ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

Larry Todd

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OPEN FOR RESEARCH

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LARRY TODD

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INTERVIEWER: _____
Brit Allan Storey

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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
Larry Todd

Storey: This is Brit Allan Storey, Senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation interviewing Larry Todd, the Director of Operations of the Bureau of Reclamation, in his office in the Main Interior Building on November the 17th, 2000, at about one o'clock in the afternoon. This is tape one.

Mr. Todd, I'd like to ask you where you were born and raised and educated and how you ended up at the Bureau of Reclamation.

Born in Goodland, Kansas

Todd Alright, I was born in Goodland, Kansas, in Sherman County. It's in the northwest part of Kansas. My heritage there was that my mother's father was the son of a homesteader and farmed out south of Goodland. My dad came from a side of a family that was also farmers, but was also part of the railroads that came through on the Rock Island. So Goodland is a small town of about 5,000 and a lot of farming community. Eventually, as I grew up and in high school, there was a big irrigation contingent that came in and pumped groundwater out of the Ogalalla aquifer.

So, ~~from there is where~~† I graduated from

1. Note that in the text of these interviews, as opposed to headings, 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

(continued...)

high school ~~from~~ there. I went to actually a vocational educational school that was in the town, became a mechanic, worked in a machine shop in a local garage and did a lot of sales of parts and that sort of thing.

Attended Fort Hays State College in Kansas Studying Botany

Then went to Fort Hays State College, which is now a university, Fort Hays University. My major there was botany. They had a lot of rangeland ecology work that was done there.

Became a Range Ecologist and Received a Masters Degree in Biology

So basically what I became was a range ecologist managing livestock and that sort of thing. I ended up getting a master's there in biology. They had just a combination degree. Most of it was in botany, but they called it biology. In that I also got into some birding and bird banding and the ornithology, that kind of thing. So that became kind of a hobby of mine.

Became a Range Conservationist in the Bureau of Land Management in Burns, Oregon

1. (...continued)
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.

From there I went to work as a range conservationist for the Bureau of Land Management in Burns, Oregon, which is in the central eastern part of Oregon, and worked there as a range conservationist for about three years.

Moved to Reclamation in Billings as a Natural Resource Specialist after Three Years in Burns

Thought I'd like to get back a little bit east of there, and a job came open as a natural resource specialist with the Bureau of Reclamation in Billings, Montana. As I inquired about the job, there seemed to be a lot of rangeland and livestock management and so forth around reservoirs and on withdrawn lands. They had about three-quarters of a million acres of land that Reclamation in that region was dealing with at the time. So I thought that would be a good opportunity and applied and got the job. So I moved to Billings in the fall of 1976 and began my Reclamation career.

Storey 1976.

Experience Gained While Working for BLM

Todd The experience I had in BLM [Bureau of Land Management] was really a good one, because it allowed me to work a lot with local ranchers, get an idea of how advisory boards worked, get an idea of how some of the public processes, working with them on different kinds of range management plans and those kinds of things where you'd actually work with stakeholders and

the people that were owning the land and on the land.

Livestock and Fencing Issues at Tiber Reservoir in Montana

And I brought that with me to Reclamation. So some of the first jobs I had there in Reclamation was dealing with some of the livestock and fencing issues that they had up at the reservoir, Tiber Reservoir in north central Montana.

Worked on Large Withdrawn Areas in Wyoming

Also down in Wyoming in some of the large withdrawn areas like Muddy Ridge, which is about 60,000 acres of land.

". . . the focus . . . in the mid-"70s, at Great Plains Region, was getting a handle on the land management issues. . . ."

So the focus at the time, in the mid-'70s, at Great Plains Region,[2] was getting a handle on the land management issues. There was a lot of the land management issues, because there was a lot of land there.

"I was . . . hired . . . to look at the issues . . .[like] identification of boundaries around reservoirs and

2. Later known as the Great Plains Region, in the mid- to late-1970s the region, originally known as Region 6, carried the name given it in 1972–the Upper Missouri Region. Then in 1985 Reclamation combined the Upper Missouri Region and the Lower Missouri Region (formerly Region 7 in Denver) and named the new region, headquartered in Billings, the Missouri Basin Region.

fencing issues and applying range land management on reservoirs that have historically just been grazed by adjacent landowners freely. . . ."

So what I was basically hired for was to look at the issues, do problem solving, do land management planning, come to grips with the issues that we had to deal with, and then implement solutions. So many of the things that I got involved with were the identification of boundaries around reservoirs and fencing issues and applying range land management on reservoirs that have historically just been grazed by adjacent landowners freely.

"A lot of people thought that it was the big Feds coming in and taking away what they had normally had under their control. Much of the land was purchased from them or their ancestors. So they felt, even though the government had purchased it, that it was their land and should still be their land. So we had quite a few emotional issues to deal with . . ."

So when we came in, and wanted to actually do some management, it wasn't met very well. A lot of people thought that it was the big Feds coming in and taking away what they had normally had under their control. Much of the land was purchased from them or their ancestors. So they felt, even though the government had purchased it, that it was their land and should still be their land. So we had quite a few emotional issues to deal with as we worked through that and tried to make sense out of getting a handle on a lot

of the overgrazing and that sort of thing, and trying to put into context and into implementation out on the ground, some of the wildlife principles that were functions of these projects.

Managing Reclamation Lands in Montana and Wyoming

So we did a lot of management kinds of things on single-purpose projects like Milk River, on the multipurpose ones like out at Tiber Reservoir and Clark Canyon Reservoir, and did some things along the Yellowstone River there at Huntley Reservoir on some of the scattered tracts that were used there.

Work on Muddy Ridge in Wyoming

We did a lot of work down on Muddy Ridge in Wyoming. Basically on that one is about 60,000 acres we put a management plan on it and a grazing plan, too. That really worked quite well and the local people turned out to be pretty successful.

"One of the biggest issues we had was just the fencing issue up at Tiber . . ."

