weather Service, local agencies. The state has a state hydrologist and a state meteorologist, and piped into this room is satellite data. The state meteorologist makes predictions several times a day on what's going to occur.

In '97 it was amazing. It was probably four or five days–actually, it was more than that. It was probably close to a week before the storm started to hit that he started making projections, and there's one I recall, that he was predicting that we were going to get like twenty-eight-point-some inches of rain in the Feather River Basin over this course of time, and, of course, that's more water than anyone would want to see. It was about four days later and it hadn't started raining, and he was starting to take a little grief from people. "Gee, Bill, what's the problem? It hasn't started raining. Where's our twenty-eight inches of stuff?" And even the *Sacramento Bee* was going, "Well, maybe there was a little bit of a cry of 'wolf' here." Ten days later, when all was said and done, that basin had accumulated twenty-eight-point-some inches of rain. It was like a half inch off. I think Bill got a

little bit lucky, but he also had to be a little bit good. And ***that's*** information that we would not have had in the past.

"As you get within twenty-four hours, those [weather] predictions become very accurate. . . ."

As you get within twenty-four hours, those predictions become very accurate. And then through modeling you can take predicted rainfall and out of it generate predicted inflow to our reservoirs. By ***knowing*** what kind of inflow we're going to get in the reservoirs, you can start making decisions on what the releases ought to be downstream. It's just remarkable how that's worked. Having worked in this stuff for a long time, I'm just baffled that you can go over there and look on a large screen in the Flood Center, and they'll have it divided in fours where they're watching the local TV stations, they've got National Weather Service satellite in one quadrant, and you can have stream levels from a certain part of the state showing up in another. I mean, the technology is just fantastic.

Of course, the public's always interested in what's going on in floods, and there's a little media room, and it's wired so that the television cameras can plug into the wall, and it's wired so it goes straight out to their satellite trucks out in front of the building. They thought of a lot of this stuff when they put it together.

But, it's a pretty rewarding situation when it works out like it did then. In fact, we got an editorial in the *Sacramento Bee* during the '97 flood fight where Bill Carl, who has not always been much of a fan of Reclamation, actually singled out the Bureau operators and engineers for doing a good job, singled us out, and that sort of kept folks going, because they'd been working twenty-four hours a day, and it was, "Gee, we even got some acknowledgment here. We knew we were doing good, but the *Sacramento Bee* even said we were doing good." So that's kind of neat.

Storey: Yet I can imagine that when we do have flood situations and we decide we're going to release water from a reservoir, there are going to be people who say, "Wait a minute. That's ***my*** water going down the river."

Patterson: Yep. That's always the tension. We've seen it forever, I guess. You've got to err on protecting life and property downstream. I mean, you really do. If you're going to lean, you've got to lean in that direction. Now, sometimes as we get towards the tail end of the flood and the data is showing us it's going to quit raining and the inflows are going to drop, then there's an inclination to try to cheat a little bit and capture some of that, because you know it's over. We've done that before, try to catch it and bring it right back up to the bottom of the flood pool and make sure that you haven't released any water that you shouldn't have. But that's another advantage of the kind of information we get now, is you can sort of pass the flood, make those early decisions in the interest of fighting the flood, and then as you get to the end, you can say, okay, now, how much is coming in, and can we capture that and bring the reservoir right back up to full? And the data's good enough you can do that without taking as much risk as going, "Gee, I want to have the reservoir full, but I'm not ***sure*** what the next storm coming in is like." So another area where this technology and information makes the job easier, if you can say that.

Storey: Don't I remember that you worked on computer modeling of river operations?

Patterson: Yeah. Well, I did. I was terrible at it, but it was an assignment that I had. When I first started with the Bureau, I was in that area, helped work on some models, and it wasn't my forte. I worked on these computerized operations systems, which I did kind of enjoy that part of. Of course, they're so much advanced now from the kind of stuff that I worked on. But, yeah, having worked on that primitive stuff then, you know, when you program by–it was either a one or a zero, and some of the stuff they do now, it's truly amazing, the kinds of tools that we have.

Storey: Can you characterize how advanced that has become now in comparison to when you were working on it?

Patterson: Oh, it's just night and day. It is night and day. I mean, the availability of information and how quick things can be turned around. I remember in January '97, I'd want to go down at least once a day down to the Flood Center and see what's going on, but I couldn't resist in between time. So rather than call our folks and take up their time when they were supposed to be taking care of business, I'd get on the Internet from my house at home, and I'd access our home page, and I could tell. The oldest data would be two hours old. I could tell what was going on in any reservoir, in any stream, basically, that we were concerned with. It was incredible. And just little simple things like we try to keep other people informed, and so you would update your operation, and you'd want to, say, fax it out to twenty different agencies. Well, you'd get it, you'd print it off. Even five years ago, you'd print it off, and you'd go to the fax machine and you'd fax it twenty times to different people. Now our operators have fax modems on their PCs, and so they just bring it up, hit the button once, and they go on to what they need to be doing, and this thing gets faxed out to people. I mean, it's incredible. I'd like to do that again, I think. It looks like it's more fun now.

Storey: Well, you mentioned that this wasn't your forte, your strength. What is your strength? What was your strength?

"I get along with most people fairly well, I think, and . . . I've always been able to . . . pick good people. . . ."

Patterson: Oh, I don't know. I get along with most people fairly well, I think, and one thing I've always been able to do–I think I've been lucky–is being able to pick good people. I really think that's something that I've–I know I've been able to do it, and I'm not sure why, but ***that***, to me, has been the secret.

". . . the last few jobs I've had, the top priority has been to try to get the right people in the right slots, because when you do that, then your job becomes easy, really becomes easy . . ."

I know the last few jobs I've had, the top priority has been to try to get the right people in the right slots, because when you do that, then your job becomes easy, really becomes easy, if you have the right area managers and division chiefs and the right deputy regional director or assistant regional directors. I've been really lucky at

being able to do that.

I think having moved around Reclamation quite a bit, I've gotten to know a lot of the people in Reclamation, and, therefore, when I'm looking for somebody to fill a key job, I know a lot of people, and I don't just send a vacancy out and hope people apply. I do a little recruiting here and there.

"When I worked in Denver, I used to recruit for the ER Center, go out to colleges and whatnot. . . ."

In fact, I used to be a recruiter. When I worked in Denver, I used to recruit for the ER Center, go out to colleges and whatnot. I mean, I was looking out for the ER Center, but I worked in Lower Missouri Region, so I had a little self-interest there because if we hired eleven people, they would get ten, and I would get the best one, convince them to come over to the region and go to work. So if I've had any success, I think it's been because of being able to get good folks.

Storey: What are you looking for?

Patterson: In people?

Storey: Yeah. What makes good folks? What makes one better than the other?

What to Look for in Hiring People

Patterson: That's a good question. It's not only technical capability. I mean, you have to have technical capability, but ***lots*** of folks have that. It's another dimension. It's people that are good communicators, that are principled and honest people, but not biased. You know, they're folks that can listen to lots of different perspectives and then kind of come down in the right spot and be able to convince people that maybe wouldn't have liked that decision that once you hear the whole story, this is kind of where we need to go, and being able to do that. And folks that other people like to work for, because those folks, area managers, it's one thing to have these skills, but if they have a hundred people working for them and they aren't the kind of people that other people like to work for, then they're not going to be successful. So it's not very specific, but it's finding people that sort of have those qualities. You know, there are good bosses and bad bosses, and I want them to, one, be a good boss so their people are producing for them, and then be people that work collaboratively, because you can make brilliant decisions, but if you haven't sold people on it, then they're not going to go down very well.

Storey: Interesting. At what point do you think that the kinds of skills you've been talking about become more important than the technical skills? What level in the organization?

Patterson: Probably at a very low level, actually. In some ways, there's sort of a break between our generally GS-12, or sort of our journeyman technical type folks and then the 13s,

for the most part, are your entry-level supervisor types. At least in the regional offices, that's sort of the way it is. I used to think that that was sort of the break point that you needed, sort of converted from being a technical person to a supervisor-manager at that point, and I think that's partly true. But I've watched some of our people that are 11s and 12s, that you would think their jobs are really technical, and they ***are***, but the ones that I think really do a good job have these other skills. I've seen it in people. And when you sort of ask them to step up and take on some broader responsibilities, the ones that are really good at that have the skills to be able to team work, all of those kind of buzzword kind of jobs.

So I think it's pretty low. I think people that are successful in the organization have those skills before they get into positions where you would think that's what they need.

Storey: You have talked about various issues that relate to endangered species as we've talked this week. Could you sort of characterize this region and endangered species for me?

". . . I always say I didn't go to school to become an engineer to deal with fish every day . . ."

Patterson: Well, I always say I didn't go to school to become an engineer to deal with fish every day, but I've complained to Fish and Wildlife Service that that's all I do and it's their fault. (laughter) It actually seems that way. We have, unfortunately, I think, endangered species concerns in at least the operational aspect of every one of our projects. I can't think of one where it's not part of the equation when you make a decision. In Nevada we've got listed species, the cui-ui and the Lahontan cutthroat trout in the river that are affected by the operation of our project. On Klamath we've got endangered fish in the lake and also downstream in the river. On the C-V-P we have, obviously, species listed in the Delta and the salmon and whatever. So every one of the projects that we have, it seems that those are an issue.

Development of Biological Assessments and Biological Opinions

It's something we take pretty seriously, and I think we have developed a good working relationship with the fishery agencies. National Marine Fishery Service are the guys that have responsibility for salmon, and Fish and Wildlife Service has basically the other species that we deal with. And the way we ***don't*** do it is follow the regulations by saying, write a biological assessment, give it to the Service, and they give you a biological opinion, and then we do what they say. Those products are produced, but we get together early on, and we jointly prepare the biological assessment, rather than just the Bureau doing it. And we always have an opportunity to review and comment and help with the biological opinion so that we get something that's going to work.

One thing that I've struggled with–and we don't look at endangered species issues the same throughout Reclamation, and I used to have in mind that that's a bad deal, we should basically be treating all these the same. John Keys, who I like a lot and is about ready to retire in Boise, is the regional director, he and I have debated

this for a long time. At one time John was sort of in the camp of "If we just could get some money, we can buy our way out of these endangered species issues by going out and buying water," and I was more in the camp of, "Look, if Reclamation project contributed to the demise of these species, if you will, then those projects have some responsibility, and nobody ought to get any money. We just need to do the right thing." John and I are probably both wrong here. I don't know. But I'm sort of moving more towards, "Yeah, we've got to be responsible with our operation, but if at the same time we can get a little money to come in and get to the end point quicker, maybe we're all better off." So it's not near as clear to me as it used to be on some of these things. Because we basically operated the C-V-P, we would get what was required to protect endangered species, and that's the way we would operate, and there was no compensation to anybody. That's basically the way it still is.

On Klamath, while we're operating to protect the species, we're also trying to get money to try to buy water, develop habitat, develop new water that's going to help work our way out of this thing. So it's a big deal. In this region it's at the top of the list.

Storey: What are some of the other big deals for this region?

". . . it takes money to run a region . . . and we've spent a lot of time in trying to diversify the budget for the region by getting some of our stuff off-line . . . our power customers . . . fund directly to Reclamation without going through Congress and getting appropriations . . ."

Patterson: Well, it takes money to run a region, and it's something I spend a lot of time personally on, making sure that we have a solid budget, and we've spent a lot of time in trying to diversify the budget for the region by getting some of our stuff off-line, so to speak. So we've negotiated a deal with our power customers so they will be able to fund directly to Reclamation without going through Congress and getting appropriations, the work we do in the power field, very much like John Keys has done with Bonneville up in the Pacific Northwest.

"We have transferred the funding responsibility for a lot of the canals and other conveyance to the water users so that they can fund that directly. . . ."

We have transferred the funding responsibility for a lot of the canals and other conveyance to the water users so that they can fund that directly. So I spend a lot of time on the budget, and depending on how you count CALFED, we spend $300 million a year, which seems like a lot of money, but it seems like we always have people that could use more. So keeping the money to do that is a big deal in these ***tight*** times for appropriations.

[We] "Put quite a bit of energy, I think, all of us do, into maintaining relationships with the other agencies and with our constituents, including the Congress. . . ."

Put quite a bit of energy, I think, all of us do, into maintaining relationships with the other agencies and with our constituents, including the Congress. That's something significant. Administrations come and go, and members of Congress

come and go, but Congress is always there, and a lot of the appropriators are there for a long time and the Appropriations Committee staff is there for a long time. So we try to work with them so they understand our program.

Storey: What kind of contacts do you have that way?

Patterson: They vary. I mean, I probably should say that our contacts all go through the Washington office and follow the appropriate protocol. That wouldn't quite be the whole story. We have contacts frequently directly between us out here and staff on authorizing and appropriations committees and the various members, and I have fairly frequent contact with some of the members directly. They call me or I'll talk to them. So we have the normal relationship going through our legislative affairs types, but we also have contacts that we've made over the years that we maintain. If any member wants information, we provide it to them. It's something you have to have.

Storey: One of the things with the Congress, I gather, is this–they call it "off-line funding for power."

Patterson: Yeah.

Storey: It concerns some of them because they no longer have control of it.

Congressional Concerns about Off-budget Funding

Patterson: That's been a little bit of a problem. Mr. Doolittle, who's our subcommittee chairman, he wasn't sure he thought this was a good idea, to have off-budget funding, if you will, because, you're right, they lose some control by doing that. I think they need to look at, okay, well, what's the alternative? If they want to appropriate the dollars, we recover 100 percent of it from the customers anyway, and how much control are they really having versus what they will have if you take it off-budget? Because then we will fully report to them how much money we're receiving from the customers and what we do with it. That will be part of our annual reports. And I think they tolerated it going this way because it does give them a little bit more flexibility when it comes appropriation time. You know, we've probably taken $100 million off-line in Reclamation easily. Well, that's $100 million that the appropriators now have to spend on other things. So, yeah, there's been some reluctance.

I think the other thing, in Mr. Doolittle's case, he was pretty big on selling off and privatizing a lot of these Reclamation facilities, and he saw the funding coming directly from particularly the power customers as sort of giving them a vested interest in the project and somehow that could get in the way of selling it off. We've shared with him and others back in Congress the arrangements we made on things like the rewinds up at Shasta, where the customers are putting up about twenty million bucks to do the work, and essentially if for some reason it would move from United States to private ownership as simply a financial transaction, that those customers that put money in would be paid off by the ones coming in and settle up the books. So in reality, it doesn't get in the way of anything he would want to do along those lines, but it has some appearance, I think, of that. I think we've worked through it,

although it is still there sort of on a low simmer.

Storey: Where are we on this now, on the issue of privatization?

Privatization Issues

Patterson: Well, I don't know. I saw something on e-mail this morning that there's some language being kicked around again on selling off the power marketing agencies, including transmission, and it sounded like generation facilities. Of course, that's been on the list for a long time, not only with the Clinton Administration, but going back to the [Ronald] Reagan Administration, there were lots of ideas there.

I think it's not as high a profile issue as it was a few years ago. Reclamation put this policy together that said–and I think rightfully so–that we own some facilities that would be better if we did not own them, that good government would say that they ought to be owned by somebody other than the Bureau of Reclamation, and I believe that that's the case. It's been a ***long***, hard process, but we have some projects now that have sort of worked their way through the criteria that we laid out and are now in front of Congress where legislation would allow us to transfer title to some of those. I think there are about eight of them in front of Congress now. Talking to the commissioner a week or so ago, he thought maybe six of the eight, the final little details could be worked out and, at least from our standpoint, it would be then appropriate to transfer title.

". . . out here we've had people from time to time push selling off the C-V-P, and the last one was directly to the water users, and that's, one, not going to happen, I don't think, it's not very likely; and, two, I don't think it would be good public policy to do that. . . ."

So it's been a long process, but there ***are*** projects that we should transfer title. Now, out here we've had people from time to time push selling off the C-V-P, and the last one was directly to the water users, and that's, one, not going to happen, I don't think, it's not very likely; and, two, I don't think it would be good public policy to do that. Prior to that, we talked about transferring it to the state of California, and I think that made a whole lot more sense but really difficult, really difficult, to work through issues to transfer title.

Storey: Why? What kind of issues?

Patterson: You find out there's a whole set of constituents out there that maybe you didn't know you had. I mean, little simple things like transferring a canal, you find out that Mrs. Robinson's been planting her garden on your right-of-way for all these years, and now she's afraid the new owner won't let her do that. Well, we shouldn't have been letting her do it either, but we didn't know about it, and she was a nice lady and did this, and it was no problem. So she and her neighbors are starting to show up at public meetings and say, "We don't know if this is a good idea. What can we get from you, new owner, to tell us that this won't be a problem?" What are they going to say? So you have all these people come out. You have Reclamation folks come out. A lot of people don't like the government, but yet it's interesting that they think

they have more influence over the government than they might a new owner. So it's just hard to work through all those issues. Our policy has been, you have to work through them and you have to work through them at the local level, because if you ***don't***, then when these are in front of a committee in Congress, those issues are going to come up there, and they're not prepared to be able to deal with that. It takes hours and hours of negotiation, discussion, and whatever to work through them. So I think that's why it's hard. It's not as simple as it seems.

Storey: Yes. It sounds simple to sell something.

Patterson: It sounds simple to sell it.

Storey: Until you get the politics involved and all of these constituents.

Patterson: But that's what you have to do.