One of the biggest issues we had was just the fencing issue up at Tiber, because there the local people thought that fencing the boundary was excluding them from use of the land. So we worked with them for a number of years with different ways and we had an advisory group up there made up of the local people and some of the soil conservation service at the time and the state

fish and game and fish and wildlife and so on. We met once a month and really got a lot of things worked out. So that was my job, basically, in Billings for a number of years. That evolved into, as regions began to change in the ‘80s, into a little broader function.

Region Used the Soil and Moisture Conservation Program to Address Erosion Issues

Actually, let me back up. There was another principle function of my job that was beside the range side of things. We had a program that had went on in Reclamation for a lot of years called the soil and moisture conservation program. In that program what Reclamation did was to work with the different irrigation districts on erosion problems that they had on the project. The problems were really widespread and pretty varied. They varied from the irrigation project of Riverton, Wyoming, and the return flows off of that project flowing into down a basically a dry coulee–naturally a dry coulee. And when they put water down it through runoff, then it would erode and basically carry a lot of sediment into the Boysen Reservoir and so forth.

So a lot of money was started before I got there and carried on after I was there about putting big check structures in what they call Five Mile Creek where this returns flows were flowing. That kind of work went on all over the region at the time. This was the Upper Missouri Region, as they called it, and it included the eastern parts of Wyoming, Montana, and North and South Dakota.

So we were doing that kind of thing all over, from putting in check structures to reduce erosion all the way to doing rock types of check structures up on the Shoshone Project on return flows. We did bank armoring on the Yellowstone River to protect the erosion from the river getting into the Lower Yellowstone Project. In some of those cases, it was a lot of rip-rap or it was these what they called jacks.[3] They were huge steel contraptions that were wired together in the shape of a jack. They had crosses with a big angle iron going through the center of it, so as they placed it on the side of the bank and as they wired a number of these together it would catch debris, limbs and leaves and so forth, and eventually it would slow down the water along the fast-moving current, and then it would start the sediment process, and it would create basically a sediment pool where it would quit cutting into the bank, and it would move the fast-moving current out into the river.

Needless to say, though, those were really quite dangerous if you were in a boat or in some kind of a water craft and came along there and got swept into something like that. But they did work. They did their job so far as retarding erosion. So there was a lot of that was done in Yellowstone River and a lot of rip-rap put in there to protect the irrigated land, to protect the integrity of the project. So that was another big piece of the work there.

". . . in addition, we used that authority and money to do other kinds of things on natural resource

3. The name probably comes from the game of jacks.

management kinds of activities. . . ."

Now, in addition, we used that authority and money to do other kinds of things on natural resource management kinds of activities.

"The Bureau itself didn't ever have any kind of authority that would give it any kind of umbrella to go out and actually manage lands as a whole . . ."

The Bureau itself didn't ever have any kind of authority that would give it any kind of umbrella to go out and actually manage lands as a whole and say, "We're manager on any kinds of activities on this land." They had a real piecemeal kind of authority that said we could manage leases and so forth.

"We could manage recreation, but in some cases we could manage recreation to a full extent, in other cases only to minimum basic facilities. . . ."

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"We really couldn't do the kind of land management that we needed to do around our facilities and so forth. So what happened was was that we would try to use any authority that gave us a piece here and a piece there and utilize it. . . ."

We really couldn't do the kind of land management that we needed to do around our facilities and so forth. So what happened was was

that we would try to use any authority that gave us a piece here and a piece there and utilize it. So that soil and moisture conservation program became that piece for the Upper Missouri Region, and we used it in a lot of things, to do the erosion, to do land management, to do fencing, to do anything that was construed to be erosion of some sort, which a lot of things can be. And that's what we used it for.

"The other regions thought that we were going too far, and I think Washington office and the Denver office, E&R Center at the time, thought that the Upper Missouri Region was going too far. . . ."

So we had a big program there and used it quite extensively. Other regions were less so. The other regions thought that we were going too far, and I think Washington office and the Denver office, E&R Center at the time, thought that the Upper Missouri Region was going too far. Eventually, what happened to that program was was that in the mid- to late '80s it basically got zeroed out, and currently we don't use it anymore.

So that's basically how I got to Reclamation and sort of what my first job was in Reclamation and in Billings and what my background was and how things led me to become a Reclamation employee.

Storey How did your job evolve? You started to indicate, I think, that it evolved into something different–after you'd been there a few years.

Land Management Needs Became Apparent to the Region

Todd The job evolved from the need of having done a lot of this land management work, and then I think the region recognized the need to deal with it and manage, but yet there was this limit about the authorities and about how much Reclamation should really get into land management.

". . .leaders at the time, [felt] that this was a construction agency and that we would construct things and turn them over to someone else. Once we turned them over, then the problems associated with it were not Reclamation's. . . ."

And, so there was always sort of this shadow that was over the land management functions within Reclamation, mainly from, I think, the leaders at the time, that this was a construction agency and that we would construct things and turn them over to someone else. Once we turned them over, then the problems associated with it were not Reclamation's.

". . . there was this overshadowing philosophy that said 'It's really not Reclamation's problem. It should be someone else's, because we're not in that kind of business.'. . ."

So from that basic philosophy there was the *need* out there to manage lands, but yet there was this overshadowing philosophy that said "It's really not Reclamation's problem. It should be someone else's, because we're not in that kind of business."

The job then evolved from having these kind of conflicting needs and philosophy, the job that I had evolved into, well, how do you deal with these problems that we have with the congressionals that we're getting on boundaries, on lands, and grazing, and leases, and sort of all the things associated along with recreation and whether or not we didn't have the facilities out there, out on the reservoir site, for instance, to accommodate the people that would go out and visit the site. So you had a lot of off-road vehicle tracks. You had a lot of erosion caused by just a lot of recreation people. You didn't have the restroom facilities. You basically wasn't able to produce any kind of facilities that were necessary to take care of the visiting public.

". . . we had this conflicting situation . . . were still responsible to try . . . to manage the land . . . provide things for the public, do just enough but not go too far. . . ."