Storey: You mentioned some habitat improvement. Are we involved in a lot of habitat work in the Central Valley? You know, I haven't heard it so much lately, but you used to have a big reputation as being the environmental regional director when you were in Billings.

Patterson: I've been playing that down, see. (laughter)

Storey: (laughter) What's going on around here besides the fisheries issues and so on?

Habitat Restoration and How it Works to the Advantage of Water Users

Patterson: Well, one, yes, we are involved in a lot of habitat restoration, a tremendous amount of it. For the most part, it is all around fisheries, but we're putting tens of millions of dollars a year of Reclamation money into habitat restoration. Trinity River, we have a special program there just for restoration on the Trinity River, and we've been spending six to eight million dollars a year. So there's a ***lot*** of activity in this region on habitat restoration. Of course, a lot of that comes out of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, where that was one of the cornerstones, was restoration of habitat. So we're obviously involved in that.

But even where we don't have special congressional direction, for instance on Klamath, we're spending a lot of time, energy, and money there to improve habitat. Because if you think about our primary customers as the water users, a ***lot*** of the problems that have developed for them with either listed species or species of concern can be helped if the habitat is better. So if you can improve the habitat for the fisheries, the fisheries are going to do better, thus there's less conflict between the fishery and the water users. So I think we're not only doing the right thing for the fishery and the environmental interests by trying to improve the habitat, I think it helps our water users as well. Out here, I think, our water users understand that pretty well, and they've been supportive of a lot of habitat restoration. They've been leading the charge on some of this stuff.

There's a Butte Creek watershed up here which is sort of the primary area for

spring-run salmon, the last remaining habitat, and our water users have been real strong about, "Let's get up there and let's do some work on Butte Creek to improve the habitat," including removing some dams, small diversion dams. "Let's help these irrigation districts to find a way to get their water, but we can get rid of some of the diversion dams, consolidate them, do those kinds of things. Let's get some more water in the creek so the fish do better, because if we can improve ***that*** habitat and then that helps us produce more spring-run, then we don't have the clash when we get to the Delta between spring-run and you've got to reduce pumping out of Tracy." So they see that connection. And I think we see that connection.

Storey: Do we have issues other than fisheries issues?

Refuge Programs Supported by Reclamation

Patterson: There are other uplands kinds of things where there's a lot of work we're doing on refuges, waterfowl-related. We're putting about twenty to thirty million a year into refuge programs here for expanding the refuge, firming up the water supplies, conveyance facilities, those kinds of things. Other upland habitat things we're doing.

'. . . C-V-P says we have authority to retire lands from irrigation if it's producing drainage problems. So if you're producing drainage *water* with high levels of salinity that's causing *problems*, we have authority to permanently retire this land, which generally means buy it. . . ."

One of [the] things is coming out of our land-retirement program. C-V-P[-I-A] says we have authority to retire lands from irrigation if it's producing drainage problems. So if you're producing drainage ***water*** with high levels of salinity that's causing ***problems***, we have authority to permanently retire this land, which generally means buy it.

Storey: That's C-V-P-I-A?

Patterson: That's C-V-P-I-A. So, okay, let's say you go in and you buy 20,000 acres of land, that the reason you bought it is to stop the bad drainage, what are you going to do with this land? Now you've got 20,000 acres of land. That's a big chunk of land. Well, we're working with Fish and Wildlife and Fish and Game so that that land can be managed for habitat. You can't put water back on it and have it for duck habitat because then you're going to start producing drainage problems. So for the most part, it's upland habitat. There are a lot of species listed in the valley: kangaroo rats, etcetera, kit fox, and so if we are strategic about buying land to help with drainage but knowing that a secondary purpose is habitat improvement and you can get corridors that work their way across the valley, then you can . . .

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. MAY 21, 1998.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. MAY 21, 1998.

Storey: This is tape two of an interview by Brit Storey, with Roger Patterson, on May the 21st, 1998.

So you can develop corridors across the valley.

Patterson: Yeah. You develop habitat corridors out of your land retirement program, and you have upland habitat. That's the advantage of working with Fish and Wildlife and Fish and Game early on, is you know that that's a purpose that's part of the program, so it's a consideration when you buy the land. You don't buy it checkerboard but you know that you want to get some contiguous land. They generally like to see at least 5,000 contiguous acres before you have something that's really a manageable–even as they see it. We're doing a lot of habitat restoration, improvement, preservation.

Storey: Let's talk about the Folsom gate failure.

Failure of Gate 3 at Folsom Dam

Storey: Well, I remember that one well. Every Monday morning at 7:30, before we come into the office, I meet with the assistant regional directors or the deputy regional director and maybe one or two other folks at La Bou, which is a coffee shop over here on Watt Avenue, and we get together there at 7:30, and then we try to be in the office here by 9:00. That's where you have the kinds of discussions about lots of things that once you hit the office it's just a blur and you don't have time to do.

". . . Tom Aiken . . . was a little excited and said that one of the spillway gates at Folsom had blown out. . . ."

So we're sitting over at La Bou, and we get a page, and it was Tom Aiken. Tom was a little excited and said that one of the spillway gates at Folsom had blown out. I don't know if that's a technical term or not, but this doesn't sound good. And Tom said, "I don't know." He said, "We're going up there. We're not sure what's happened, but it looks like one side of it's given way and we've got water going everywhere." He got hold of Jeff McCracken. He's our public affairs officer, and Jeff is the kind of guy to jump on things. We not only knew we had a problem we needed to figure out, but this baby is right in the backyard of Sacramento, and so we knew everybody else was going to know in a hurry.

". . . we assembled a press conference and figured as we're finding out what's going on, we'll let the media know what's going on so that they don't have to speculate as to what's happening. . . ."

So we assembled a press conference and figured as we're finding out what's going on, we'll let the media know what's going on so that they don't have to speculate as to what's happening. So by, I don't know, 9:30 or so, we were all out at the dam and crawling around, and the TV cameras were crawling around. Our safety officer about had a heart attack, I think, because we had people hanging in areas they probably shouldn't have been hanging off of, but it was sort of organized chaos, I would say. Our operators determined that even if that whole gate failed, that the downstream channel had capability to handle it. So there was not a danger to Sacramento or the downstream community because there was going to be too much water. So one of the first things people did is get the local folks and start down the river to let people know there's a big slug of water coming, because it happened to

turn out–this was on a Monday, and the day before was what's called "Eppie's Great Race," which is like thousands and thousands of people show up on the American River, and they have this kayaking, canoe, and anything else that will sort of float on the river, and thank God it didn't happen that day. But there were a few folks that had had such a good time at Eppie's Great Race, we thought they might still be laying along the banks of the river, and it turned out there were a few. (laughter) So the local officials went down and let these people know that it was probably a good thing to move away from the river because there was water coming down.

Our operator, I think his name was Taylor, who was the guy that first found this, the first thing he did, he saw what the problem was, and Nimbus Dam is just downstream of Folsom, and it's not automated. So he went down there and he opened the gates up at Nimbus so when the water hit there, it would pass and not overtop Nimbus, because we did need to do that. So we pretty quickly determined there's not a problem downstream, just make sure people know it's coming and then what the heck is going on here. It sort of went from there. I think media-wise and communication-wise, we did a pretty good job there. In fact, we got some pretty good recognition out of folks.

"We had a forensic team put together. We involved experts from everywhere . . ."

It took forever. We had a forensic team put together. We involved experts from everywhere from McClellan Air Force Base to the Department of Water Resources. It turns out that over the Internet–here's technology again–a professor in Japan, Professor Ishi, is like the world expert on these kinds of gates, and he found out over the Internet sort of what was going on. He called Tom Aiken and said, "I know a little bit about these gates," and Tom said, "Great. We'll send you a plane ticket. Come on over." So we got Professor Ishi involved in it. And we had the Denver people from the Bureau out here.

". . . maintenance was a problem . . . was a contributing factor, but the real underlying problem was the design of the gates originally, and they just weren't designed as hefty as they needed to be. . . ."

It took a long time, but basically we concluded there were a couple of things. It was viewed that maintenance was a problem and in some small way, I think, was a contributing factor, but the real underlying problem was the design of the gates originally, and they just weren't designed as hefty as they needed to be. We're actually lucky this didn't happen previously. I think that gate like eighty-two times had been under similar load condition, and at any time it was right on the edge of failing. So we put out a contract, and went in and beefed up the other gates. I think we added like 19,000 pounds of steel to each gate. There are eight of them. So the other seven gates we reinforced very quickly. We had bulkheaded this area, where Gate Three had failed, so we could get in and figure out what happened and disassemble the gate. Then we had to have a new gate manufactured and installed. At this point we got the seal of approval, and everything's fine.

"When the January '97 flood hit, we didn't have the new gate in. We still had a bulkhead in there. . . . we decided on the spot to pull the bulkhead out and just let

it free-flow through that notch, and they went out and pulled it out that day. So we had no control of that, but we made the decision, better to have no control of that but have its capacity . . ."

When the January '97 flood hit, we didn't have the new gate in. We still had a bulkhead in there. I remember being over at the Flood Center, and Lowell [Plass] was going, "You know, if this inflow develops to where it should, it would sure be nice to have eight gates instead of seven." So we decided on the spot to pull the bulkhead out and just let it free-flow through that notch, and they went out and pulled it out that day. So we had no control of that, but we made the decision, better to have no control of that but have its capacity, and then we can regulate with the rest. So we pulled that bulkhead out. It worked out fine, worked out great.

Storey: Who makes a decision like that?

Patterson: Well, Lowell Plass is sort of the first-line decision-maker. He works with his staff, and then on this one he wanted to chat with me and make sure that it was there. So between Lowell and Tom Aiken and I, we said, "Yeah, let's do it." It didn't take but fifteen minutes to decide we'd better do it, because that lake's coming up, and if we wait too long, it's going to be too hard to pull it out. So it was a fairly quick decision. It turned out to be a good one.

Storey: How about the sort of traditional relationships? This would have been '96, was it?

Patterson: I was thinking it was '95, but I don't know. It was July.[43]

Storey: So that would have been about one year after the reorganization had taken place.

". . . lot of discussion . . . folks wondering about the relationship between–'Has Reclamation eroded its capability through this reorganization' kinds of things. . . . even internal to Reclamation . . . I think the Folsom Gate thing really showed that we have the capability. The Corps of Engineers originally designed and built Folsom. . . ."

Patterson: Yes. There was lot of discussion, you know, a lot of folks wondering about the relationship between–"Has Reclamation eroded its capability through this reorganization" kinds of things. There was a lot of talk about that, even internal to Reclamation, you know, concerns that people had. I think the Folsom Gate thing really showed that we have the capability. The Corps of Engineers originally designed and built Folsom. We always remind people of that. They did a crappy job, and that was part of the design. But the Corps worked really well with us during this, but the actual new design and the construction was done by Reclamation, as it turned out we had the expertise available to do that, and they really rose to the occasion. But there's been some questioning of that, and I think there's not much of that now.

"[Commissioner] Eluid Martinez has made a priority out of retention of technical capability . . ."

43. Gate #3 failed on July 17, 1995.

[Commissioner] Eluid Martinez has made a priority out of retention of technical capability, and he had a couple of task forces look into that, and he's implemented a lot of recommendation. But it was a concern.

And you're right, the timing of this Folsom Gate failure was fairly coincidental. We had hearings. We had oversight hearings in front of Mr. Doolittle on the Folsom Gate, and I was back testifying. Of course, that was on his mind. He figured he could get some questions answered. So, yes, good issue.

Storey: What about also the issue of who's responsible for what? Had that worked itself out by that point in the reorganization, the area office versus the regional office?

The Relationship of the Area Offices to the Regional Office

Patterson: Yeah. If it hadn't been worked out, it's things like this that work it out in a hurry, because we made it very clear that Tom Aiken was the guy in charge for the Bureau of Reclamation. He was the area manager. Nobody saw it any different, and everybody was working with and for Tom to get it going. So it turned out that that wasn't an issue.

Storey: How do you think the reorganization's going? We didn't talk about this Tuesday, did we?

How Dan Beard's Reorganization Is Going

Patterson: No. We might have talked about it a little bit. I think it's good. I think we've worked pretty hard at getting the right balance between what's located where.

". . . early on there were a few places in Reclamation where area offices thought they had been anointed with . . . kingdoms and maybe were empowered a little more than they really were, but I think it's balanced out pretty well. . . ."

I think early on there were a few places in Reclamation where area offices thought they had been anointed with some kind of knighthood or kingdoms and maybe were empowered a little more than they really were, but I think it's balanced out pretty well.

". . . area managers in this region collectively decided there are several things they do not want located in the area office, that they actually want located in the regional office. . . ."

Our area managers in this region collectively decided there are several things they do not want located in the area office, that they actually want located in the regional office. For instance our water-rights expertise. We have consolidated expertise, and the area managers want it that way. The people in the region work with the area office staff on those things. So I think it's worked out pretty well. There were a lot of people, I think, in Reclamation that sort of always viewed the project offices as those in charge of the program. There were others that didn't, but I

certainly did. I didn't see the creation of area offices as a big deal. I think it was the philosophy that a lot of us tried to use for several years, and it changed some things. In this region it changed quite a bit, because C-V-P is so big that you couldn't have an area office to run the C-V-P. It turned out that was us in the regional office. So there was some change that we went through here by basically telling the three area offices that had the C-V-P, "You're it. You're the front line on the program for Reclamation, not only with the C-V-P, but if there's some fishery restoration thing that's in your geographic area, you're on that, too." So there was some transition going through it, but I think fundamentally Reclamation has always had that front-line project office or whatever, and this just expanded the responsibility to make no question of who's in charge first, who's on the front line. We've worked through it, I think, pretty well.

Storey: What happened to staffing in the region before the reorganization and after the reorganization?

"Our program is getting bigger . . . when the first buy-out was coming along, that was kind of a struggle for me . . . I finally decided that . . . it was not right, to say these buy-outs are going to occur throughout Reclamation *except* in the M-P Region. That just wasn't going to work. . . ."

Patterson: Our program is getting bigger rather than smaller, and early, you know, when the first buy-out was coming along, that was kind of a struggle for me, because we really, in Mid-Pacific, didn't need to lose anybody. But when all was said and done and thinking it through and talking with other folks in the region and other regional directors about it, I finally decided that it was not fair, it was not right, to say these buy-outs are going to occur throughout Reclamation ***except*** in the M-P Region. That just wasn't going to work.

So we decided to participate in that, knowing that it was going to hurt, it was going to cause problems, because the people that we thought would take the buy-outs were going to be a lot of our most experienced and, therefore, in many ways, most valuable folks, and it turned out that was the case.

". . . the average experience that went out the door was thirty-one years . . . people that would have been retiring in two or three years, maybe, anyway, but not all at the same time. When the buy-outs came, that really accelerated, and we [lost] . . . 118 people . . ."

I think the average experience that went out the door was thirty-one years, and those were the people that would have been retiring in two or three years, maybe, anyway, but not all at the same time. When the buy-outs came, that really accelerated, and we had, I don't know, 118 people or something that took the buy-out.

"Dan Beard was good to me in the sense that he said, 'You replace whatever you need to. I know you're going to lose people, I know you're going to lose expertise, but don't feel like you're restricted in hiring people back.' . . ."

Dan Beard was good to me in the sense that he said, "You replace whatever

you need to. I know you're going to lose people, I know you're going to lose expertise, but don't feel like you're restricted in hiring people back." Not those people, but going out and recruiting people. Because there was this rule: if a job has been vacated by a buy-out, you can't refill the job, this kind of stuff. We figured on a corporate basis we were going to be fine, because we knew a lot of people in Denver were going to leave, and we weren't going to be replacing a lot of those and some of the other regions, maybe, too. So he basically gave me the green light to replace people, which was good, but when you lose the kind of expertise we did, you don't just immediately go out on the street or elsewhere in Reclamation and find folks that can come in and hit the ground running. So we went through some times when things felt pretty thin and folks were doing more than one job, folks were doing two and even three jobs, and we asked an awful lot of our people. We managed to get by, and now we're back. We've recruited–for the most part, I think we've filled all of those critical jobs, and we're in a lot better shape. But it was tough, and I wouldn't want to do that again. I think it was the right decision to let our people participate, but it was hard.

Storey: Is there anything else about the region currently that we ought to be talking about, any area I've overlooked or anything like that?

Patterson: I think you've been pretty thorough. You've done your homework. We've talked about a lot of things. It's a pretty multi-faceted region, and I think we've hit on most of it.

"One of the big future things for this region that is still undefined is what does CALFED mean to the region and to the Bureau out here. . . ."

One of the big future things for this region that is still undefined is what does CALFED mean to the region and to the Bureau out here. At this point, it's hard to know what that is. I mean, we're in as a major player in the CALFED process, but CALFED could affect the future of the C-V-P as to how things go, it could generate a tremendous amount of work for us, and it may or may not, so we don't know. So we just kind of stayed tuned on that one.

Storey: Well, in that case I'd like to shift gears and go back to your career earlier and start working through some of the questions that I hadn't gotten answered previously. You talked about a summer job on a drill crew.

Summer Job on a Drill Crew While in College

Patterson: Yeah. Those were the good old days. I did that. It was a engineering aid kind of a job, and it was when I was in school.

". . . the per diem structure then is one that encourages you to stay together in rooms. Now when you travel, you have your own room. In those days, you made more money if you could tolerate sharing a room with three or four other people. So that's what we did. . . ."

I worked for the Bureau like two summers while I was going to college, and this was

the second summer, and it was a drill crew that did drainage investigations, and it was back before–well, the per diem structure then is one that encourages you to stay together in rooms. Now when you travel, you have your own room. In those days, you made more money if you could tolerate sharing a room with three or four other people. So that's what we did. And, of course, I was a student and it was no problem.

His Crew Worked on Drainage Investigations in Northern Kansas and Southern Nebraska

We were doing groundwater drainage investigations in northern Kansas and southern Nebraska, and we had a drill crew leader who was the kind of guy that would get up about 3:30 or 4:00 in the morning, and he would start planning our day. His name was Ray Brush [phonetic], and he was a great guy, and he'd been the foreman of the drill crew forever, and he'd get his maps out on the little desk in the room and start charting our day, where we were going to go. Now, as I said, I was a student, so a couple of the other guys and I, that's just when we were getting in from the night before, about 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning, just when Ray was planning our day. So at least it worked well to share the room. Ray was out of the bed before we needed the bed kind of a thing. But it was a good summer job. I guess that's one of those things where the Bureau started getting in my blood, in those summer jobs, and that was certainly one of them.

Storey: What would you do on the drill crew? How did this work?

". . . I did the worst part, because I was the low man on the totem pole, but basically what we were doing is going out and logging holes, and essentially what we were trying to find out is where was the water table and what kind of soils did we have . . ."

Patterson: Well, I did the worst part, because I was the low man on the totem pole, but basically what we were doing is going out and logging holes, and essentially what we were trying to find out is where was the water table and what kind of soils did we have and how well would they drain if we constructed tile drains. So we were getting a lot of the data the engineers would use then to lay out a system.

". . . power-operated auger . . . but a lot of times we couldn't use it, so we would use these hand augers . . . That was usually my job. I would crank it in the ground, and I would pull it out and give it to the engineer or the foreman, and I'd knock the mud out of it . . . You had a big rubber mallet. You're trying to pound that stuff out. I knew then I wanted to stay in college, because I saw they had a better job than I did. . . ."

But it was a drill rig, which was a power-operated auger, basically, and we would use that where we could, but a lot of times we couldn't use it, so we would use these hand augers that you would take and you'd crank into the ground. That was usually my job. I would crank it in the ground, and I would pull it out and give it to the engineer or the foreman, and I'd knock the mud out of it, and they'd take it and put it between their fingers, and they'd smell it and chew on it a little bit, and they're log it down

and say, "Keep going." (laughter) So I'd go a little deeper. And you'd get down into the water and the mud. You had a big rubber mallet. You're trying to pound that stuff out. I knew then I wanted to stay in college, because I saw they had a better job than I did. (laughter)

Storey: So you weren't taking cores per se?

Patterson: Yeah. Sometimes we would log a core. We would do that. We would log the core, but other times it was just simply to find out where the water table was and get a couple of samples to see how permeable the soils were.

Storey: How far apart would drill holes be?

Patterson: Oh, several hundred feet, usually. I mean, Ray would–as we got into it, he would kind of spot where he thought we were going to need more data. So it was kind of a random pattern, but, you know, maybe in a section of 640 acres we might drill five holes, something like that.

Storey: And was this on private property, public property?

Patterson: Most of it was all on private property. So one of the things that was done before we got there, which probably was kind of tricky, was getting permission, because we had permission to go in on all this land and drill the holes, and I always remember Ray was ***very particular*** about not messing things up. You know, you don't just go driving across the field; you do things in a certain way. And I know that the other Bureau guys had worked with the irrigation district and the landowners ahead of time so that we had access in there. It's something I really didn't think about much at the time. I just thought Ray was picky. But he was doing his job.

Storey: There were five of you?

Patterson: There were always at least three and sometimes four. There was me and the drill crew foreman, and there was always an engineer with us and sometimes another engineer and other technicians. So there's usually probably about four.

Storey: What was this job that you did that was the low-man-on-the-totem-pole job?

Patterson: I don't know that it had a classification, but it was generally the guy that ran the hand auger. It was manual.

Storey: You did that the last two summers before you actually came on Reclamation, is that right?

Patterson: Yes. I did it the last summer. I did it one summer. The first summer I was with Reclamation, I was on a field team. It was kind of the early water conservation stuff, so I was on a team. We'd go out and work with the farmers, and we'd put gypsum blocks in to get moisture readings, and we were getting a lot of crop data and that stuff. And then the second summer I worked for the Bureau, I was on this drainage drill crew.

Worked for the State of Nebraska Highway Department for His Last Two Years in College

Then the last couple of summers I actually worked for the state of Nebraska, the highway department, and then came back to the Bureau when I graduated.

Storey: You went to SEED-SOD[44] in Denver in '78, I believe.

Worked on the SEED-SOD Program in Denver in the Region Beginning 1978

Patterson: Yep, I did. I was working in the project office before that. I started sort of full time out of college in '74, and about four years into that the Bureau was starting their safety-of-dams program. Charley Calhoun was the Branch Chief in Denver at the time, and I knew him from working with him in water operations and other things. He was looking for somebody to start that program for the Lower Missouri Region, so I went into Denver then and applied for the job. It was a GS-12 job. I was an eleven, out in McCook, at the project office, and I did that for a couple of years. It was interesting because it was a new program and there were no rules, there were no procedures, getting to know other people and also trying to figure out how to do it. So it was a good job. I enjoyed it. I did it about two years.

Storey: This was two years after Teton.

Patterson: Right.

Storey: Do you remember where you were and what people were saying in Reclamation when Teton failed?

Failure of Teton While He Worked in McCook

Patterson: Oh, yes. I remember the day, because I was working in water operations. Of course, I was really low down in the organization at the time, and I didn't know much about ***a lot*** of things, but I just remember, I think it was on a Saturday, because I was working.

"I usually worked two or three hours every Saturday . . . they were trying to get a hold of Bob Kutz. . . . I happened to be in the office, so I fielded the phone call and very diligently took down all this bad-news detail. . . ."

I usually worked two or three hours every Saturday, went in and checked the water orders and whatnot. They called from the regional office. There was a call placed out to–I think they were trying to get a hold of Bob Kutz. He was the area manager, project manager. They tried Bob at his house, or they just took a random shot at calling the office. I happened to be in the office, so I fielded the phone call and very diligently took down all this bad-news detail.

Then, Monday, there were a lot of sad, quiet faces sitting around the office.

44. See footnote on page 33.

Like I say, I was probably a GS-9 or GS-11 at the time, and I didn't know much about anything, but I remember that. I think anybody that worked for Reclamation probably remembers that. And, you know, then a lot of just talk about how could this happen and who's going to take the fall for it, somebody has to. Those kinds of things going on. It was a bad time.

Storey: Tell me about Mr. Kutz.

Bob Kutz

Patterson: Oh, he's great. He's a legend. Here's a guy that started out as a part-time student and became a GS-14 project manager, and never left the office. I mean, he worked in that same office his entire career with Reclamation, and he left with–gosh, he must have had forty years.

"His service date dated from when he was seventeen years old. . . ."

His service date dated from when he was seventeen years old. He got credit for when he was seventeen years old. So the whole time that he was in college, he got credit. Here was a young guy. Bob always seemed like a young guy to me. When I first got to know him, he had twenty-five, thirty years of service already, which was hard to believe.

"He's the guy that tried to get me to start as a GS-1 for the Bureau, though, and I remember asking him if he knew anybody that had ever started as a one, and he said no. I said, 'Well, then, I don't want to be the first one.' He said, 'Okay. Okay. Well, we'll start you as a two.'. . ."

He's the guy that tried to get me to start as a GS-1 for the Bureau, though, and I remember asking him if he knew anybody that had ever started as a one, and he said no. I said, "Well, then, I don't want to be the first one." He said, "Okay. Okay. Well, we'll start you as a two." So I started as a two.

But he was a good guy. He still is a good guy. Then when I got out of college, then I had a master's degree, and I knew the rules said you could start as a nine, and Bob tried to start me as a seven then. You know, job offers were plentiful for engineers back then. The Bureau wanted to talk to me about a job, and I thought, "You know, I really like the Bureau." And I had a lot of offers that would have paid more money elsewhere, so I was asking what's the grade and whatever. I know with a master's you can start as a nine or whatever, and they said, "Well, I don't know. You'll probably have to talk to Kutz."

". . . I had to negotiate grade with Kutz twice. And I've joked with him about that since. . . ."

So I go down and chat with old Bob again, and he says, "Well, I think a seven." I said, "Gosh, Bob, I thought you could get a nine." And we talked for a while, and he finally said, "Okay." So I had to negotiate grade with Kutz twice. And I've joked with him about that since.

It's funny, I became his supervisor at one point because he wouldn't leave. He never left McCook, so when I was a fifteen, assistant regional director, Bob worked for me, and he always got a kick out of that. I always let him do whatever he wanted. I never supervised Bob. I was his supervisor, but I didn't supervise him, because you couldn't. He was one of those guys. But he was a legend. He always tried to do the right thing, and he was a smart guy, and he had relationships beyond compare out in Nebraska and Kansas. He's still there since he retired.

Storey: Yes. I'm going out in about two weeks to interview him.

Patterson: Good.

Storey: Gil Gyllenborg is supporting a trip to get his oral history.

Patterson: I think that's great you're going to talk to Bob, because he goes way back, and he has a different perspective than a lot of folks would. He and Marla still live there in Grand Island. He's a good guy.

Storey: When you went to Denver two years after the failure of Teton, SEED-SOD was a pretty new program, I believe.

Patterson: Brand new.

Storey: Caused by Teton. Did that cause any pressures or issues that came up in the program?

Reclamation's SEED-SOD Program

". . . I don't know if we ever would have had a program–we certainly wouldn't have had a program when we did, with the emphasis that we had, if it had not been for Teton. There was a lot of pressure to show that Reclamation had responded by creating a sort of a world-class safety-of-dams program, and we were making it up as we went. . . ."

Patterson: Well, I don't know if we ever would have had a program–we certainly wouldn't have had a program when we did, with the emphasis that we had, if it had not been for Teton. There was a lot of pressure to show that Reclamation had responded by creating a sort of a world-class safety-of-dams program, and we were making it up as we went. I mean, we tried to find out who had what where–what country, what state, what other agency, that kind of information, but there was a lot of pressure on to get a program in place, up and running, I suppose so the leadership could say, "Hey, we've got a strong program, and this will never happen again," and whatever.

Charley Calhoun was my supervisor at the time, and he was wonderful. Technically he knew this area, and he was supportive, and he and I worked a lot for that region and worked with similar folks in the other regions. They even had an assistant commissioner for dam safety for a while. What was his name? Bob Jansen.

Storey: Bob Jansen, ***after*** he was chief engineer.

"I think Reclamation has a good program. You know, we just had it reviewed recently by an outside blue ribbon panel, and I think we got really good marks for the program we have, and that's good, because it's easy to lose sight of that when you're trying to do all this other stuff that's eating your lunch every day on fisheries and operational and political issues. You can't lose track of what's really important . . ."

Patterson: Yeah, and he'd been in California. I think he'd been the head of dam safety or something in California. So I remember we worked with him some. So, yeah, there was a lot of pressure to get a program in place. I think Reclamation has a good program. You know, we just had it reviewed recently by an outside blue ribbon panel, and I think we got really good marks for the program we have, and that's good, because it's easy to lose sight of that when you're trying to do all this other stuff that's eating your lunch every day on fisheries and operational and political issues. You can't lose track of what's really important, and that is we've got to take care of those facilities.

Storey: Do we have any issues in this region right now?

Patterson: We have a pretty active safety-of-dams program. So, yes, but none that are falling behind schedule, but we just completed a modification– well, it's just about complete–down at Bradbury Dam down by Santa Barbara. We've got one that is going to need some work up at . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. MAY 21, 1998.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2. MAY 21, 1998.

Storey: You were mentioning Bradbury and Casitas and various other places.

". . . we've got a pretty active safety-of-dams program in the region. And it works well. . . ."

Patterson: Yes. Casitas is out there. We've done some work out here at Folsom on Mormon Island, additional work. So we've got a pretty active safety-of-dams program in the region. And it works well. I think Dave Achterberg in Denver does a great job working with the regions and the commissioner's office in helping to manage that program. It works very well.

Storey: What kinds of things were you working through back in '78? Were you setting up procedures or what?

Patterson: Yes, we were setting up procedures for examining our facilities, actually going back and looking at the original design and construction of our facilities much more in depth than we had ever done before. The inundation mapping program of being able to–because a lot of people wanted to know, after Teton, well. ***what if*** this dam failed? What if this dam failed? Obviously we didn't want to fuel that discussion, but at the same time, those were fair questions.

"We had the Safety of Dams Act in '78, and there was funding starting to flow. So

you had to prioritize what dams are the most important, the highest priority to do work. There's always processes and systems that had to be developed. . . ."

So there was a program put together to prepare inundation maps that showed what areas downstream would be wet if you released at full spillway capacity, for instance, ***or*** if you had a dam failure. So, those kinds of things in place. Then getting legislation. We had the Safety of Dams Act in '78, and there was funding starting to flow. So you had to prioritize what dams are the most important, the highest priority to do work. There's always processes and systems that had to be developed.

Storey: And you were in the Lower Missouri Region then?

Patterson: I was in the Lower Missouri in Denver, yeah.

Storey: Did you find any really serious problems that had to be addressed right away?

Looking at the Safety of Pathfinder Dam

Patterson: Yes. We had some of the older structures. The Pathfinder Dam, for instance, up on the Platte River was in the region, and it was started, one of the first Reclamation dams. I remember looking at the spec, and it had two pages. One was a location map that said, "Go over here and build a dam," and page two was, "Make it look like this." It's an old block masonry dam. So it was very high priority, and one that we wanted to look at how it was really built, what records did we have. And it turned out, as sketchy as that design was and the specifications, the documentation on how it was constructed was really very detailed and elaborate, and the way it worked back then is the on-site construction engineer sat down at the end of the day, every day, and made notes of what happened, and why it happened, and you could track through those decisions. Better to use his monthly report so you didn't have to do it all, but they would have a monthly report, too, where you could track through. We had not just Reclamation people looking at this, but we had outside experts, which was another part of the philosophy. So we had a lot of high-priority stuff we looked at.

"So it wasn't like we had a *big* dam above a big city with a *big* problem. We didn't have those, which is good. . . ."

It turned out that we had some safety-of-dams problems in the region, but probably not any more than elsewhere. So we went to work on it, and they're still working on some of them. But I would say, no, I don't recall we had anything major. I mean, we had a couple of them that were in pretty bad shape, like Lake Alice, but it was small and remote. So it wasn't like we had a ***big*** dam above a **big** city with a ***big*** problem. We didn't have those, which is good.

Storey: Then you became a branch chief in '80. That was the safety of dams branch?

In 1980 Became Chief of the Water Operations and Maintenance Branch in the Lower Missouri Region

Patterson: I think it was called the Water Operation and Maintenance Branch. Safety of Dams

was part of it. Charley Calhoun had been the branch chief, and he had left, got a promotion as the Water and Land Division chief in Amarillo. So I took over Charley's job. So we had Safety of Dams, and Water Operations did all the review of maintenance kinds of things. We had–oh, I don't know how many people we had, six, seven, eight, something like that in the branch. It wasn't a large group of people, but they were all professional folks.

"That was my first supervisory job, thank God, because these were people that really didn't need any supervision. You'd talk about, 'Maybe we should do this, or maybe we ought to think about that," and then they would do it plus more.'. . ."

That was my first supervisory job, thank God, because these were people that really didn't need any supervision. You'd talk about, "Maybe we should do this, or maybe we ought to think about that," and then they would do it plus more. So it was a good group of people, by and large GS-12-type folks, people like Larry Dozier [phonetic], who for the last several years has been kind of the number-two guy for the conservancy districts down on the Central Arizona Project; Ron Johnson, who is running Central Utah Project for the Bureau now; Ken Randolph, he had water conservation in that branch. Ken Randolph worked in that.

Storey: And now he's up at–

Patterson: He's in Casper now. A guy named Tom Williamson worked in there. He's got his own firm in Denver. He and another guy that worked for the state have been for years doing consulting for water rights stuff. Tom's been in Supreme Court cases on the Arkansas River and others. Ellen Bondurant [phonetic] worked in that branch. I'm not sure where Ellen is now. The last I knew, she was in the construction business up in Canada. Just a group of really topnotch people in that branch.

Storey: Well, I would like to keep going, but I see that it's eleven o'clock, which is what my appointment is for.

Patterson: I have to be downtown to talk to the Chamber of Commerce at noon.

Storey: So let me ask again if you're willing for the information on these tapes and the resulting transcripts to be used by researchers.

Patterson: I am.

Storey: Good. Thank you very much.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. MAY 21, 1998.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 1. MARCH 28, 2000.

Storey: This is Brit Allan Storey, senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Roger K. Patterson, former regional director of the Mid-Pacific Region of the Bureau of Reclamation, and now the state engineer of the State of Nebraska. We are in his offices at 301 Centennial Mall in Lincoln, Nebraska, on March the 28th, 2000, and it's about one o'clock in the afternoon. This is tape one.

Let's see. I was wondering if you would tell me about the passage of 102-575[45] and the development of all of the activities around the San [Joaquin] ~~Juan~~-Sacramento Rivers because of that, how it evolved.