So we had this conflicting situation and yet we were still responsible to try to work out as best we could how to manage the land, how to provide things for the public, do just enough but not go too far.

So as my job evolved, it evolved into more of the range issues, get it solved, get it quieted down, get less congressionals in, still manage the land but don't go too far. The same with wildlife areas. We've done wetlands. We've done some things with wildlife, habitat and that sort of thing. But do what's necessary but yet, you know, don't go too far. The same with recreation.

YCC and YACC and Recreation Facilities

We were able to provide some facilities in Reclamation at the time through the YCC, which was the Youth ~~Corps,~~ Conservation Corps program, and then also through the YACC, which is the Young Adult Conservation Corps. We were able to build some of the restroom facilities and maybe some trailer sites and those kinds of things for recreation on these reservoirs. But they *really weren't* anything that could build the roads, do pads, do anything to a standard that a recreation public was looking at at the time. So it was still evolving into do just enough but not go too far.

Lower Missouri and Upper Missouri Regions Combined

As we were dealing with it in that context, in that level, in the mid-'80s there was a lot happening with Reclamation and the regions. So in the mid-'80s the first thing that happened was combining the Lower Missouri Region, which was headquartered out of Denver, with the Upper Missouri Region, which was headquartered in Billings, and they moved the headquarters. When they combined the two regions, they left the headquarters in Billings and moved the headquarters of the Lower Missouri Region from Denver up to Billings. So when that happened, they also were recognizing that there was a need to separate some of the regional functions from some of the field functions.

How the Project Offices Were Reorganized as Construction Work Dropped off

At this point, I have to back up and give you a little bit more background about the Upper Missouri Region. The way that the regions were organized in the ‘50s, ‘60s, and early ‘70s were that they had project offices that were building the projects, and then they had the regional offices that were helping plan, design, and run some of the contracts and that sort of thing. In the early ‘70s, some of the projects were being finished in Wyoming and Montana, and so they didn’t have the funding in order to carry some of the project offices. So what they did is they reorganized so that the project office in Great Falls, the project office in Cody, Wyoming, in particular, were moved into the regional office in Billings. There was no one left at Cody and only, maybe, just a handful of inspectors and so forth left in Great Falls. So all of the project functions were actually carried out out of the regional office rather than the project office. There still was left two project offices, one in South Dakota and one in North Dakota. North Dakota was carrying out Garrison and South Dakota was carrying out Oahe.

Issues Related to Running the Projects out of the Regional Office

The problem that really became apparent was, was that we in the regional office, and I was part of that, would figure out how to deal with a certain problem out on the ground, and then we would get it solved or we’d work on it and we’d understand how to deal with it. And we were the same people that would write policy for the region. So we would come in and write policy on

how to deal with certain things or how things should be within the region, and yet it didn't consider the specific conditions and character of the problem in North Dakota or South Dakota, but yet the expectations were that, well, if we did it in the region, they can do it out in the Dakotas. And, that wasn't necessarily the fact. They had differing conditions, different constituency, stakeholders, and so forth. So there was some inherent problems in how the region was administering that.

Moved into the Montana Field Branch upon Its Creation

So what they decided to do at about the time that they were merging the regions was to create a field office which would carry out the field functions, and then they would have the regional staff focus on policy and those kinds of things so that you wouldn't get a mixture of carrying something out and being a field staff and also writing policy, separation of two different halves. So they created the Montana Field Branch at the time, which was still located in the regional office, but it was a separate branch that would carry out field functions. And that was supposed to solve the problem of doing the field work. So I was moved into that branch when that was formed.

Storey When would that have been?

Todd That was about '83, I think, or '84, one of those two years.

Storey Somewhere around there. That's fine.

Todd That organization only had a couple people for land management because there was a lot of land issues in it, had an engineer, secretary, had a branch chief, and basically that was about it–when it started. So it was just about half a dozen people.

Evolution of the Montana Field Branch

When they merged the regions, which was only about a year later,[4] they made that office a separate office and actually relocated it outside the region and actually made it an office rather than a branch, so that we were functioning as a standalone. Not quite a project office, but an office that would take care of O&M, O&M things and also land management issues.

Job Changed as the Montana Field Office Developed

While that office was being formed as a branch and then also eventually as an office, that's when my job ~~become~~ really [had] a lot of changes in it. Before I was mainly focused on wildlife management kinds of things, and range conservation, and soil moisture conservation, soil erosion, those kind of things.

Recreation Program Evolution

Then it evolved into things like the recreation

4. The Lower Missouri Region and Upper Missouri Region were merged in 1985 and renamed the Missouri Basin Region.

program. It took on a lot of other aspects.

Issuance of Special Use Permits

I had a responsibility for special-use permits already, but the additional aspect that it took on was actually signing and executing those special-use permits at a office level rather than getting them ready for the regional director to sign, for instance. So there was a delegation of authority.

Developing Procedures for Resource Management Plans

We had the planning function where we could execute plans and resource management plans, and so we did a lot on really developing a lot of the procedures for how to develop resource management plans for the Bureau, and we even prepared somewhat of a manual on that. I think it never really got published, but a lot of people have used it over the years for public involvement in developing the planning and so forth on lands management aspects.

Archaeology for Montana Moved into the Montana Field Office

There's also the archeology program for Montana was moved.

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. NOVEMBER 17, 2000.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. NOVEMBER 17, 2000.

Storey The Montana archeology program was moved into that office, I guess.

Became Branch Chief

Todd Was moved into the office. What happened was really it created a branch, where I was the branch chief, and then we had a person who was doing recreation, a person who was doing wildlife, a person who was doing special-use permitting and that sort of thing. We had an archeologist that had come in and was doing archeology for not only Montana but was also doing archeology for Wyoming. We were kind of sharing an archeologist. So at the same time there needed to be some sort of supervision of the recreation and land management duties that was going on out at Clark Canyon in Dillon. We had an employee out there. So that person was in that branch.

". . . all of those people were in this branch, and so my involvement and functions really expanded. . . ."

We also had sort of a mixture at Canyon Ferry where we had a couple of employees that were doing land management work along with maintaining the pumping plant at Canyon Ferry that pumped water from the Missouri River up to the Helena Valley Project. So all of those people were in this branch, and so my involvement and functions really expanded. It expanded to O&M and mechanics to a lot of recreation to archeology to special-use permits to environmental issues to endangered species issues, sort of the whole aspects of land management and project management.

Reclamation Was Trying to Improve the

Management of Managing Partners–Resulting in Areas Returned to Reclamation for Management

There was one other aspect here that I need to go back to in the evolving–in this land management issue that was happening in the northern plains. Reclamation was putting pressure on the managing agencies where we had actually turned over management, either recreation or wildlife, to state agencies or to local park agencies, to manage for those functions. We wanted them to improve their management. There was a lot of managing for wildlife habitat where there was a lot of overgrazing, and so that seemed to be in conflict. There were recreation areas that were run down, and even though these agencies were required to maintain the facilities, they really didn't have the money to. So there was a lot of pressure to try to focus the agencies on maintaining them and so forth.

What that all really resulted in, sort of the downward economy, the problem with the state agencies really having the money to maintain the facilities, also then the philosophy of Reclamation to try to get a better handle on land management, sort of all culminated into the local agencies not being able to do the job. So even though Reclamation wasn't *forcing* them *out*, but just the requirements of the job the local people finally recognized that they really couldn't do the job or that they'd come to that conclusion themselves because either they couldn't raise money or whatever their conditions were. So there was a lot of management areas that were actually turned back to Reclamation. The Clark Canyon

Reservoir area was turned back. Other areas within Montana. The Tiber Reservoir was turned back. I think almost every reservoir in Montana except for Canyon Ferry was turned back in those late ‘70s, early ‘80s.

“There were trespasses of cabins being built on Reclamation land, and we were trying to get the boundaries marked so that that wouldn’t happen. We had to deal with those trespasses. The local people couldn’t really get them dealt with because of the political pressures and because of the expense of the local people that were building . . .”

We had the same problem, though, in the Dakotas. There was still the pressure that Reclamation was putting on to improve the management was really hitting the locals hard. There were trespasses of cabins being built on Reclamation land, and we were trying to get the boundaries marked so that that wouldn’t happen. We had to deal with those trespasses. The local people couldn’t really get them dealt with because of the political pressures and because of the expense of the local people that were building either their homes or porches or whatever it was. So there was just a lot of issues that surrounded that. So, consequently, we had a lot of areas turned back.

“So when this branch was formed . . . my functions expanded, it was based on this movement from getting reservoirs and management areas turned back. Reclamation then had the obligation to deal with them and try

to deal with the land issues. So that became a big piece of my job. . . ."

I think it was inevitable, but certainly Reclamation itself played a big piece when that was all happening. In doing so, there were places like Clark Canyon and Canyon Ferry and so forth that actually hired people to manage lands and recreation. So those people then became part of the branch.

In the 1950s and 1960s the National Park Service Did Recreation Planning for Reclamation

There's another evolutionary thing I think is really important on this land management aspect. In the '50s and '60s, the Park Service was the agency that would help Reclamation and the local state agencies plan for the kind of recreation that went on in a reservoir area whenever one was built. So they would plan things like the cabin sites. They planned the different recreation areas and what kind of capacity that they would carry so far as visitors and that sort of thing. They were the recreation planning arm for Reclamation.

Early- to Mid-1970s the National Park Service Quit Doing Reclamation's Recreation Planning

In about the early- to mid-'70s the Park Service quit doing that. So that left Reclamation with having to carry this out on their own.

"So there was a big switch *about* the time that I became a Reclamation employee . . . That forced Reclamation a lot more into the land management

game and the planning game than we had ever been before. I think before we could take kind of a hands-off approach . . ."

So there was a big switch *about* the time that I became a Reclamation employee, maybe a few years earlier than that. That forced Reclamation a lot more into the land management game and the planning game than we had ever been before. I think before we could take kind of a hands-off approach where the Park Service did the planning, the local state agencies, counties, and so forth, did the management, and we just sort of sat back.

"What happened in those times was that the recreation areas did get established, patterns got established, trespasses got established, cabin areas, people built a lot of cabins back then, and they got established. All of this tended to culminate in the late-'70s, early-'80s, and we're still dealing with it today on how to deal with cabin leases, how to deal with the trespasses that have occurred over time, how to deal with the recreation that was planned, turned over to a local agency, and then returned. . . ."

What happened in those times was that the recreation areas did get established, patterns got established, trespasses got established, cabin areas, people built a lot of cabins back then, and they got established. All of this tended to culminate in the late-'70s, early-'80s, and we're still dealing with it today on how to deal with cabin leases, how to deal with the trespasses that have occurred over time, how to deal with the recreation that was planned, turned over to a local

agency, and then returned. All those things were really difficult to deal with, I think, back then. So those evolutionary trends were quite critical to the function that I was in–which was the land management part.

Storey You're doing great.

Todd It seems pretty disjointed to me.

Storey Oh, no.

Todd It takes a little thinking to think back. Gosh, now it's twenty-four years ago now, twenty-five years ago now.

Storey Now, you're saying it was added to your responsibility and so on. Were you the head of the office?

Leland Tigges Was the Branch Chief in the Regional Office in Billings

Todd No. When I came to Reclamation and while I was in the regional office, there was a branch chief there, Leland Tigges.

Storey Who?

Todd Leland Tigges.

Storey I don't think it can hear you over that buzz. Now, Leland?

Todd Tigges. T-I-G-G-E-S. He was the branch chief in the Upper Missouri Region. Then he was the one

that hired me into the branch. His background was soil science, a soil scientist. But he was really heavily into the land management philosophy and so forth.

"So up until the Montana branch was formed in '83 or '84 . . . that was really a big effort then to get a handle on land management. . . ."