Passage and Implementation of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act in 1992

Patterson: Well, I need to refresh my memory a little bit. When I went out to Sacramento, I guess that was in about August of 1991, and the [George H. W.] Bush Administration was in then. A lot of these issues were percolating along and they had been for a long time. Dennis Underwood was the commissioner at the time. He saw, and I saw, fairly soon after I'd been out there, that there were going to be some changes coming, one way or another. Either we were going to deal with them administratively or Congress was going to do so, because they had been debating for a long time new legislation in California, basically to reform the C-V-P. But it had not passed at that point and was under discussion.

". . . Congress finally . . . passed 102-575 . . . It had taken forever to wind its way through the legislature, because titles continued to be added. I don't recall how many there were, but there were like forty titles, and Title 34 was the Central Valley Project Improvement Act. . . ."

So, we worked on a few ideas that we thought we could do administratively, but it just turned out we didn't have enough time, and Congress finally, the following year, the fall of '92, then passed 102-575, which was a fairly comprehensive bill. It had taken forever to wind its way through the legislature, because titles continued to be added. I don't recall how many there were, but there were like forty titles, and Title 34 was the Central Valley Project Improvement Act. But there were many others.

"The irony in this . . . Title I was the bill I worked on when I was in Billings for Buffalo Bill. Who would have thought it would come back to haunt me the way it did when finally that continued to be added to? The *major* title, I think, in a lot of people's opinion, certainly in Californian's opinion, was Title 34. It really did change the way we did business in that region very fundamentally . . ."

The irony in this is, I think Title I was the bill I worked on when I was in Billings for Buffalo Bill. Who would have thought it would come back to haunt me the way it did when finally that continued to be added to? The ***major*** title, I think, in a lot of people's opinion, certainly in Californian's opinion, was Title 34. It really did change the way we did business in that region very fundamentally by bringing new obligations and mandates on the Central Valley Project, which was the big Reclamation project that our region had responsibility for and in many ways was sort of the driver for a lot of what was going on with Reclamation.

"So we had new responsibilities and we had new mandates, and shortly thereafter we had a new administration . . . there was really no legislative history

45. See footnote on page 58.

on the bill [and different people interpreted the bill differently] . . . So as we're unraveling that, lo and behold, Dan Beard comes in as the commissioner of Reclamation . . ."

So we had new responsibilities and we had new mandates, and shortly thereafter we had a new administration, because the [William Jefferson] Clinton Administration came in then. As we were trying to figure out and untangle this new responsibility and just understand what we received, because there was really no legislative history on the bill, so what you would do is talk to one of the people that was involved in it and you would get their perception, and you would talk to person number two and you would think maybe it was a different bill they were talking about. Everybody had their view, and they were all very willing to share what they thought it meant and what we needed to be doing.

So as we're unraveling that, lo and behold, Dan Beard comes in as the commissioner of Reclamation, and, of course, this legislation was often referred to as the Miller-Bradley Bill, George Miller being the Miller and that being Dan's Beard's boss when he worked as legislative director for Congressman Miller on the Hill. So I thought, "Wow, this will be great. I can go talk to one of the principal authors of the bill and find out what all this stuff means." Dan acknowledged that some of it he understood and other parts came from various places in Congress, and he wasn't a whole lot more informed than we were on what some of it really meant.

So we struggled with trying to interpret how to implement the bill, and we put a team of people together in the region to start putting guidelines together for various parts of the bill. One of the mandates was to put out a programmatic environmental impact statement, so we put a team together to start working on that.

". . . this legislation allowed water to be sold from the Central Valley Project to anyplace in California, and the idea *there* for the folks that put the bill together was that Los Angeles, through the Metropolitan Water District, would be able to come into the San Joaquin Valley and buy out water that was going to a C-V-P farmer and move it over the hill and into Los Angeles. . . . Just figuring out the rules by which that would happen was a major, major headache, major controversy. . . ."

But some of these new responsibilities and programs were fairly comprehensive and controversial. For the first time ever, this legislation allowed water to be sold from the Central Valley Project to anyplace in California, and the idea ***there*** for the folks that put the bill together was that Los Angeles, through the Metropolitan Water District, would be able to come into the San Joaquin Valley and buy out water that was going to a C-V-P farmer and move it over the hill and into Los Angeles. I know there were estimates made when the legislation was being debated that within a few years there could be as much as a half a million acre-feet of water moving from the valley to the metropolitan area in L-A. Just figuring out the rules by which that would happen was a major, major headache, major controversy.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's First Attempt to Move CVP Water to the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area

But in reality, what we found is the first attempt to do that was probably pick the worst parties you could, because it was Metropolitan Water District went to a state legislator in the valley to try to buy his water from a dairy farm and transfer it. What happened is the neighbors sort of all came unglued and showed up en masse to public meetings. After a few meetings, they sort of gave up on the idea and got a little more sophisticated about how to approach doing these water transfers and started talking about doing them on a district-to-district basis as opposed to individual farmer basis.

". . . by the time I had left California, which was seven years after the act had passed, there hadn't been any water moved . . . of any magnitude as envisioned by the act. . . . a lot of it just had to do with the local politics of allowing water to move out of the valley to Los Angeles. . . ."

But at least by the time I had left California, which was seven years after the act had passed, there hadn't been any water moved on a long-term basis of any–I don't know of ***any***, certainly of any magnitude as envisioned by the act. It wasn't necessarily that they crafted the language poorly in the act or that we came up with rules that impeded it, but a lot of it just had to do with the local politics of allowing water to move out of the valley to Los Angeles.

The Act Created a Restoration Fund

There were other provisions. There was a restoration fund created in the bill. That was another first, basically it allowed for surplus revenues or revenue surcharges to be placed on water and power from the project. That went into a fund, and that fund then could be used to implement certain restoration or other Fish and Wildlife activities of the project. Obviously that was scrutinized very highly by the water users who were paying part of the bill, the power-users who were paying part of the bill. It took a lot to get that up and running.

". . . probably the most controversial part of the bill was a dedication of part of the project yield to Fish and Wildlife. It's still in litigation, I believe . . . quite a different view between those of us in Reclamation and those folks in Fish and Wildlife Service who are also part of Department of Interior. So we had a lot of internal family battles over that. We had battles with the outside world. . . ."

Then probably the most controversial part of the bill was a dedication of part of the project yield to Fish and Wildlife. It's still in litigation, I believe, as to exactly what that provision meant. But it was 3406.b.2, which dedicated 800,000 acre-feet of the C-V-P yield to Fish and Wildlife. We struggled with that a lot as to how to implement it and, again, everyone had their own view, quite a different view between those of us in Reclamation and those folks in Fish and Wildlife Service who are also part of Department of Interior. So we had a lot of internal family battles over that. We had battles with the outside world.

Reclamation Was Sued One Day after it Announced its Plans for Quantifying and Using the 800,000 Acre Feet of Water Dedicated by the CVPIA

One of the major decisions that was made by Interior was met with a lawsuit the day after it was announced, by the water users, and a week or so after that, the environmental community filed a lawsuit on the same decision. So clearly it wasn't easy to try to implement that.

Storey: What decision was that?

Patterson: A lot of times it was referred to as the b.2 decision. But it was the decision on how to quantify and utilize the 800,000 acre-feet that was dedicated under the act. I found out then, I guess, those of us that had worked for Reclamation for a long time, we had worked with the concept of yield before at some point in our careers we were working on water projects and dealing with the Fish and Wildlife Service folks. That was a foreign concept to most of them. They figured yield must mean 800,000 acre-feet of wet water each and every year. We just struggled over that, just a difference of view.

This rose to the highest levels in Interior. I mean, I can recall meetings with at the time it was John Garamendi, who was the deputy secretary, and John Leshy, who was the solicitor for interior, and we'd kind of go back and each argue our own position on that. Finally, I'm not sure if they knew exactly what it meant, but they told Mike Spear, who was the regional director for Fish and Wildlife, and me. They basically threw us out of the room and said, "Why don't you guys get your act together and see if you can figure this out." So we didn't get a lot of help there.

". . . it was just clearly a difference in view and a difference in view of the water users versus the environmental community, and then it wasn't helpful to Interior to have two agencies sort of espousing a different view of the world on the same provision. . . ."

But it was just clearly a difference in view and a difference in view of the water users versus the environmental community, and then it wasn't helpful to Interior to have two agencies sort of espousing a different view of the world on the same provision. While we clearly both understood we worked for the same boss in the secretary, we just had a hard time bringing those views together.

"So a lot of *new* programs and responsibilities under the act that were controversial and very expensive and put our staff in a tough spot, because the water users of the project, for the most part, hated the act. They were people that the Reclamation staff had worked with for years and years, and it was really hard to see how strained the relationships got between our customers out there and us trying to implement what Congress had handed us to do when they hated it and they fought it to the very end. . . ."

So a lot of ***new*** programs and responsibilities under the act that were controversial and very expensive and put our staff in a tough spot, because the water users of the project, for the most part, hated the act. They were people that the Reclamation staff had worked with for years and years, and it was really hard to see how strained the relationships got between our customers out there and us trying to

implement what Congress had handed us to do when they hated it and they fought it to the very end. I mean, it was such that Governor [Pete] Wilson flew to someplace on the East Coast, I think in Florida, and tried to talk President Bush into vetoing the law before it went into effect.

"People had done a pretty good job of adding so many *pieces* to this law, that states like Wyoming had things in there they wanted and other supporters of President Bush, there were things in there for them, too, and ultimately he decided to allow it to become law. So we had a sitting governor in California that publicly hated it . . ."

People had done a pretty good job of adding so many ***pieces*** to this law, that states like Wyoming had things in there they wanted and other supporters of President Bush, there were things in there for them, too, and ultimately he decided to allow it to become law. So we had a sitting governor in California that publicly hated it, and people knew that he had gone to try to convince the president, which was of his party, to veto it, and that didn't work out.

So we got handed something that wasn't all that much fun to try to implement, and I really admire the Reclamation folks for how they sort of stepped up and tried to do, not what their judgment was, you know, what's the right thing to do, but what do we need to do with this statute that we've been given the responsibility to implement. It had already been written, so it wasn't a matter of how would we write it.

". . . we were told when it was going through the very last phases in Congress, basically, to keep our hands off of it. . . . didn't want any involvement from us in it. It clearly was a political adventure in Washington. Normally, you would like to try to be there in crafting something like that, so when you get handed responsibility to implement it, you've helped provide some input. . . ."

In fact, we were told when it was going through the very last phases in Congress, basically, to keep our hands off of it. This was by the Bush folks. They didn't want any involvement from us in it. It clearly was a political adventure in Washington. Normally, you would like to try to be there in crafting something like that, so when you get handed responsibility to implement it, you've helped provide some input. We didn't have that luxury either.

CVPIA Changed Contracting Procedures

So it was a struggle, and it was our prime job for several years and still is for those folks that are still there. It changed the whole contracting procedures, by law limited the term of renewed contracts with water users to twenty-five years and had a requirement that, for a while, they had interim contracts until the EIS was done that were three years, and then on two years thereafter. So these folks went from what were previously forty-year contracts to a three-year contract. Bankers were nervous, and the water users thought they'd been sold out.

"Land values did decrease during that time. It wasn't just the new law, but we

were in the middle of a drought in California, the worst possible thing . . ."

Land values did decrease during that time. It wasn't just the new law, but we were in the middle of a drought in California, the worst possible thing, it occurs the same time this new law passes. And then we also had species listed in the Bay-Delta ecosystem that we were protecting under the Endangered Species Act.

". . . you have endangered species, a drought, and this new law, all of which worked to reduce the water supplies to our water users. . . . But there was a tremendous amount of distrust because of all those things coming together. . . ."

So here you have endangered species, a drought, and this new law, all of which worked to reduce the water supplies to our water users. At one point they were just so frustrated, they thought Reclamation was hiding the ball on them and was causing their water supplies to go down because of the new legislation when we were saying it was primarily because of the drought. It was just hard. We did work through that relationship over the next two or three years to where the technical people and the managers from the water users, I think, worked with our folks enough that they understood what was causing the problem and believed us when we told them this is sort of how we got to it. But there was a tremendous amount of distrust because of all those things coming together. Sounds like fun, huh?

Storey: I'm told that you were the primary architect, for instance, of CALFED.

Creation of CALFED

Patterson: Well, CALFED, I was in on the ground floor, I guess. This was during that same time frame, and Pete Wilson was still in the governor's office.

"The water users . . . and the governor . . . asked some fairly good questions. Kind of what it all pointed to was maybe . . . the Federal agencies, really didn't have our act together and were not doing a very good job of working together in coordinating our activities. It was primarily directed at four of us at that time. . . ."

The water users were pointing fingers and the governor was pointing fingers, and I think they asked some fairly good questions. Kind of what it all pointed to was maybe the agencies, the Federal agencies, really didn't have our act together and were not doing a very good job of working together in coordinating our activities. It was primarily directed at four of us at that time. It was Reclamation and Fish and Wildlife Service, because we were working together to implement Central Valley Project Improvement Act. There was also National Marine Fisheries, because they were involved under Endangered Species Act, because they have responsibility for salmon. Winter-run salmon was one of our listed species. And then the Environmental Protection Agency was kind of front and center as well, because they, under the Clean Water Act, had oversight for new water quality standards in Bay-Delta.

So I don't know, we decided that maybe we owed the folks in California and ourselves at least to try to see if we were doing a poor job of coordinating and

understanding what we were doing. So Reclamation hired a facilitator and we met in some hotel in San Francisco. I don't know what time we started. It was like nine in the morning, and I think we were still going at eleven o'clock at night. By the time that meeting concluded, at least–well, several observations, I guess. One, we had pretty well wallpapered a room with flip charts, and I think we had amazed ourselves at how much we had going on individually and collectively. I mean, we just went through a process of trying to put on the wall what we had under way in Reclamation, for instance, and just kept putting more and more things up.

"By the time we got four agencies' primary stuff up there, we had the room wallpapered, and, I think, concluded that we *were* doing a lousy job of coordinating on a *lot* of things, because there was so much going on . . ."

By the time we got four agencies' primary stuff up there, we had the room wallpapered, and, I think, concluded that we ***were*** doing a lousy job of coordinating on a ***lot*** of things, because there was so much going on and our focus may have been on two things, and we had ten others that our staff was implementing and maybe even in direct conflict to the goals of the other agencies.

Late at Night, after a Long Day, They Originally Dubbed the Program "Club Fed"

So we were getting kind of goofy by about eleven o'clock at night, and we thought, "Well, we ought to create some kind of mechanism to start doing a coordination process on this." John Weiss [phonetic] was there. He was the deputy director at EPA [Environmental Protection Agency], and he's the one that said, "Well, we ought to have a name for this thing." We started brainstorming and we stumbled on to, well, it's the Feds, so it's got to be Fed. And then we ended up with Club Fed. That's how the Federal agencies got the name of Club Fed, and we started talking about it publicly and basically acknowledged that, yeah, we needed to do a lot better job of coordination, and we'd created a way to do this, and make fun of us, if you will, but at least we're trying. We're Club Fed.

Betsy Rieke was assistant secretary at the time, and she had been given some responsibility for Bay-Delta by the secretary, so she became kind of our godmother for Club Fed after we had got it sort of up and running. She ran a lot of interference and provided support to us at the Washington level.

". . . we were doing a better job, and I think it started to become obvious that maybe the state agencies weren't so hot at coordinating either. The governor got them together . . . they were much more dignified than us. They created a Governor's Water Policy Council . . ."

I think what we did, we got to the point where we weren't doing a great job, but we were doing a better job, and I think it started to become obvious that maybe the state agencies weren't so hot at coordinating either. The governor got them together and said, "If I'm criticizing the Feds, that's fine, and I'm going to continue to do that, but maybe we ought to try to get our act together a little bit as well." Of course, they were much more dignified than us. They created a Governor's Water Policy Council, where the relevant agencies of the state would get together and meet

and do some coordination.

"Those two eventually grew together, the Cal part and us Feds, into CALFED. . . ."

Those two eventually grew together, the Cal part and us Feds, into CALFED. That was the joint state-Federal group of agencies, and it grew. It went from the few that we had, the original four on our side, we ended up bringing in the [U.S. Army] Corps of Engineers and Western Area Power Administration and NRCS [Natural Resources Conservation Service] and others. So it continued to grow. I don't know, people argue about how many were really there. I think there were about sixteen, ultimately, agencies that were part of the Club Fed process.

". . . one of the first major things that took place there was the negotiation of the Bay-Delta Accord. . . . It was really a truce in a lot of ways to kind of stop the bleeding for all parties that were concerned with Bay-Delta. We'd gotten to the point where in the past you really had three interest groups. You had the ag, the enviro, and the urban. . . ."

Kind of one of the first major things that took place there was the negotiation of the Bay-Delta Accord.[46] It was really a truce in a lot of ways to kind of stop the bleeding for all parties that were concerned with Bay-Delta. We'd gotten to the point where in the past you really had three interest groups. You had the ag, the enviro, and the urban. Those three, for years, they always looked out for their own interests, and from time to time two of them would team up on the other one and they would advance their interests, and then the next time it might be urban and ag teaming up against the enviros, and then the next time it might be the enviros and the urban teaming up.

". . . it had gotten to the point in the early nineties where everybody was losing. . . ."

But it had gotten to the point in the early nineties where everybody was losing. The populations of the species were continuing to decline. New listings were coming on. The ag folks' water supplies were going to heck on them because of a lot of reasons, new restrictions from C-V-P-I-A and Endangered Species Act, etcetera. Urban communities didn't really have a reliable water supply coming out of Bay-Delta.

". . . caused folks to come together and basically say from the water users' side, 'We'll put a certain amount of water on the table to go towards Bay-Delta needs for water quality and endangered species. In exchange for that, we will get a planning process that we will all support to find a long-term solution.'. . ."

So this was one where it isn't working for anybody, and that's really what caused folks to come together and basically say from the water users' side, "We'll put a certain amount of water on the table to go towards Bay-Delta needs for water quality and endangered species. In exchange for that, we will get a planning process

46. See footnote on page 108.

that we will all support to find a long-term solution." So that's what was behind it, and that was December fifteenth. I think it was '94.

". . . CALFED sort of was in charge of the planning process from that point on and created the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. I guess we call it the Bay-Delta Program. It gets used interchangeably, Bay-Delta and CALFED. . . ."

Then CALFED sort of was in charge of the planning process from that point on and created the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. I guess we call it the Bay-Delta Program. It gets used interchangeably, Bay-Delta and CALFED. Hired an executive director, Lester Snow. Undertook this planning process, and it's still under way, and it's extremely controversial. Finally, we had all the agencies, I think for the first time in California history, sitting around the same table, and we had a process to bring in and work with the various stakeholders at the same time. So, a fascinating, fascinating process, and expensive, but something that needs to be done.

Storey: Let's talk about how the money flowed into this process.

Money in the Bay-Delta CALFED Process

Patterson: Boy, it flowed. I'd just like to get the crumbs out here. [Laughter] It was really interesting. We knew we were going to need a lot of money, and kind of the way I saw it is, the various stakeholders saw the wisdom in joining arms to go get money, and then with the same message basically, and that is, we have a problem, we're working together to solve it, and it's going to take money. They were very effective at pursuing money. Then once the money was brought back and put on the conference room table, then the normal fights resumed over how to spend it. But that was more of an internal process.

Really one of the first efforts was a state bond issue. Prop–I think it was 904. I don't even remember now. But it was just a little under a billion, about 995 million dollars for basically water bonds and ecosystem restoration, and about half of that was to be the state's part of the Bay-Delta Program. That was on a November ballot, and within a few weeks after that, legislation passed Congress authorizing like 430 million dollars of Federal matching funds. So this was before there was any plan at all. It was basically we knew we had a problem and we were going to start the planning process. We had close to a half a billion dollars of state money available to use and an authorization, at least, for 400-plus million of Federal money. So that was a pretty good start.

The President requested the maximum amount under the Federal legislation for the first year appropriation. I think the maximum you could get was 143 million, and I think we ended up with like 85 million, and that money has continued to flow. With the state money there's easily 100 million dollars a year available to that program. Just recently California passed another bond for 1.97 billion that a good portion of that can be made available to the program.

So it's kind of amazing how folks that have been at war for years came together and were able to secure some pretty heavy-duty funding to go towards that

problem. That doesn't include the money that Reclamation is putting into similar activities through C-V-P-I-A. We were putting probably 50 million a year into similar activities through that program. So you had the restoration fund from C-V-P-I-A; you had direct appropriations to Reclamation for C-V-P-I-A; you had the Federal appropriation for Bay-Delta that came through Reclamation; and then you had the state money available. We also had a commitment for like 30 million dollars from the water users that was up-fronted by Metropolitan Water District. So we had some non-state, non-Federal money on the table. Really, really fascinating how you can raise a lot of money in a hurry. Like I say, I'd like to have the crumbs. [Laughter]

Storey: Yes, but I would think that that kind of money coming through, I'll say you, but through Reclamation in Sacramento, how do we control . . . how do we assure ourselves that the money is being properly spent?

Patterson: Well, that was always a question, because what you had is really at that point you almost had more money available than you could spend wisely that year. Folks in California really wanted to kind of make sure we were spending it wisely. This is not just Reclamation, but kind of the stakeholders in other agencies. They just didn't want to dribble it away.

We sort of had this funny dynamic setting up where kind of traditional Reclamation programs you always measure program accomplishment by how did you spend the money. You know, how much money did you spend? Did you spend all the money? Well, then you must need more. And we started running in to . . . we had big appropriations coming to us, but we wanted to make sure we spent it wisely and, as a result, our expenditures weren't real high. And try as we might to explain that, "Look, all we want to do is make sure we spend it smart, and we'll let it sit there. We're willing to set it aside in a trust or whatever," we got in this jam where people were saying, "Ah, jeez, they must . . ."

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. MARCH 28, 2000.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. MARCH 28, 2000.

Storey: They must not really need that much money.

Patterson: That's right, if they aren't spending it. So it was sort of the old Reclamation view of program accomplishment is how much money did you spend, and sort of the new view is we want to spend this money in partnership and we want to get everybody on line for all these projects, and then when we're ready to go, gosh, we need to have the money available, because now we're ready to go. We can't wait for a two-year appropriation process. So it was a challenge.

"The percent of Reclamation's budget going into Mid-Pacific Region got pretty high during that time. . . . I remember Commissioner [Eluid L.] Martinez looked at me and he said, 'Look, you've already got 42 percent of Reclamation's budget. Can't you figure out how to get by without this 1.4 million?' He humiliated me into saying, 'Commissioner, I'll do that. I'll try to do that.'. . ."

The percent of Reclamation's budget going into Mid-Pacific Region got pretty

high during that time. I remember I was in arguing for something in one of our Budget Review Committee processes. It was like a 1.4 million dollars or something that our region needed, and we really needed it. It didn't have anything to do with CALFED or C-V-P-I-A. It was for something out at one of the dams.

I gave a great argument, and I remember Commissioner [Eluid L.] Martinez looked at me and he said, "Look, you've already got 42 percent of Reclamation's budget. Can't you figure out how to get by without this 1.4 million?" He humiliated me into saying, "Commissioner, I'll do that. I'll try to do that." [Laughter] So that's what I did. But the fact is, there were a lot of firewalls, as you know, between the various funds and you can't just take CALFED money and move it out to Shasta, Shasta Dam, and spend it that way.

". . . there was a lot of money going out there, and there's this old ABC, this old "Anybody but California" business that a lot of folks hold, including those in Congress. It was a lot of money to be going towards California, and a lot of other states have real needs, and there's only so much money. . . ."

Fortunately, I knew the other regional directors pretty well, and we worked together well. But there was a lot of money going out there, and there's this old ABC, this old "Anybody but California" business that a lot of folks hold, including those in Congress. It was a lot of money to be going towards California, and a lot of other states have real needs, and there's only so much money. And if we had money setting there from a big appropriation, we hadn't spent it yet, that whole dynamic was kind of like, "What's going on here?" It got more politicized than it probably needed to be.

Storey: But, let's talk in a little more detail about the dynamic of how the money actually got spent. Reclamation wasn't doing the planning.

How the CALFED Money Got Spent

Patterson: Right.

Storey: Yet Reclamation was spending the money.

Patterson: Yeah. Basically the way it would work is we had a restoration fund roundtable that was made up of agency and stakeholder staff. They were the ones that, through a solicitation process, would go out and solicit proposals for habitat restoration or similar activities from anybody that had a good proposal. So it could be a city, it could be an irrigation district, it could be a non-profit, it could be another agency that had an idea. It went through a pretty excruciating evaluation process to look at whether it was technically adequate and looked at the cost, etcetera, etcetera. ***That*** process was basically the surrogate for what normally would be a Reclamation plan-it-and-design-it kind of an approach.

So, we worked very closely with that roundtable, and they had a staff. The CALFED staff handled the logistics of the program, etcetera. They would rank, and then as those proposals came through the approval process, and they had to go all the

way to what was called the CALFED policy team, which was chaired by an assistant secretary on the Federal side and the secretary of resources on the state side. So it had to get approval there, and that's where ***all*** of us as agency directors sat. Once it had gotten to that point, then a contract was awarded by somebody.

"CALFED is a *virtual* organization; it has no authority to hire, fire, contract, etcetera. It's really a conglomeration of employees from all of these various agencies and some stakeholder groups that were under contract and some contractor-like, consultant-type employees. So you had this group, this staff of sixty people, all of them had a lifeline back to one of these other organizations. . . ."

CALFED is a ***virtual*** organization; it has no authority to hire, fire, contract, etcetera. It's really a conglomeration of employees from all of these various agencies and some stakeholder groups that were under contract and some contractor-like, consultant-type employees. So you had this group, this staff of sixty people, all of them had a lifeline back to one of these other organizations. It wasn't a separate agency or an entity. So they didn't have ***authority*** to award these contracts.

So you get a proposal that goes through, it's checked and rechecked and it meets the test, yes, it's what ***we want*** to do as CALFED. Then somebody had that contract, Reclamation ended up doing the contracting for a lot of those. On the state side, Department of Water Resources did a lot of them. Then the Federal money came from Reclamation. So we would be cutting the checks.

". . . we had people nervous about, 'Gee, we're spending Reclamation money, but yet we haven't had the *experts* from Reclamation look at these projects and they didn't plan them and they didn't design them.'. . ."

So we had people nervous about, "Gee, we're spending Reclamation money, but yet we haven't had the ***experts*** from Reclamation look at these projects and they didn't plan them and they didn't design them." I think for the most part they were well planned and well designed, but it happened to be by somebody also. Again, that was a little uncomfortable for some folks. But I don't think a lot of lousy projects got funded that way. You really had to have your act together to get your project funded. But, again, that was different.

So the question to us is, gee, we know that if something goes wrong with the funding, they're not going to drag in one of the state employees or one of the contractors; they're going to drag in the Reclamation person responsible, either me or the commissioner or the assistant secretary. Congress is going to drag us in and ask us what the heck is going on.

So I felt accountable for the money, and my staff did as well, and they would have liked to have had more involvement, I think, from time to time so we had a better handle. But I spent a lot of personal time on CALFED. I mean, I knew what was going on there and spent a lot of time with them and had pretty good confidence that they were doing it right. But, again, it was a new approach to things, and sometimes when we tried to explain it to some of the folks on The Hill, they kind of

looked at us like, "Yeah. We hear what you're saying, and it sort of sounds right, but we're skeptical this is the way to do business."

Storey: Where do we do the traditional controls? I can see that coming up all over the place.

"We ended up putting one of our prime budget staff people down in the CALFED office, and they kind of did an on-site review there. . . ."

Patterson: Absolutely. That's what it amounted to, is how do you make sure you do it right. We ended up putting one of our prime budget staff people down in the CALFED office, and they kind of did an on-site review there. But it was different. There's no question. I don't know, I have a feeling, probably not of that magnitude, but we're going to see probably more projects being put on the ground and then in a way similar to that in the future. I don't know. It ***was*** different.

Storey: I've forgotten the name of it, there's an irrigation district north and west of Sacramento. Maybe Tehama-Colusa or something like that?

Patterson: Yeah.

Storey: They felt that they sort of got the short end of the stick when the 800,000 acre-feet were allotted.

As far as the 800,000 acre feet of water allocated to environmental projects, ". . . the people *north* of the delta, that would be primarily the people on the Sacramento River, I think they were impacted less than the people south of the delta were. . . ."

Patterson: Well, yeah, I think a lot of them felt that way. Sort of the way it worked was, the people ***north*** of the delta, that would be primarily the people on the Sacramento River, I think they were impacted less than the people south of the delta were. There was a major endangered species conflict between winter-run salmon and the Glen-Colusa Irrigation District where National Marine Fisheries pursued that real hard and actually got–Glen-Colusa Irrigation District had an injunction against them for how much water they could take until they got a new fish screen in. So they felt that a lot.

Westlands Water District

But I think a lot of the impact of the 800,000 and the other endangered species actions hit the people south of the delta harder. Westlands Water District is despised by a lot of folks in the environmental community. They're just too big, for one thing–600,000 acres. I told the board president once, "You've got to split into ten small districts and come up with new names," that didn't have either "West" or "land" in them and he'd have less problem. But, I mean, they were just this ***big*** 600-pound gorilla south of the delta, and many of the environmental problems of the past, whether it's associated with drainage or using more water than they should, whatever it was, those seemed to get attributed to Westlands. As a result, I think a lot of people felt that if Westlands was being shorted, that's the way it ought to be.

"In reality, Westlands is probably about as progressive of a water district and a water manager of any district I've ever seen and worked with. . . ."

In reality, Westlands is probably about as progressive of a water district and a water manager of any district I've ever seen and worked with. They're truly state of the art. I mean, they have an internal electronic bulletin board where farmers can trade water. They have some very progressive things they're doing relative to drainage. They ***are*** very sophisticated and they're really good. But they were sort of attacked on a lot of these issues by folks and, I think, probably felt more of the brunt than the people north of Sacramento did. But they had theirs. They got theirs as well.

Storey: Why would they have felt that way?

Patterson: Well, because the primary water supply going to them is through the Tracy Pumping Plant out of the south delta, and not too far from Tracy is the Banks Pumping Plant, which is the state project export facility that delivers water down the valley to Kern County and through the Tehachapis [Tehachapi Mountains] to the Los Angeles area.

So you had these two large pumping plants in the south delta. That's where Westlands' water supply came. A lot of the measures that were ordered either by Fish and Wildlife or NMFS [pronounced as "nymphs"; National Marine Fisheries Service] through Central Valley Project Improvement Act or Endangered Species [Act] really had to do with those pumps. One, are they entraining fish by pumping fish into the pumps through the screens? Are they changing the whole flow of the south delta to where when there's not a lot of outflow are we actually reversing the flows in the south delta and disorienting fish, water quality issues, etcetera? So those pumps really were the focus of a lot of the ills being caused to the environment, and as a result, the solution was, don't run them as much and don't run them as fast. So anytime you reduced or shut down a pump or even a unit, that reduced the water supply going to Westlands and other users south of the Delta. So that was a problem.

Storey: That brings up another thing I wanted to talk about, and that's the Peripheral Canal. Did it come back up in all of this process?

Peripheral Canal/ Isolated Facility

Patterson: Actually, it did.

Storey: There are still people who believe it's the best way to have solved a lot of the problems.

Patterson: Actually, a lot of the fish people believe that, which is interesting. Yes, it came back. The Peripheral Canal had been a concept that had been around for decades, and some of the folks, particularly with the state–Bob Potter, who was the deputy director at D-W-R [California Department of Water Resources], he used to talk about all four times or whatever it was that he had worked on the Peripheral Canal dating back thirty-, forty years.

There was some information that was pulled out of some of the old Reclamation documents where ***our people*** talked about at the time that Tracy Pumping Plant was even built, that at some point it would make more sense to try to build a Peripheral Canal, where you would go up on the Sacramento River and divert the water there, and basically go around the delta so that problems wouldn't be caused in the south delta.

"I don't know that problems were all that major when Tracy was there by itself. Tracy diverts like 4,200 cubic feet per second. But then when the state project came on next to Tracy, it's a much bigger facility and problems really started to develop and then more talk about you really do need this Peripheral Canal. . . ."

It became extremely controversial. Folks in the north part of the state thought by doing that it's just a way for the southern part of the state, particularly Los Angeles area, to just bleed the north dry.

". . . sort of the third rail of water politics in California is the Peripheral Canal. So, you don't touch it. . . ."

It became very controversial for political reasons, some for technical reasons, but more, I think, for political reasons. Many of the folks that thought a Peripheral Canal is the way to go were the fishery folks. They truly believe that the fishery would be in better shape if you could figure out how to divert from the Sacramento and go around. But sort of the third rail of water politics in California is the Peripheral Canal. So, you don't touch it.

Storey: It didn't get serious then?

Patterson: No. It got a lot of talk, but basically we decided for this first phase of the CALFED program we ought to see if we can't solve it without having to go that far. It's also extremely expensive. You're talking a couple of billion dollars easy, and probably a lot more than that by the time we actually figured out how to build it and get it on the ground.

Storey: I understand part of it's already there.

Patterson: Well, yeah. I guess they strategically used some of the fill for Interstate 5 out of a borrow pit that from the airlines up and kind of starts looking like a part of the canal. [Laughter] At least that's what some folks have told me.

Storey: I still don't understand where the 800,000 acre-feet of water was going to come from, and I also don't understand this concept of ***yield*** and what that means and why it was an issue of confrontation between us and Fish and Wildlife Service.

"Reclamation, several years before '92, had actually started down the path to sell more C-V-P water, and at least in hindsight now, it's pretty clear that there wasn't any water to sell. . . ."

Patterson: Well, I wish I could explain it. It's so difficult. Let me just a little bit more

background here. Reclamation, several years before '92, had actually started down the path to sell more C-V-P water, and at least in hindsight now, it's pretty clear that there wasn't any water to sell. But we had started down the path to do an EIS for marketing additional C-V-P water, and that clearly caused people to believe that there must be some excess water in the C-V-P if the Bureau's out there and they're going to market it.

". . . their intent in dedicating some of the water from the C-V-P to Fish and Wildlife was simply to dedicate that which the Bureau had already indicated was surplus . . . their view, is, 'We didn't *intended* to take water away from the existing users. We thought there was surplus, so that's what we were dedicating.'. . ."

So some of the folks will tell you that their intent in dedicating some of the water from the C-V-P to Fish and Wildlife was simply to dedicate that which the Bureau had already indicated was surplus, if you will. It was available to be marketed. So that was their view, is, "We didn't ***intended*** to take water away from the existing users. We thought there was surplus, so that's what we were dedicating."