So up until the Montana branch was formed in '83 or '84, from the time I got there until '83 or '84, that was really a big effort then to get a handle on [land] management. So we did a lot of fencing of boundaries to try to do two things.

". . . the other thing was to try to get a handle on the actual grazing and the *use* of the land. The third thing he was really into . . . was the recreation side, getting a handle on recreation. . . ."

One was the trespass of housing and land and land use to try to mark the boundary, and then the other thing was to try to get a handle on the actual grazing and the *use* of the land. The third thing he was really into, I wasn't at the time, was the recreation side, getting a handle on recreation. So there was a lot of push there to try to do the right thing from a land management standpoint.

Environmental Laws Passed about the Same Time

Now, if you remember, also in the early '70s, that's when the environmental act was

passed and also the endangered species[5] and that sort of thing. So the movement, sort of the value of the country at the time, was to become more environmental and to try to do the right thing from land management standpoint. BLM had that. I think other agencies, other land management agencies, had that connotation.

". . . it wasn't that Reclamation was out there driving something that wasn't a public value. . . . we were out there trying to do the right thing from the science and the land management standpoint, but then *we* were dealing with the actual people on the ground where it was their livelihood or their adjacent land or their heritage that we were dealing with, and that became a really hard issue along with, then, the states pulling out and not being able to withstand the political issues and the economic issues around maintaining facilities and that sort of thing. . . ."

So it wasn't that Reclamation was out there driving something that wasn't a public value. I think it was. But we were out there trying to do the right thing from the science and the land management standpoint, but then *we* were dealing with the actual people on the ground where it was their livelihood or their adjacent land or their heritage that we were dealing with, and that became a really hard issue along with, then, the states pulling out and not being able to withstand the political issues and the economic issues around maintaining facilities and that sort of thing.

5. Referring to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA).

Work as Section Chief in the Regional Office in Billings

So that was sort of the regional office part of it, and I was basically a piece of it. I think I was a section chief at the time and had sort of land management, soil conservation, special-use permits, and some things in there that I took care of and had some employees that worked on that. Then there were other people that did sort of the recreation side of it. Landscape architecture, the youth programs, they were in another section.

Storey This is in the Montana office?

Todd This was in Billings, Montana, in the region before the Montana Area Office was formed. So that was really our function. We basically had a branch of sort of land managers and we had about–let's see, if I count it up, maybe, six or eight people that were in there.

Work in the Montana Branch Office in Billings

Then when we had the Montana Branch, we had the Montana branch and I just supervised a couple of people in there that were land managers like myself. So the head of that office was Jack Suphin, who had come from planning and he was an engineer planner. So he became the head of that office.

Upon Merging the Upper Missouri Region and the Lower Missouri Region, Reclamation Created the Missouri Basin Region and the Montana Field Office Outside the Region

Then when we went from a branch and they merged the Lower Missouri [Region] to the Upper Missouri Region we became the Missouri Basin Region. *That's* when they moved the office and called us the Montana Field Office, and they actually *moved* us location-wise out of the office and we actually moved to a bank building a few blocks away. And in that office Jack was still the head of it, of the office.

Jack Suphin Headed the Montana Field Office

Storey Jack?

Todd Jack Suphin, spelled S-U-P-H-I-N. Then I became a branch chief. I don't remember if archeology came along with that at the time or not. We were basically just the same bunch of folks but a different function and an expanding role.

Southwest Region and Missouri Basin Region Merged into the Great Plains Region

Then about a year and a half later there were a couple of things. A year and a half later they merged the Southwest Region out of Amarillo with Billings and left the regional office in Billings.

Storey That would have been about '88-'89?

Todd I think it was more like ‘86.[6]

Storey Okay.

Todd Now, that didn’t have so much impact on our office as much as it had an impact on the region with the different regional people trying to get a handle on all the work that was down in the Southwest Region and trying to merge that in. But a couple of years after that, in about ‘88, there was recognized that we had three offices in Montana, but we didn’t have any project office. We had the superintendent of Canyon Ferry, we had our Montana Field Office, and then we had the Yellowtail superintendent. But yet there was no sort of project office that covered all the eastern part of Montana.

In 1988 the Region Merged Three Other Offices with the Montana Field Office to Oversee Montana Projects

So In ‘88 there was a decision to make a project office out of all three offices. So we merged. We merged all three of those offices. Jim Wedeward became the project manager for that office. Steve Clark was the superintendent out at Canyon Ferry. Jack Suphin was the head of the Montana office, and Denny Christiansen [phonetic] was at Yellowtail. The heads of those three offices then merged in with the project office with Jim as the project manager.

For Several Years There Was Ongoing Evolution

6. This reorganization occurred in 1988, and the regional title changed to Great Plains Region

in the Montana Field Office

Then as that office developed from ‘88 on there always seemed to be a lot of evolution as to how the office was organized and whether they were divisions or branches or whatnot. Ultimately, some of the functions also came under the branch that I was managing, too. So from about ‘84, when we became the field branch, about every year or two there was an evolution of organizational changes that was going on all the way up until, probably, 1990 or so. So there was quite a six years of evolution for me and my job and for the offices that were there and all the people involved, actually.

To better put some time scale to it, I’m thinking it went something like this is that ‘83 or ‘84 we had the Montana Branch formed. About a year later we moved over to the bank building and that was the Montana Field Office. We spent about two years there or two and a half. Since the bank building was temporary quarters, we moved over to across the street from the Federal Building, spent about a year there as the Montana Field Office. That would bring us up to about ‘88. During that year archeology was moved over. By that time, also, the southwest regional office was also merged into the region.

Archaeology Functions Added to His Office in the Montana Field Office

So my role had expanded from archeology and I think we also had picked up a few employees in the region from Southwest Region.