As you look at the capability of the project, even before C-V-P-I-A, we couldn't deliver firm water supplies to all of our contractors at a rate that was envisioned when those contracts were signed.

"Reclamation's always . . . looked at their projects in a way that they wanted to have enough *. . . firm* yield to be able to provide at least–it varied, but generally it was a 75 percent supply during a drought. . . ."

Reclamation's always had different– they've always looked at their projects in a way that they wanted to have enough ***firm*** supply or ***firm*** yield to be able to provide at least–it varied, but generally it was a 75 percent supply during a drought.

The way you would look at it is, what's the drought of record for this particular project when you build it? In the case of C-V-P it was '28 to '34 was the driest period of record. So the idea was that during a reoccurrence of a similar drought we want to be able to deliver at least a 75 percent supply to all of these people we've contracted for. Obviously, if you weren't in a drought, they'd get 100 percent.

"Then there was usually another criteria that you wouldn't have more than one year out of that drought where you couldn't deliver any water. . . ."

Then there was usually another criteria that you wouldn't have more than one year out of that drought where you couldn't deliver any water. So there were usually two criteria: you try to ***not*** go below 75 percent for the whole time, and no more than one year when you were worse than that. And that's generally how you determine the yield of a project. You looked at the drought period of record and the capability to supply water during that period, and that got you to the yield. Clearly, in anytime when it's wetter than that, no problem. You've got more water.

What the C-V-P-I-A did is it came in and dedicated 800,000 acre-feet of C-V-P yield to Fish and Wildlife–***not of water*** but of yield–which basically said–and it even made reference to the '28 to '34 period, that the yield of the project during '28 to '34. So you basically needed to look at during a drought period like that what was the yield of the project, and whatever it was, 800,000 of that now was dedicated over here to Fish and Wildlife. And, that's what the act did.

What got hard for people to understand is, just like before the dedication, when you were in times when you weren't in the drought of record, the project clearly had more water supply and you could deliver higher amounts to the users.

"But somehow the Fish and Wildlife Service believed that even when times were good, the contractors should still be short, and they should be short by at least 800,000 acre-feet, even when times were good. . . ."

But somehow the Fish and Wildlife Service believed that even when times were good, the contractors should still be short, and they should be short by at least 800,000 acre-feet, even when times were good. That's just sort of the central debate.

"'Well, what you got is when times are really bad . . . the worst you'll do is 600,000. When times are good, you're going to get 800,000. . . . the other users of the project, they might get their full supply in those good years . . .'"

When we would say, "Well, what you got is when times are really bad, you're going to get at least 800,000 acre-feet of water, you the Fish and Wildlife concern, and the act allowed that to be reduced by 25 percent, just like Reclamation used to do to our contractors. So the worst you'll do is 600,000. When times are good, you're going to get 800,000. You're going to get 800,000. But the other users of the project, they might get their full supply in those good years, too, because the yield of the project is a whole lot more in those times when it was good."

"They always thought somehow the other guy's getting a full supply must mean they weren't getting theirs, and also they thought when times were good they should be getting *more* water. . . ."

They always thought somehow the other guy's getting a full supply must mean they weren't getting theirs, and also they thought when times were good they should be getting ***more*** water. We just never could get by that, try as we might. Talking to policy people in Washington, they quickly glazed over, and the lawyers, you can shop around and get one to agree with you, whatever your view was. So that's why it's in litigation, because it's clearly not viewed the same by everybody.

Storey: So it is currently in litigation?

Patterson: Yeah. I think so. I think it still is.

Storey: But the Fish and Wildlife Service isn't suing Reclamation over this issue?

Patterson: No. Interior is sued by the water users and the environmental community. I think the

first cut from the judge was, "Jeez, yeah, this is complicated stuff." Kind of whatever Interior decides, he's going to give pretty wide latitude to. There's a lot of deference given to the agency. So a lot of it got down to then how's Interior going to come down on this, and unless it's arbitrary and capricious, probably the view of the agency would prevail. Clearly, during the time we were debating this, people were a lot more favorable in the department toward Fish and Wildlife's views than they were Reclamation's views. It's just the nature of the folks in the Department. So I was never very happy about that.

Storey: So it's never been really settled. It's still an issue out there.

Patterson: Still an issue. They've got time. They've got a few more years.

Evolution of Commissioner Dan Beard's Thinking about the Issue of Acreage Limitation

Storey: You were talking about Westlands a little while ago. One of the things I'm sort of interested in is . . . I don't know whether you are aware that I did interviews with Dan Beard every six months after I had completed the initial interview. (Patterson: Oh.) And, I was very interested to watch his evolution in thinking about the acreage-limitation issues and how important they were and so on. Westlands, I believe, was sort of a center of many of those concerns.

Patterson: Yes.

Storey: What I saw was him evolving from it being a major concern to it wasn't a major issue at all. Could you talk about that from your perspective? How did you see the issues down in Westlands and in the Central Valley Project?

Thought Dan Beard a Champion of Acreage Limitation, but after He Became Commissioner Acreage Limitation Became less of a Concern

Patterson: That's an interesting observation about Dan, because I saw that as well. I always thought when Dan worked on The Hill that he was a great champion for acreage limitation, and that was a major concern of his. As I saw him with Reclamation, that did become of less concern over time. I don't think he spent a lot of time on it after he'd been in Reclamation for a while.

My view before going to California was that if it weren't for Westlands Water District, we wouldn't have acreage limitations in the first place. Of course, that's not true. Acreage limitation went back way before then. But a lot of the controversy and problem with Reclamation Reform Act, it did come out of Westlands. When we got to looking at components of the program, whether it's trusts, whatever, it wasn't uncommon to find out that 80-, 90 percent of whatever you were looking at across Reclamation was certainly within the M-P region, and out of those, 80 or 90 percent were probably within Westlands.

". . . Westlands landowners and the attorneys that worked for those landowners, were very smart. So kind of no matter of how the law would get changed to deal

with whatever the concern was, they would figure out a way to restructure to allow their operation to remain viable. . . ."

The problem was they, the Westlands landowners and the attorneys that worked for those landowners, were very smart. So kind of no matter of how the law would get changed to deal with whatever the concern was, they would figure out a way to restructure to allow their operation to remain viable. And it may mean that they may have had to sell or they may have had to do this or whatever, but these guys were not a bunch of country bumpkins that didn't know what they were doing. They were smart businesspeople and they had good counsel, so they were able to figure out how to work under the law, but yet continue to do things.

The lightning rod for a lot of this were like the West Haven Trust, which was this–gosh, I don't remember how big it was, but it's a huge trust that was set up. Each of the employees of the organization held up to 960 acres. Clearly, you'd look at that and go, "Well, that's not right. That shouldn't be." But we would audit it. It wasn't illegal. Well, so then you tell Congress. "Yes, we audited it. It's not illegal." And some folks would think, "Well then, gee, we need to change the law again." I knew good and well that's fine, but whatever you change the law to, they're going to figure out how to stay in business. They may have to change, but they'll stay in business.

I, frankly, didn't spend much of my time, either, worrying about it. I wanted to make sure that our staff was doing an adequate job of audits and reviews and knowing what's going on so that, clearly, if they were put on the stand, they would know and they would be able to testify that they'd done their job, that whatever they had looked at was legal under the law, and if they found something that wasn't, then I'd help them and we'd jump on it and we'd go do what we needed to do. I don't know, I just had better things to spend my time on, and I think that's kind of the way Dan felt after a while.

Storey: You went to California, and then we had the "Contract with America" and the change in the Congress from a Democratic House [of Representatives], I believe, to a Republican House. One of the changes there, if I'm not incorrect, was that instead of [George] Miller being the head of our relevant committee, it now became Congressman Doolittle. [Laughter]

Patterson: That's right.

Storey: What kind of changes did that mean for Reclamation?

What Changes in Administrations and the Congress Meant to Reclamation

Patterson: In a way it changed a lot and in other ways nothing changed, because previously we worked for a Republican President and the Democrats had the House. So I would go up many times to hearings to be the witness or go with the assistant secretary or the secretary or the commissioner, and we would be beat up by Mr. Miller for how we were handling RRA or we were doing this or whatever. In a lot of ways it was adversarial.

The funny thing is, when you're a career employee, sometimes you testify on the same issue. I've had a few of those where at one point I was there representing the Bush Administration and Mr. Miller was asking the questions, and then later, some of these things never change, I was back there at that time then working for the Clinton Administration and Mr. Miller's now in the minority and John Doolittle is the subcommittee chair and he's beating us up over . . .

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. MARCH 28, 2000.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. MARCH 28, 2000.

Storey: This is Brit Allan Storey with Roger K. Patterson on March 28, 2000.

Patterson: So the dynamic, in a lot of ways, was the same. It was just a different face there. But a lot of that dynamic was the same. Both George Miller and John Doolittle were from California, so you always had that California slant on things. Clearly, when John Doolittle came in, he had never been in the majority while he had been in Congress, and I think for him, as well as a lot of folks, when the Republicans took control, they had to learn what it meant to be in the majority, and I think they struggled in getting their legs on a lot of issues, you know, just simple things like the rules of conduct for the committees.

I can remember I think I was at one of the, if not the first one, one of the very first hearings that Mr. Doolittle conducted. I don't know what it was, but I can remember George Miller having to give him some advice on some procedural thing. Had sort of gotten into a snag. You know, it was the thing, well, you're new at it and it takes a while. It wasn't just Doolittle, but the staff. The staff, they'd always been in the minority, and now here they are in the majority. So it was hard.

John Doolittle does not try to hide his dislike for the Clinton administration. He was pretty vocal about many of the policies that were coming down. Then, again, some of the same issues that our water users hated about what we were doing with them, he hated just as much. I mean, whether it came to contracting procedures or this 800,000 acre-foot thing or dah-dah-dah, I mean, he had issues that he wanted to take us up on.

I will say I always got along with him well. I sat down and talked to him. He had his issues. Auburn Dam was his number-one issue, and it sort of would find its way into almost every hearing, conversation, almost every letter, I think, because he was from that district in California for Auburn Dam. A lot of folks thought, and maybe John Doolittle included, that Republicans had the Congress back, that opened up his opportunity to finally get Auburn Dam back up and running. Of course, that just wasn't to be.

But I always got along with him pretty well, and I always got along with George Miller pretty well. When I went to California, I thought, "Well, as the new regional director, I should go meet with George Miller." I'd worked with Beard before on a lot of things, but I'd never really had a chance to interact with George Miller directly. But I thought, "Well, now's the time." So I set up an appointment one of my first trips. I was feeling like I was ready to go and visit with him about

whatever.

I talked to Larry Hancock, who had been the regional director before me, and I said, "Yeah, I'm going to meet with George Miller while I'm back there." And he said, "Boy, you'd better be prepared." He said, "He yelled and screamed at me and basically threw me out of his office the last time I met with him or the first time or whatever." Ah, jeez. So I sort of prepared myself going in, that if it got bad and I thought he was just beating up on me just for sport, I'd just have to excuse myself and leave. We sat there and chatted for forty minutes, and it was a great conversation. No yelling. No screaming. No name-calling. It was interesting.

Talking with George Miller about the San Luis Drain

Besides just meeting him, there was one ***issue*** that I wanted to take up with him, and it was what he called reopening San Luis Drain, which is almost like the Peripheral Canal. What we had decided is that for a short-term measure deal with some of the drainage problems, we had a scheme worked out where we could get all the bad drain water out of the wetlands area, the grasslands area, the wetlands complex, reroute it around the wetlands, carry it for a short ways in the old abandoned San Luis Drain and then put it into San Joaquin River, which is where it was now going anyway. Technically made a lot of sense. Water management-wise made a lot of sense. But when it came to the part about putting it in the old San Luis Drain, which used to go into Kesterson Reservoir, that didn't sound very good. So I knew he would react to that adversely.

After five minutes of small talk, I said, "Congressman, there's one thing I do want to run by you, because I haven't been there very long, but I figured out something I think we need to do with drainage." And I explained it to him. I could tell I wasn't too far into it, and he was–he didn't interrupt me, but he was kind of wondering who this guy was. But he let me continue, and I spent about ten minutes on it. He looked at me and he said, "Well, at least you've thought this through. That's more than you guys usually do." "Now," he said, "you're not opening San Luis Drain. I don't know what you're going to call this, and I don't know if this even works, but that doesn't sound like a good thing that you would want to be pursuing." Very good advice.

We ended up still doing the same project, and we got the environmental community to help us put it together, and Fish and Wildlife Service was on board and whatever. But I kind of learned from him it's how you say things that is probably going to affect his reaction to things. But we continued on for another half hour and visited about this and that. That was before the Clinton people came in. I always got along with him pretty well. Then after the Clinton folks were in, he was always pretty easy to work with.

I always got along with Doolittle pretty well that way, too. He had different issues that he cared about, usually at just the opposite end of where George Miller was.

"Doolittle had a hearing, he had an oversight hearing in Sacramento, and he had

about half of his committee there. Half of the committee was from California. He told me beforehand, he said, "You know, we've got to do this. We've just got to do this, and you're sort of the main entrée.'. . ."

One other little story. Doolittle had a hearing, he had an oversight hearing in Sacramento, and he had about half of his committee there. Half of the committee was from California. He told me beforehand, he said, "You know, we've got to do this. We've just got to do this, and you're sort of the main entrée." [Laughter] And I knew, yeah, okay. That was fine. So we went through, and it was the same old grilling on this and that and the 800,000 and whatever. As one of his staff used to tell me, "John Doolittle's a very conservative guy. He thinks conservative, he dresses conservatively, and he acts conservative. So you'll do better if you understand that's the way he is."

". . . they'd gone through two rounds each by the members of the committee. They had all taken their licks . . . He said, 'Well, let me ask this.' And he looked at all of them, 'Is there anybody that objects to going one more round?' Of course, I was in the witness chair and just for heck. . . . I raised my hand. [Laughter] It was the biggest smile I ever saw come out of Doolittle. It was like he looked at me, and he said, 'You're not allowed to vote.' [Laughter] But he stopped it at that. . . ."

So he was up there as the chairman, and they'd gone through two rounds each by the members of the committee. They had all taken their licks, and I think they were all pretty well satisfied. He said, "Well, let me ask this." And he looked at all of them, "Is there anybody that objects to going one more round?" Of course, I was in the witness chair and just for heck. Well, actually, I raised my hand. [Laughter] It was the biggest smile I ever saw come out of Doolittle. It was like he looked at me, and he said, "You're not allowed to vote." [Laughter] But he stopped it at that. He said, "Well, I think Roger's had enough of this, and it sounds like we all have, too." So he cut it. That was kind of the only time I ever broke through with him on that conservative front that he always had.

Storey: Tell me about your interactions with congressmen generally. You were regional director in Billings and you were regional director in California. Who initiated them? What were the kinds of things they were about, that sort of thing? And any other good stories like that one.

Interacting with Politicians While Regional Director in Billings

Patterson: I'll tell you my Dick Cheney story. Well, when I was in Billings, I did quite a bit of interacting there. Remember, we had nine states in that region, and, really, between Billy Martin and Don Glaser and I, we had a lot of people to stay in contact with. I mean, nine states gives you eighteen senators and many, many congressmen. If you're a congressman from that part of the country, you're probably involved in water issues, as opposed to some of the folks in California. There were a ***lot*** of them, but some of them, water wasn't their thing. But if you're a Congressman from Nebraska or South Dakota or Wyoming, Montana, water's one of the things you deal with. So it kind of went both ways.

I found over the years that they appreciated very much getting heads-up on issues that were coming down. If it was something that still was sort of in the formulation stage, they liked to be consulted with. It varied. Some of them had staff that had been with them forever that they had a lot of confidence in, and a lot of times I would interact with that staff, who was almost the same as interacting with the member. As they got to know who you were and where you were, particularly if you'd been there very long, then a lot of times they would contact you and they'd have some issue. It always looked good to them, particularly if it was a constituent issue and it was one that you could solve for them and if it was one that didn't cost us anything and I could solve or even just make a phone call and say, "Hey, I was talking to Senator Burns and he said you were concerned about this," just talk to them. I mean, that did a lot of good and they appreciated that. So it kind of went both ways.

I would try to get to Washington, as I think a lot of the R-Ds did. John Keyes, I think, was exceptional at getting back and doing that. I learned a lot from John, just going back and kind of going around and updating people on what you had going on. And if it was the staff, great, and if it was with the member that was great, too. But that worked out, and particularly I would go out of my way to try to touch base with the committee folks, because they cared about Reclamation's issues. And if you ever had a hearing, you were with them, no matter what state you were from.

Interaction with Dick Cheney, Malcolm Wallop, and Al Simpson When David Wilde Put a Call on the North Platte River

One invite I did get, this was when [C. Dale] Duvall was commissioner, in 1989. For the first time in eighty-plus years, our project manager in Casper decided to place a call on the North Platte River. That was Dave Wilde, who has since passed away. A great guy, but this is one that he didn't consult with his boss, who was me, prior to doing it. What that meant is after eighty years, basically, you had all these water users in the Upper Platte, part of the North Platte Basin, who had never had to worry about being regulated to fill Pathfinder Reservoir. Well, Dave decides that "It's pretty dry, and I do hold a water right on Pathfinder, so I should ask the state engineer to regulate and shut off all these junior users so I can fill my reservoir." One thing Wyoming people don't take kindly to, it's regulation, and particularly Federal Government-mandated regulation. They kind of went crazy, and I kind of went crazy, too, because Dave didn't do any consulting with me. He sort of did this thing on his own.