One of those landed in our office. So as we were working with archeology in that role we also took care of the newly formed office down at Cody, Wyoming, which was reconstructing Buffalo Bill Dam. So we were helping out that office ~~from~~ [in] archeology. So that expanded my functions as land manager. In '88 the project office was formed, and from that branch of environment and recreation land management was formed, and in that formation employees from the Canyon Ferry office that were in land management came in the branch and that sort of thing. So we ended up with a branch there of about eleven or twelve with a lot of expanding functions.

So that's a long story to a short question about not only the evolving roles of my role but also really of the offices. I mean, this is really quite a grand story about all the things that were changing in the '70s and '80s to Reclamation.

"There was a lot of pressure for Reclamation to do things differently. And . . . there were pockets that were recognizing doing things differently and maybe focusing more on environment in some ways and in reducing the cost of our services and in reducing the construction of big dams and so forth, it was *all* sort of started back, I think, in the '70s and it took about fifteen or twenty years to sort of get set up so that Reclamation, as a whole, was ready for this change . . . when Dan Beard came in in '93. . . ."

One of the important points about sort of describing all those changes, not only about what was going on specifically within land

management, but also about the Park Service and other things and the environmental thrust was that so much of the change that happened in the early nineties under Dan Beard was formulated and was already under change, of some sort, early on, probably as far back as the '70s. There was a lot of pressure for Reclamation to do things differently. And even though there were pockets that were recognizing doing things differently and maybe focusing more on environment in some ways and in reducing the cost of our services and in reducing the construction of big dams and so forth, it was *all* sort of started back, I think, in the '70s and it took about fifteen or twenty years to sort of get set up so that Reclamation, as a whole, was ready for this change, as ready as we could be when Dan Beard came in in '93.

". . . Dan [Beard] . . . did a *great* job of moving this organization in a whole different direction. But I think the point . . . is that there was a lot of changes that led up to this, and you could *sense* those changes for a long time. . . ."

Of course, I know you've got histories on Dan and what he took ahold of and what he did and he did a *great* job of moving this organization in a whole different direction. But I think the point was–is that there was a lot of changes that led up to this, and you could *sense* those changes for a long time.

You know, I think as I think back about what was going on then and the jobs that I had and the activities that I was involved with–was really quite a great experience. And I feel

extremely fortunate to have been a part of it, from being a biologist coming to an engineering organization and sort of getting the experience that I had on the land management side of things, like I focused on here, and yet dealing with specific irrigation districts on a lot of the return flows and erosion control and other kinds of things that we were dealing with back then.

"The understanding that I was able to gain in working with people on the ground, and what was really happening out in a district, it really gave me a tremendous sense of balance between the environmental side of things and where sort of the extreme protectionists were taking that philosophy and the on-the-ground livelihood of people . . . there really was a balance to be met with those two things and that they didn't necessarily have to be in conflict with each other. . . ."

The understanding that I was able to gain in working with people on the ground, and what was really happening out in a district, it really gave me a tremendous sense of balance between the environmental side of things and where sort of the extreme protectionists were taking that philosophy and the on-the-ground livelihood of people that Reclamation's philosophy had been so rich over the last seventy years and formulated, and that there really was a balance to be met with those two things and that they didn't necessarily have to be in conflict with each other. And if there *were* things that we could do in the operation of districts and in the philosophy of the environment to bring both of those philosophies

together and do good things.

"I think that was really the kernel of my thinking . . . that both the original philosophy of Reclamation, which was building public works projects, *and* being able to do the right thing environmentally and public use-wise is accomplishable. . . ."

I think that was really the kernel of my thinking and probably one that I hold today is that both the original philosophy of Reclamation, which was building public works projects, *and* being able to do the right thing environmentally and public use-wise is accomplishable.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. NOVEMBER 17, 2000.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. NOVEMBER 17, 2000.

Storey This is Brit Allan Storey with Larry Todd on November 17, 2000.

Todd I really don't think you have to do one at the exclusion of the other. As I'm thinking about in my current job sort of where my focus is and where I think Reclamation needs to go today, it stems a lot from those values that I learned back then, being able to try to bring those philosophies together where you could make it work right there on the ground with the livelihood and with the environmental philosophy and actually do some good things for both. It's really a strong principle that I got from Reclamation, and it's really a good one. I think it's something that we'll go forward with.

I know you probably hear this from a lot

of different people in a lot of different ways about not doing one at the exclusion of the other but, in fact, what I'm saying is that being able to be a part of that with solutions not on the ground is really good for me, good examples and good successes. I'm thinking about where to take you next.

Storey That's why I haven't asked any questions, because I could see you were thinking. You weren't signaling that it was time for me to start asking questions.

Controlling Boundaries and Use at Tiber Reservoir

Todd I want to tell you a little bit about the Tiber story, because I think it's probably a basis for what I've just said, but it also gets into some of the issues and some of the deep problems of the area and some of the ones we still deal with today.

When I came to Reclamation in '76, they had already started an effort to fence the boundary of reservoirs throughout [the] Upper Missouri Region, and so since they hired me, a big part of my job was going to be the range management kind of things. Tiber Reservoir was deemed as no control on the grazing and so forth, and it is a reservoir that is out on the plains north of Great Falls. It was also a reservoir that was built back in the early '50s, and it was under some conflict because it was in the Lower Marias unit. It's on the Marias River, so it was going to have a Lower Marias irrigation district with it. The irrigation district never was formed and they never voted to

build it. But yet there was authorization and a directive to, I believe this was from the president at the time, to build the reservoir.

Tiber Reservoir Was Built, but There Is No Project and No Delivery of Water

So the reservoir got built, but there is no project and no delivery of water to any project. So it's just a reservoir. It is under the Pick-Sloan Project and so it comes with it some functions of recreation and wildlife and other things besides the normal irrigation and municipal and industrial uses and so forth. But since it really didn't have any delivery of major piece of water so it was sitting out there kind of all by itself.

"There was a lot of contention in the purchase of lands in the '50s when it *was* built. People didn't want to sell. There was a lot of condemnation. There was a lot of issues even with the withdrawn land from BLM and how much land was *taken* and moving people out of the river bottom where their homesteads were and so forth. . . ."

There was a lot of contention in the purchase of lands in the '50s when it *was* built. People didn't want to sell. There was a lot of condemnation. There was a lot of issues even with the withdrawn land from BLM and how much land was *taken* and moving people out of the river bottom where their homesteads were and so forth. That was where their heritage were and we basically flooded all that out, moved them out and set them up on top of these bluffs and prairies, and so they had to rebuild their farms and

so forth, a pretty natural occurrence when reservoirs are built. But here most of these same people were in place, and so they had either dealt with Reclamation on purchase of lands or their condemnation or their fathers had, they stood by and watched while their fathers had done this.

". . . there was a lot of bitterness of almost all the adjacent landowners around that reservoir. . . ."

So there was a lot of bitterness of almost all the adjacent landowners around that reservoir.

"The adjacent landowners pretty much used the land however they deemed necessary and tried to make do with their new grazing regimes . . . the cattle wanted to go to the water, and so that's where they hung down to was on the Federal land near the water. There wasn't a lot of grazing management on their own lands, and so basically you had a lot of cows near the water and not much in other areas. . . ."

The reservoir is quite large. It's probably in the neighborhood of twenty-some thousand acres of land when the reservoir is full. There was no boundary demarcation or fences or anything. So when the reservoir was filled, it was just the water that was the barrier. The adjacent landowners pretty much used the land however they deemed necessary and tried to make do with their new grazing regimes and so forth, which really didn't work out all that well, mainly because the cattle wanted to go to the water, and so that's where they hung down to was on the Federal land near the water. There wasn't a lot of

grazing management on their own lands, and so basically you had a lot of cows near the water and not much in other areas.

". . . the recreation issue had come up. So the state had turned back the reservoir for management under Reclamation while we were trying to do this fencing. The fencing was viewed as the Feds really coming in with a heavy hand. . . ."

At about the same time, there was the recreation issue had come up. So the state had turned back the reservoir for management under Reclamation while we were trying to do this fencing. The fencing was viewed as the Feds really coming in with a heavy hand. So when I came in, what we ended up doing there was to really set up what we called an advisory group, and I mentioned it before, but it was really the *key* to getting that thing back on track. We were getting a lot of congressional letters. It seemed like half my time was spent responding to congressional letters over how we were treating people up there and the nonsense that we were creating by doing this.

Created an Advisory Group for Tiber Reservoir

So we created this advisory group and then we met about once a month for several years, and we sent out the notes from that, from those meetings, and the decisions that we were making and how we were progressing and so forth.

Sought to Balance Landowner Needs with

Resources Protection and Boundary Fencing

The principles of the group, though, was this ~~is~~ that we needed to mark the boundaries somehow and that we *were going* to do the right thing for the natural resources in the area, and [if] we could find a way to do the right thing for the natural resources and incorporate the adjacent landowners' needs somehow, then we would try to do that. We would try to make them balance.

". . . it was a time back in the '70s when we were really looking at an integrated approach to working with people. . . ."

The reason that this is an important thing, and I hope it's not just because I worked on it, but it was a time back in the '70s when we were really looking at an integrated approach to working with people. Really bringing the stakeholders and the adjacent landowners together, really trying to assess what the needs were and do the right thing. Try to solve the problem. Even though that was a pocket and it really wasn't sort of a big national issue, but it was a big local issue and it *definitely* was giving Reclamation a bad name. So for us to go up there and try to work for the years that we did and work this out I think was really important. I felt at the time that when I was in school in biology that to work on something like that you'd probably only do something and have it be a success only once in your career. Since then I've revised that, but at the time it was not only a big deal to me but it was a big deal, I think, for the area.

The kinds of issues that we got into was the fact that we were doing a culture change. These adjacent landowners who are ranchers and farmers had a way of doing their business, they had a way of running their cattle. It worked for them and they had it in a routine format. When we suggested changing that routine and running them different and basically upsetting how they carried out their duties, how they carried out their farming operations, that was just not palatable to them. They had a *very* hard time changing that. It was really–and I heard this a lot–it was really, "This is the way my granddad did it. This is the way my dad did it. This is the way I've done it. This is the way it is."

". . . to actually get them to consent to doing some changes or to allow Reclamation to do some of the things it needed to on the Federal lands, even though they were adjacent, was really a horrendous task and . . . it took ten years. . . ."

So to work with that to a level to actually get them to consent to doing some changes or to allow Reclamation to do some of the things it needed to on the Federal lands, even though they were adjacent, was really a horrendous task and it took a number of years. And I really don't think we got to a place where it really got implemented well until probably in–it took ten years. It took ~~till about '80,~~ till the late '80s, before it got implemented very well at all. And even then there were some outstanding issues that still seemed to linger.

Reseeding Areas

Some of the things we did there is we did some reseeding in some areas that were cultivated. It was sandy. It was getting a lot of wind erosion on it and those seedings were successful. We did seedings in the upper end where we planted some of the native grasses back. In the time of pioneer days this grass would be shoulder high or higher and basically had just been grazed out to where it had changed the environment totally. There were a few areas where we did that.

Noxious Weeds

We had a big issue with the noxious weed control in the area, and I imagine it's still there today. The weeds of–Russian knapweed and leafy spurge, in some of the flooding that occurred in that reservoir in the '70s, brought down a *tremendous* amount of weed seed that was deposited in sort of a bathtub ring around that reservoir. So the reservoir basically was a seed bed for these kinds of weeds. Since they were noxious, then the adjacent landowners had a concern that whatever we were doing down on the reservoir wouldn't actually bring those seeds out and be deposited on their lands or spread. So there was a lot of science that we did up there about how to deal with these weeds and a lot of biocontrol, a lot chemical control, and a lot of testing and so forth. I think that some of it was successful. A lot wasn't. But there was a lot of earnestness in trying to get a handle on those things.