But I was the one that got invited back to Washington, and this was when Dick Cheney was congressman for Wyoming. So you had Dick Cheney, Malcolm Wallop, who was on our committee, and Al Simpson, who is Al Simpson. Just a great guy, but, wow. Duvall was the commissioner, and we were going to meet with the three of them. The Wyoming people, they did things together. We were going to meet in the Senate, in the Capitol on the Senate side, because Al Simpson was the Senate Whip. We were going to meet in his office. Fabulous office.

So I talked to Duvall the afternoon before and basically said, "You know, commissioner, maybe we're entitled to do what we did, but it wasn't that smart.

These guys are mad, and they're really mad, and we're going to get hammered tomorrow." So I tried to get him up to speed. I stayed at the State Plaza that night, and I don't think I slept a wink. I practiced every which way I could think of doing this.

We go in there, and Duvall, you know, he didn't get too uptight about a lot of things. Dick Cheney was setting in Senator Simpson's chair behind this big desk, on this very big chair that I think he had raised up as high as it would go. The two senators were sitting here kind of on each side of it. The commissioner and me. Cheney starts the meeting. He looks at the commissioner and he said, "Commissioner, I'm not sure what Reclamation has done, but you better have a very good story." And Duvall says, "Congressman, we do. And Roger's going to tell you what it is." [Laughter]

That was it. And Dick Cheney, he looked at me. I'd met him. We worked together a little bit. But he wasn't happy. And he looked at me. I'm not even sure what I said, but I talked for about ten minutes straight. And he said, "Well," he said, "that was a pretty good story, but I guess I'm interested in what are you going to do about it." [Laughter] So I told him I'd work with the state engineer and we'd see if we could sort of unshoot this gun, unring this bell, and we did. But that was probably the best chewing that I'd received by a congressman.

". . . Cheney, he was a brilliant man. This guy, he understood everything about everything, and he was definitely a type-A personality. You knew, one, you weren't going to outsmart him, and, two, you weren't going to outtalk him. So you just as well be honest and say, "Well, Congressman, what would you like us to do about it?" Because, after all, there were three Republicans, and we were working for the Republicans. . . ."

Cheney, I'll tell you, Cheney, he was a brilliant man. This guy, he understood everything about everything, and he was definitely a type-A personality. You knew, one, you weren't going to outsmart him, and, two, you weren't going to outtalk him. So you just as well be honest and say, "Well, Congressman, what would you like us to do about it?" Because, after all, there were three Republicans, and we were working for the Republicans. So it's like, "Why are you doing this to us?" But, you know, we've gotten along well for years, one of those kinds of things. So it was a good experience, good working relationship being established between the administration and the Congress.

When I went out to California, it was sort of the same. In places like Wyoming, you ***needed*** to know these people, because everybody in the state knew them. If you're Malcolm Wallop or Al Simpson or Dick Cheney, you've probably met every person in Wyoming over the years. Everybody thinks they know you on a first-name basis. So part of my motivation there was we needed, you know, we, me and Glaser and others, we certainly needed to know these folks, too, because everybody in the state knew them. When I went to California, clearly 32 million people aren't going to know every Congressman, and I was always amazed by how small those congressional districts looked. I can remember standing in the lobby, killing time looking at the map of their district, and some of those maps, their district

wasn't even a good county. In California it was just quite different.

In Sacramento ". . . I got to know a lot of those folks pretty well, the ones that really cared about water. . . ."

But I got to know a lot of those folks pretty well, the ones that really cared about water. Cal Dooley[47] from down in the San Joaquin Valley. In fact, I was in D.C. last week and I swung by and chatted with him for a minute just for old times' sake, you know how you do, and dah-dah-dah kind of a thing. And Dick Fazio, did a lot with him. And John Doolittle. But it was different. It was different there.

Storey: How has your contact with politicians changed between being a regional director and your current job?

Patterson: Well, I only work for one now. [Laughter] I work for the governor, and I work directly for the governor. There's nobody in between, and there's none of this kind of stuff. He's wonderful. He's a great boss and just really great to work with. In a lot of ways it's the same. I spend quite a bit of time and I try to be responsive to the members of the legislature, just make sure they know who I am and I know who they are, and if they've got something on their mind, that they'll feel inclined to talk about it, and that we know each other well enough so the first time we talk isn't over something that they would be upset about. I'd rather know each other ahead of time.

Betsy Rieke gave me good advice. She was the Department of Water Resources director in Arizona, and we were talking about me coming to the state, the same job that she had, she said, "You want to get to know and love each of the members of your legislature." That was pretty good advice. You really do need to know them.

Storey: Tell me about Betsy Rieke. She did a lot in California while she was assistant secretary. Then she went off and then she came back to California–well, not to California, to Nevada.

Betsy Rieke Work in the Mid-Pacific Region

Patterson: Yeah. Betsy's great. I admire Betsy as much as anybody I've ever worked with. When she was assistant secretary, Dan Beard was the commissioner. But what they had decided to do in Interior was kind of go on an issue basis, as opposed to kind of the old line of responsibility basis. So really the way it worked was, Beard had the lead for the Department on the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, but Dan had delegated almost all of that authority to me and to the regional director for Fish and Wildlife. Betsy was the lead for the Department on Bay-Delta, and she was in the line of command for me, but she was the lead for the Department, which meant [Bruce] Babbitt looked to her for Fish and Wildlife Service issues on Bay-Delta as well. It's a little different for them. They're going, "Wait a minute. We don't work for her." Well, on this issue, she's on point for the Department, so she handled that well. She would talk with the service people and gain some credibility with them. So

47. Calvin (Cal) Dooley was a member of the House of Representatives from 1991 to 2005.

I think they got pretty comfortable with it.

But Betsy was great. I mean, she was really the key for our side in negotiating the Bay-Delta Accord. She had the confidence of the secretary. She was a very adept negotiator. She used all of us, I think, fairly effectively in working through the issues and making sure the science would support what we needed to do. She was just really great to work for, and very effective and really has no ego. She always amazed me. She did things for the right reason, and she shared credit very widely. Just a good manager and a good problem-solver and a good consensus-builder.

So then she leaves and, of course, I always stayed in touch with her. We would talk. I was having problems on the Klamath or somewhere else, and Kirk and I, we'd go talk to Betsy and see if we could get any good free advice. She was at the university in Colorado, and we would run into her from time to time, because the Natural Resource Law Center there was working with Reclamation's area managers kind of through our periodic need. So we'd see Betsy a lot.

". . . we've had a mess in Nevada forever. . . . difficult time being able to keep an area manager over there that, one, wants to stay and, two, that will meet with the approval of Senator [Harry] Reid, and what are we going to do, kind of a thing. We'd talked with her about the Nevada issues in the past, and I don't know what it was, but I give credit to Kirk when it was, 'Well, gee, Betsy, you ought to come and do that for us.' It was one of those, you know, I can't believe she had never *thought* of that. . . ."

One of the problems that popped onto the screen was, God, we've had a mess in Nevada forever. We just have a difficult time being able to keep an area manager over there that, one, wants to stay and, two, that will meet with the approval of Senator [Harry] Reid, and what are we going to do, kind of a thing. We'd talked with her about the Nevada issues in the past, and I don't know what it was, but I give credit to Kirk when it was, "Well, gee, Betsy, you ought to come and do that for us." It was one of those, you know, I can't believe she had never ***thought*** of that. But her reaction when Kirk said that to her–and I wasn't there then. We had talked about it the night before, and Kirk says, "Gosh, I hope you're not going to be mad at me, but I suggested Betsy might want to come to Nevada." You know, I was ready to give him a crown. I wasn't going to be mad at him. Then he said her reaction was, gosh, she'd never thought about it. And the next thing you know, she's willing to do it.

"We couldn't believe that Betsy would be willing to do this. And, again, no ego. She didn't care whether she was our boss, we were her boss. . . . She just wanted to work on this. . . ."

It was really interesting, because Kirk and I–we thought, man, it was Christmastime. We couldn't believe that Betsy would be willing to do this. And, again, no ego. She didn't care whether she was our boss, we were her boss. She didn't care. She just wanted to work on this.

It was kind of a tough sell in the Department. When we were trying to

convince folks that we wanted to hire Betsy to be the area manager in Nevada, it was like, "Well, she won't do that. Why would she want to do that? Well, she wouldn't stay." You know, there was every reason why this doesn't seem to make sense. Well, if you know Betsy, it makes eminent sense. If you don't, it looks really weird. Why would an assistant secretary now want to be an area manager for Reclamation? Well, I knew why she did. I mean, that's just the way she is. But we got her sold. Of course, we always knew we could go to Babbitt because he loved her. So, yes, so there she is, and I still talk to her from time to time.

Storey: You had had trouble filling that job, I believe.

Ed Solbus and the Newlands Project

Patterson: Well we'd had–yeah. It had been a terrible spot to try to fill. Senator Reid didn't like Reclamation a lot. He'd been there a long time, and it seemed like no matter who we had over there, they just weren't going to meet his satisfaction. ***And*** the tribe had a lot of sway with him and with the administration. So if you got just a little bit crosswise with the tribe, the next thing the word was you were just not a team player, etcetera, etcetera. Because Ed Solbus was over there for a while, and he was doing a lot of good things trying to help the tribe. In fact, the water users thought he was a little bit too friendly, and the senator was grumbling about him a little bit or whatever. So Ed lateraled over and became the regional engineer for Mid-Pacific, and I'll tell you, he's as good a regional engineer as I ever worked with. So it wasn't that he wasn't capable. He's smart, and good, and, you know.

Ann Ball and the Newlands Project

Then Ann Ball was in there for a while, and she was good. She sort of got crosswise. We were negotiating a contract with the water users, and I think the tribe thought we were giving them too sweet of a deal, and that Ann was kind of being a little too friendly there. So it was always either they were ready to leave or they were starting to get crosswise with people.

What's different than Betsy is, I mean, Betsy is great, but Ann was a smart person and so was Ed. But Betsy, she carries the stature to be able to tell those guys, "No, this is how we're going to do it." And they know that she can probably pull it off, because she can definitely go directly to Babbitt if she needs to. She's been there, done that. So she's perfect. She's perfect to go over there and deal with some of those things that have been hanging about for decades and be able to say to whoever it is, whether it's the manager of the irrigation district or the attorney for the tribe or whoever, "No, we're not going to do it that way. We're going to do this, and we'll help you do this." And she could pull the agencies together, because she still had that ability, and it was ***known*** by the other Interior agencies that, hey, Betsy could do that and it's okay for her to represent Interior. She used that clearly to our advantage over there.

Storey: Well, when she went to the University of Colorado, she did an oral history interview on the Newlands Project. You may remember you started that.

Patterson: Yeah.

Storey: She said, "Oh, this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. You know, this is just so wonderful." She couldn't believe it. Did she ever say anything about why she decided to leave Colorado?

". . . Betsy's. . . was too far removed from the real problem-solving. . . . [in previous jobs] she was out trying to work with people on the ground, solving problems, and I think she missed that at the university. . . . this Nevada thing was just really attractive to her, because nobody else had been able to solve it. . . ."

Patterson: Yes. I mean, Betsy's an attorney, but she can't help it. [Laughter] Betsy's above and beyond. I mean, just being an attorney just taught her better how to think, I think. I think she was too far removed from the real problem-solving. I think, in a way, her time at the state of Arizona and her time with us–I mean, she didn't act like an assistant secretary. She didn't spend a lot of time back there surnaming letters. I mean, she was out trying to work with people on the ground, solving problems, and I think she missed that at the university. She could talk about it, and she could talk about ***how*** to do it. I think after a while she just missed it, and this Nevada thing was just really attractive to her, because nobody else had been able to solve it. So I think that was primarily . . .

Storey: She wanted to try her hand.

Patterson: I think that was primarily it, yes.

Storey: What about her successor as assistant secretary, Patty Beneke? What did she mean for Reclamation in [Mid-]Pacific?

Patty Beneke as Assistant Secretary

Patterson: Well, anybody following Betsy had a tough job. Patty didn't have the luxury that Betsy did of being a state administrator. Patty had worked on The Hill for quite a while and, I think, saw the issues from the Washington perspective, much more so than what Betsy had. As a result, she was definitely plugged into the right circles, and she had access to the right people in D.C., but we had a harder time connecting her with how ***we*** were seeing things out in the field, because she hadn't worked there. It's really not her fault; it's just that she hadn't worked there. So it was different. It was just different than it had been working with Betsy. I mean, I wouldn't have wanted to follow . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 2. MARCH 28, 2000.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2. MARCH 28, 2000.

Patterson: That would be a tough job. So they tried to continue doing things in a certain way, but the Bay-Delta dynamic had switched enough that sort of the lead on that split and went in two directions. Betsy had previously been the Federal chair on the CALFED, and sort of the number-two there was Bob Perchiasepe, who was EPA assistant administrator out of D.C.

We decided when Betsy left that we needed some continuity there, and so Bob picked up the Federal chair for CALFED, as opposed for it going from Betsy to Patty. So that didn't put Patty right in the middle of our issues like Betsy had been.

Then CALFED was heating up to the point where the secretary actually started spending a lot of his personal time on CALFED. Patty was in and out of that, sort of, but I would say her involvement in our issues was really not near as extensive as what Betsy's has been, because it sort of went Perchiasepe was kind of the day-to-day CALFED stuff and then the secretary started picking up the big stuff. So it was just kind of the way they divvied out the duties.

Storey: Another person I'm sort of interested in, our new regional director, Lester Snow.

Lester Snow as Executive Director of CALFED

Patterson: Oh, Lester's great. Lester's great. We had, I think–I don't remember–we must have had sixty applicants for the CALFED executive director's job, and Dan Fults,[48] who I worked with, was on the screening panel. After the first couple of meetings, Dan said, "Yeah, we've got a lot of applicants." And this is a tremendously tough job. I think if it hadn't have been for Lester, I don't know what we would have done. I don't know who the other candidates were, but I can't imagine any of them could have been as good as Lester and as well fitted for that job as he was.

That was a big move for him. I mean, here he was. He worked with Betsy in Arizona before, so she had known him from then. So he was the executive director, or whatever it was, for San Diego County Water Agency. Pretty big job, pretty nice job. And he goes to some ***temporary*** CALFED planning process with this disjointed board of directors. I don't know why he ever did that. He was great at it. I was glad that he did.

"He actually worked for me as an IPA. That was his link to civilization or to his paycheck. He was under an intergovernmental agreement deal with Reclamation. . . ."

But he came into that and, as I said, CALFED didn't even exist. It was a virtual organization. He actually worked for me as an IPA. That was his link to civilization or to his paycheck. He was under an intergovernmental agreement deal with Reclamation. So we paid him and whatever, and he served as the executive director and, I thought, did a great job and I think was a perfect guy to take over for Reclamation there.

He's well respected by the water users, and he knew the Reclamation staff. Lester knows not only what he knows, but he knows what he doesn't know. So I know that he'll rely heavily on Kirk and the managers in M-P to help him do what he needs to do. So he's great.

Storey: You mentioned Dan Fults. He retired quite a few years ago, didn't he?

48. Interviews with Dan Fults are included in Reclamation's oral history program.

Dan Fults Went to Work for the Friant Water Users

Patterson: Yes. I remember him sitting in there and he was rubbing his head one day in his office. He was one of my assistants. I went in there, like we'd always visit if we happen to be in town at the same time. I went in and said, "What's the matter?"

He said, "Ah, man. Sit down. I've got to run this by you." And he runs by me an offer that he has for the Friant water users to go to work for them. He's like fifty-three, something, within a couple of years of being able to retire, and he was eligible for an early out.

He runs it by me and I said, "Well, Dan, that's a no-brainer. I mean, that makes eminent sense for you to do financially and however. Financially it makes great sense for you to do."

He said, "Yes, I know. But, man, this is tough." He'd been with Reclamation for a long time. In fact, I'd worked with him, he was the project manager in Casper, and I was working in Denver back in the late seventies. So I'd know Dan forever.

He decided to do it. He took his retirement. He went to work with the Friant water users and, of course, he's kept working on a lot of the same issues and he was still working with us, and it was a pretty easy transition for him, I think. But he went from being in charge of our region, pretty much, a good part of it, to not having any staff or any program. He was working for the director of the Friant water users who was duty-stationed down in the valley and, Dan, he was in Sacramento. So he was a one-man show there, and he was in the middle of everything and he was in meetings all the time and did a lot of things.

"What I liked about him is, he'd been in charge of those field offices, so he really understood what Reclamation did and who we did it for. . . ."

He was a good guy. He was the head of that Casper office when he was pretty darn young, and he went to Klamath Falls and he headed up that office. Primarily for family reasons he needed to go out there. Then he headed up the Bureau's office in Fresno for a while and then he came into the region. So Dan had been around. What I liked about him is, he'd been in charge of those field offices, so he really understood what Reclamation did and who we did it for. He was great. And he's still chugging at it, I guess.

Storey: How was he on this review committee for CALFED?

Patterson: Oh, he's great. I mean, Dan, he was great. He and Bob Potter, who was the deputy at DWR, they were kind of the two. They were really the two guys that got Lester. I don't know how it had come to Lester's attention. I don't know if they talked to him about, "Man, you ought to throw your name in the hat," but Lester got his application and it got to the final running.

"Dan was real good, too, at relating to Fish and Wildlife Service. . . . at one time we had instructions in the mail room if we received a letter to the regional

director, and it came from Fish and Wildlife, and it wasn't from their regional director, we just deep-six it. . . ."

So Dan was good. Dan was real good, too, at relating to Fish and Wildlife Service. Dan was really, he and Wayne Wyatt [phonetic] from Fish and Wildlife, I think, ***really*** worked hard at trying to build a better relationship between our two agencies, and they made a difference there. They really did. They worked at it hard, and there were some ***long-held bad*** feelings between the two agencies. I mean, when I first got there, Wayne asked something about if I'd gotten this letter he'd sent me. And Wayne Wyatt, at the time I think he was the field supervisor. I asked Diane, my secretary, about getting this letter from Wayne. She said, "Oh, jeez. I'd better check on that." She said at one time we had instructions in the mail room if we received a letter to the regional director, and it came from Fish and Wildlife, and it wasn't from their regional director, we just deep-six it. [Laughter]

The attitude was, if they need to talk to the regional director, ***their*** regional director will be the one to make the contact. So that was sort of where we were coming from.

Storey: The old bureaucracy.

Patterson: Yes. So Dan Fults did a lot to break through that and work with Wayne. I mean, there's still a long ways to go, but I gave Dan a lot of credit for doing that.

Storey: I remember seeing you in Denver, this was when Kirk was on detail, and then a couple of weeks later, here came the announcement you were retiring.

Patterson: Yes.

Storey: Tell me what you decided and why and all that good stuff.

Decision to Retire from Reclamation and Go to Run the Nebraska Department of Water Resources

Patterson: It's not that complicated, actually.

"I never planned very far ahead career-wise. . . . One thing I always did with Reclamation is, I moved around. . . ."

I never planned very far ahead career-wise. It just happened really kind of fast. It was driven by what was going on in Nebraska, not by what was going on in California. Nebraska just elected a new governor, and he, for whatever reason, had decided that he was going to change some of the directors of the state agencies. One of them that he decided he was going to change was the Department of Water Resources. The previous director had been in the job, I think, about seventeen years, and he was the person, and a lot of folks had never known DWR to be anybody but him. Governor [Mike] Johanns came in, and he made a decision that he was going to change that.

One thing I always did with Reclamation is, I moved around. It was great because you got to meet a lot of new people, and then I always tried to keep contact with those folks as I moved around. And this is my home state as well. The ***day*** the governor announced that he was making a change, my phone started ringing, and it started out with sort of the news, "Oh, my gosh. You can't believe what Governor Johanns has decided to do. He's asked Mike Jess to leave."

On the second day, the calls went towards, "We don't know who we're going to get to do this, but you ought to think about it."

And on the third day it was sort of, "We'd really like to see you throw your name in the hat to do this," kind of a thing. So it was really driven by what was going on back here.

I loved what I was doing with Reclamation and was having a good time, but I'd been there. I'd actually been to Sacramento. That was really my longest stint in any particular location with Reclamation. I had more than twenty-five years in, so I got to thinking about this thing a little bit and I thought, well, I was always up for a new deal.

When I went to California my goal family-wise, I wanted to get my girls through high school without having to move. So they went through junior high and high school in Sacramento and they were both in college. And I thought, "You know, personally, I could move. Besides this next couple of years we're going into a presidential election. I know how those go. There are more fun times with the Feds."

So threw my name in the hat, and it went really fast. The governor had a search committee and I interviewed with them. The following Saturday, I was setting in the governor's mansion visiting with him, who I'd never met. He called him on that Monday and offered me the job. It was like I didn't really have time to think about any of it. The next thing I knew I said, "Yeah, I'll do it." So it was really this opportunity here.

"So my Nebraska friends think I'm crazy for ever having worked in California and doubly crazy for enjoying living there. My California friends think I'm *nut*s for being in Nebraska. . . ."

My wife and I are both from Nebraska. There are some pretty interesting issues here. My mom lives out in southwest Nebraska, and she has cancer, and it's nice to be close so I can see her once in a while. Linda's folks live here. It was just one of those things where the timing just felt like it was pretty good to do that. And so what the hey. Whoever would have gone to California? It was sort of the same thing. So my Nebraska friends think I'm crazy for ever having worked in California and doubly crazy for enjoying living there. My California friends think I'm ***nuts*** for being in Nebraska. So it's just sort of the way it is, you know.

Merging the Department of Water Resources and the Natural Resources Commission to Create the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources

But it's been great. I tell you, I've had a ball. I mean, I've been kind of notorious over the years with Reclamation of redoing things. In the year that I've been here, the governor asked me and the director of–we have a Natural Resources Commission, which is another state agency–if the two of us would look at whether it would make sense to merge our two agencies. This has been looked at three times in the past, and they never could pull it off. Of course it made sense. That's why they'd, in the past, thought it made sense. But the Governor was great. He said, "Take a look at it. If it makes sense, tell me how we ought to do it. Try to visit with enough people to make sure that it is a good idea. And if you decide it doesn't make sense, tell me." As opposed to in the past I think governors have said, "We're going to do this." Of course, that got everybody out of whack right off the start.

So we worked with our employees and we got a half dozen of our customers of the two agencies and had the governor write them and ask them if they would work with us. And, lo and behold, we put together a scheme to merge the two agencies, and we've pulled it through the legislature and didn't have one vote against it. So we had a press conference and signed it into law last week, and July 1 we'll have the Department of Natural Resources for Nebraska. First time. So that will be fun.

I'll be the director and Dale Williamson, who's the director of the other agency's, sixty-eight, looking towards his sixty-ninth birthday, and he's going to help me get it up and running, and Dale's going to retire and be able to go dancing all the time like he likes to do, and we'll have a new agency.

Storey: And Natural Resources will . . .

Patterson: Have surface water, groundwater, soil, and soil conservation. We have a Department of Environmental Quality, so they have the environmental issues. And we have Game and Parks, and they have the fish and the parks. By most states' views, it will be a fairly narrow D-N-R, because we'll just basically have surface water; groundwater, which is really regulated in our state at the local level, but we'll be the state agency that works with what we call our natural resource districts; and then the soil conservation stuff.

Storey: But nothing like coal or . . .

Patterson: We don't have coal. We have water. We have 67 percent of the Ogalalla aquifer, but we don't have any coal.

Storey: There isn't any coal in this state?

Patterson: Not to speak of.

Storey: How about oil?

Patterson: A little.

Storey: But that's not part of your job?

Patterson: Our number-one resource is water. That's the biggest resource we have. So it will be kind of fun. So it's been good. And, you know, it's just so nice to have one boss. He used to be a water lawyer. In fact, this morning at the cabinet meeting afterwards I said, "Hey, I need to come visit with you about our negotiations we're doing with Wyoming on the Supreme Court case." And he said, "Yes, yes, get a hold of my scheduler. You bet. Tell him whenever it works for you." This is Wyoming.

Storey: This is Kansas and Nebraska on the . . .

"The staff is good. They don't get paid anything. . . . relative to Reclamation, considerably lower. But really dedicated folks and a lot of them have been here for a long time, and they're good. . . . they're required to do multiple jobs. . . ."

Patterson: No. This is Wyoming and Nebraska on the Platte. We're one of the few states blessed with two Supreme Court cases going on at the same time. And the one was accepted in March of last year when I was appointed to this job, so I don't know how that all worked out. But, you know, here's the Governor saying, "Yeah, tell the scheduler whenever it works for you to set something up." I'm just not used to that. It's really nice. It's been good. The staff is good. They don't get paid anything. I mean, we pay, relative to Reclamation, considerably lower. But really dedicated folks and a lot of them have been here for a long time, and they're good.

The thing is, they're required to do multiple jobs. I mean, Reclamation has a real luxury of being able to have people and enough of them that you can specialize in certain things. For instance, the person that is in charge of our water rights, which is a big job, it's probably as big a job as we have in this department, is also the collateral duty public affairs officer. You go around here and everybody has multiple jobs. It's just different with Reclamation. I have a person that does budget, but she also does personnel and she also does property and she also writes our affirmative-action plan and she makes sure the supply cabinet is stocked. If we have to go explain to the legislature something about our budget, I take her with me. So she'll go from stocking the file cabinet to going with me to the Capitol all within ten minutes sometimes. [Laughter] It's just state government. It's just different. This state. Of course, in California, I was used to that, and they had more people than Reclamation and more money most of the time. It's different, but it's kind of neat. But it is different.

Storey: One of the things that I noticed at Reclamation was we reorganized under Dan Beard. In your case, you went from three or four assistant regional directors to one deputy, and I don't know how many division chiefs you went from down to whatever you ended up with. One of the things you said to me when you were walking in to see Kirk was, "Oh, this is killing me not having Kirk in the office."

Patterson: Yeah.

Storey: When I first started doing oral histories back when Dan first came to the office, it was ***easy*** to get appointments with regional directors, comparatively. The last one, I went to John Keyes to get him on his last interview, and, "Oh, I'm in the office three days this month." Things had changed a lot because of that reorganization. Could you

talk about some of that and what that meant in the regional office for you and so on?

"Mid-Pacific didn't reorganize to near the extent the other regions did, and I caught my share of criticism for doing that, but I thought there was more negative than positive came out of that reorganization. . . . from three assistants to one deputy . . . We did not consolidate all of our divisions into a couple of divisions like some of the other regions did. . . ."

Patterson: Yeah. One, Mid-Pacific didn't reorganize to near the extent the other regions did, and I caught my share of criticism for doing that, but I thought there was more negative than positive came out of that reorganization. For instance, I did go in our region from three assistants to one deputy, partly as part of that reorganization, but the other part was I decided that I wanted to do that for some reasons.

We did not consolidate all of our divisions into a couple of divisions like some of the other regions did. For instance, we kept a regional engineer and we kept our Planning Division, we kept a 400 Division. Folks used to say, "Jeez, why isn't M-P changing?" I said, "Man, because we don't want to. We think this works for us."

Dan was pretty good. I basically told him that I thought some of the things that people were suggesting we ought to do didn't make sense, and I wasn't going to do it unless you made me, and I probably wouldn't have done it then. But he understood.

So we kept our major divisions. We did consolidate our administrative divisions into one shop, budget and information technology, personnel, etc. We consolidated those, but we basically kept our other main divisions. We had already gone most of the way towards the area office concept, and we didn't have to go much further to really have our area offices.

What I really decided to do, and the reason I went from three assistants to one deputy is, first of all, out of the three, one of them was for administration. Basically what I did there was take that assistant and move them out of the front office. They became the division chief for administration, had the same job they had before. So it looked like there was one less assistant, but in reality that job was still in the organization ***at*** the same grade level, just was out there with the people they worked with rather than being in the front office. So that was sort of left, too.

What I decided to do there was had ***excellent*** area managers, and the five key people in the region were really good. I decided that they could basically run things and we could do it with one deputy, mess less with them, kind of let them run things, rather than have two, and it worked only because Kirk [Rogers][49] was really good. We needed one and a half, kind of needed about one and a half. Two was a little too much. Because what happened [when] we had two was this part of the organization worked for one and this part worked for the other, and that did kind of create two parts of the organization. When you had one, it was kind of everybody was in there.

49. Interviews with Kirk Rogers are included in Reclamation's oral history program.

So we spent a lot more time working directly with the area managers in particular and meeting with them. For me, it worked.

One thing I learned working around different Reclamation offices is each organization sort of has to set themselves up for whatever works for them and those people. I mean, I know Lester. Lester is coming in now, and he's hired Don Glaser to give him some ideas on does he need to make any changes. Don called me and basically Don was saying, "You know, with Lester, Lester's great and all this stuff out here, but he hasn't been with Reclamation, and so he doesn't know all of that stuff." So he says, "I think what would serve Lester is to have Kirk and another person. In other words, two rather than one." And I said, "I agree. I think so. If that's what Lester wants to do, it ain't going to hurt my feelings."

So it really depends on the organization and the program and the people. So I kind of went that way, and that's why we kept things the way they were. I mean, I'd worked in Billings, and it's one thing. It's just a different program in that region than we had in Sacramento. I ***needed*** my regional engineer. We had a lot going on, and a lot of engineering and design kinds of things, and I needed somebody like Ed Solbus to be in charge of that. So it was kind of program-driven.

Storey: Did you find the stress levels went up?

Patterson: No, not really. Kirk's did, but mine didn't. [Laughter]

Storey: Kirk's did but yours didn't, huh? [Laughter]

". . . I traveled more when I was in Billings and had more assistants than I did in Sacramento. And, again, it was the program. The *action* was in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. So I didn't have to go to Texas. . . ."

Patterson: Actually, I traveled more when I was in Billings and had more assistants than I did in Sacramento. And, again, it was the program. The ***action*** was in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. So I didn't have to go to Texas. I didn't have to travel like Maryanne's [Bach] having to do now. It's just an easier region to get around in. Now, the issues are pretty tough, but . . . you can do what you can do. So I never got particularly stressed out about much of anything. Going to get chewed out by Dick Cheney is one thing. ***That'll*** stress you out. But kind of the day-to-day things, no, not really. It worked. But Kirk was carrying a large part of the load. People just are different. With different folks you might do it differently.

Storey: Of course, before Kirk it was Tom Aiken, right?

Tom Aiken

Patterson: Actually, Tom was in that administration job. The thing with Tom, he is really an interesting guy. Tom had been up at Auburn, up at the field office in Auburn. Then when that closed down, he ended up, I think he was the budget officer for the region for a while and then he became the assistant regional director for administration. He'd been in that job for a long, long time. I think he'd kind of gotten tired of it, in a

way. He was sort of stagnant in it.

After I got there and I'd been there about year and thought, "I don't need three assistants. I want to kind of change this thing," I asked Tom, I said, "Tom, what the heck are you going to do?" Because he'd been divorced and he said he had to work till he was ninety to pay off his first wife. [Laughter] I said, "Are you going to stay in the same job for another dozen years and you've already been in it for eighteen or whatever?"

He said, "I don't think that's a good idea."

Aiken's Move to the Area Office at Folsom

I said, "Well, the area manager, the Folsom job is open and it's a 14." It was a lateral. I said, "What would you think about going out there?"

And he said two things. First he said, "Oh, I think that'd be great." But he said, "I think the organization might see that as a downgrade or a lower-status deal."

I said, "Okay, Tom." This was kind of before area manager, but that's sort of where I wanted to go. I said, "Let me give you my view of how the future's going to look in Reclamation." I said, "The people in Reclamation that are going to be in charge are going to be those Folsom people. These project managers, these area managers," I said, "***that's*** where the action is going to be for Reclamation, and so those jobs are going to be the prime jobs. You ask somebody in five years whether they'd rather be an area manager or somebody in charge of administration for the region, and every one of them is going to say an area manager." Of course, that's the way I think things kind of looked five years from then. And he decided to do it, and it was great. He just kind of got energized in a hurry.

Storey: I didn't think of the right name, there was somebody else who was your deputy.

Frank Dimick

xxx

Patterson: Neil Shield? Frank Dimick?

Storey: Frank was your deputy for a while, right? Before Kirk?

Patterson: Yes. Frank, he was the assistant director. He had been one of those Nevada guys. Frank had been at Nevada.

Storey: Yeah. He'd been at Newlands.

Patterson: He'd been back. We had him go back as the regional liaison in Washington. We did that. I pulled a move here. I know that a lot of Reclamation people still think I did something illegal, and I was assured it wasn't illegal, it was just efficient. But I knew I wanted Frank's next stop after Washington to be in the front office in Sacramento, because he ***knew*** the Nevada stuff and I didn't know the Nevada stuff. Frank knew his way around a lot of things.

"There was a vacancy for an assistant regional director in Billings, and Frank had applied. So I thought, 'Well, this could be good. I'll just pick off of the same list.'. . ."

There was a vacancy for an assistant regional director in Billings, and Frank had applied. So I thought, "Well, this could be good. I'll just pick off of the same list."

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. MARCH 28, 2000.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 3. MARCH 28, 2000.

Storey: . . . Roger Patterson on March the 28th, 2000.

Frank and make sure that's okay.

Patterson: I'll talk to Neil and make sure that, you know, "You're not going to pick Frank, are you, Neil? Because I really need him." So that's what we did. Frank, I think, as he said, he was the most successful but yet shortest tenured [assistant] regional director in Billings ever. I think he was on the books like a day. They put him on and then transferred him to Sacramento and Neil picked whoever he was going to pick. So I brought Frank in there. Then Frank retired and he's doing some consulting. But he was great. He kind of had the lead for a lot of the C-V-P-I-A implementation stuff, figuring it out. Frank was a great thinker and just a real hard worker. I learned a lot working with him. He retired. I guess I went through a lot of assistants out there. I need to think about that. But he's doing some consulting now, and I see him once in a while at some of these conferences. He's doing all right.

Storey: Well, I'd like to keep going, but I see my time is about up. Is there anything you would like to talk about?

Patterson: No. I've talked about more than I know already.

Storey: I doubt that.

Patterson: Well, I appreciate being able to follow up with you. I think this thing that you're doing with Reclamation is good. I hope you got everybody you needed to get while they were around for the getting.

Storey: I'll tell you, I wish the budget hadn't gone to hell in a handbasket.

Patterson: That's too bad, yeah. I think it's good. No, I'm fine. Thank you.

Storey: Well, let me ask whether you're willing for researchers to use these tapes and the resulting transcripts.

Patterson: I am.

Storey: Good. Thank you.

END SIDE 1, TAPE 3. MARCH 28, 2000.
END OF INTERVIEWS.