Several State and Federal Bureaus Were Involved

at Tiber

There was a lot of people involved in making this happen, too. I think this brought together the state, Soil Conservation Service, even some of the employees in Reclamation, Fish and Wildlife Service, *all* sitting around a table trying to focus on solutions. I think that was probably most gratifying for me.

". . . if you can get the problem on the table, and if you're all standing around shoulder to shoulder around the table looking at the problem, then you're not focused on each other. . . ."

One of the things I did learn out of that was that if you can get the problem on the table, and if you're all standing around shoulder to shoulder around the table looking at the problem, then you're not focused on each other.

We did that a lot. We had the maps. We had the photographs. We had the problem laid out on the table, and when you can really stand around or sit around the table looking at the problem then the solutions seem to come. When you are sort of face to face facing off about the conflicts of the problems, the solutions don't come. It becomes more of a grudge, more of a bitterness than it does a solution. One of the things I did take away from that as a technique is to try to get the problem on the table and get people to stand together to look at it, and then we would get a product, we'd get consent, we'd get it worked out.

The Muddy Creek Project, on a Sun River Tributary

Another project that I think is really important and I think is telling about Reclamation was the Muddy Creek Project. Muddy Creek is a river–tributary to the Sun River up near the Sun River Project. Before project times Muddy Creek was something that you could drive a wagon across, had lots of cottonwood trees and so forth. But it was always fairly murky water because of the watershed it come out of, a lot of clays and suspended solids and so forth and so on.

Storey Are you saying Muddy Creek or Meadow Creek?

Todd Muddy Creek.

Storey Muddy. M-U-D-D-Y.

Todd M-U-D-D-Y.

Storey Okay.

Todd So it was a primitive stream, but it was still kind of a muddy kind of a water which flowed into the Sun River, which was really a clear stream. The project of the Sun River was built on benchlands that was in the watershed of the Sun River and Muddy Creek. These bench lands were of a lot of glacial till,[7] and so the water that was irrigated,

7. Defined at http://www.dictionary.net/till on April 7, 2010, as "A deposit of clay, sand, and gravel, without lamination, formed in a glacier valley by means of the waters derived from the melting glaciers;–sometimes applied to alluvium of an upper river terrace, when (continued...)

put on crops, would drain down several feet, maybe fifteen or twenty feet, and they would hit an impervious layer and then they would move out of the project underground and then in these dry coulees and so forth that fed into Muddy Creek. They would drain a lot of the project. It was *perfect* for growing crops, because it had a lot of drainage, but all of the extra water that was put on would drain off and it would cause a lot of return flows in this creek that probably had around ten thousand acre-feet per year yield, and by the time *I* began working on [it] in late '70s it had an average of a hundred to a hundred and ten thousand acre-feet of yield. So it was ten or eleven times the amount of flow that it normally had.

That issue really became big for–actually it should have became big for Reclamation in that the erosion caused by that amount of water to come off that project was tremendous. The river bed dropped vertical walls of twenty and thirty foot drops in areas probably the first five to ten miles up from Sun River, and those soils had so much sodium in them. Sodium sort of disperses all of the connectivity of the soils, and so with the extra water, with the kind of soils it was, you just had these huge blocks of soil that would actually melt right into the water, and then you had these vertical cliffs of exposed soil.

The project itself was clearly a key piece of what caused this erosion, and yet

7. (...continued)
not laminated, and appearing as if formed in the same manner. [1913 Webster]."

Reclamation's position was that even though the project was clearly a significant piece of it that since it was a single-purpose project, in other words one that was just particularly irrigation function, that it was the district's problem or state's problem to fix. It wasn't any responsibility of Reclamation or a Federal role to try to deal with. At the time, we were trying to deal with it on the basis of the soil and moisture conservation program that I had responsibility for. We were beginning to use that program. We'd done a lot of work in understanding why it had eroded to the point it had and where it was coming from and what kind of solutions were to be employed to try to hold back some of the erosion.

We also put together–we didn't totally put it together, but we were part of putting it together–was another sort of group of people that included EPA [Environmental Protection Agency], and Soil Conservation Service, and us, and some locals, local landowners, and so forth, to try to come up with some of the solutions. In that whole process we also did some science and some engineering and so forth and come up with some check structures that we would put in the base of that to try to retard some of the erosion.

At about the time that we were doing this, which is in the early '80s, there was a decision from Washington not to do any more on it. This was about the time that there was a lot of questions being asked about the validity of the soil moisture program and whether Reclamation would continue to be in it to the extent that we were. We had designs. We had contracts ready to

go. We had the landowners' consent.

". . . check structures so it would cure the amount of erosion going into the Sun River. It went into the Sun River and a few miles downstream it went into the Missouri, and by air you could just see this mud trail from Muddy Creek all the way down one side to the Sun River all the way down one side of the Missouri River. So one side of the river was silt laden, and the other side of the rivers were not. . . ."

Everything was right there poised and ready to put in some of these check structures so it would cure the amount of erosion going into the Sun River. It went into the Sun River and a few miles downstream it went into the Missouri, and by air you could just see this mud trail from Muddy Creek all the way down one side to the Sun River all the way down one side of the Missouri River. So one side of the river was silt laden, and the other side of the rivers were not. It was really quite a sight, probably still is.

The decision was basically to not do it and to quit. So in the middle of all that nothing was done. It was still being dealt with in mid-'80s to some degree to try to figure out what to do. We tried to enlist the state to cost-share and to help. A lot of maneuvering in trying to deal with it. I think at one point it was the state's number one watershed problem that they had listed.

Through all of that, I think the only thing that was ever really done was that the irrigation district, through the rehabilitation betterment

program had put in some system-wide management remote controls and other things to manage their waters and how they were delivering it so it would reduce the amount of water being delivered to the land and so forth and it would actually reduce the return flows. And I think it did. But it still really wasn't enough, and I think that that was the only thing that was ever really done.

"That type of effect on the environment and on rivers from these public works projects is something that Reclamation still today has a hard time in trying to deal with. The aspect of repayment, that it's not a Federal problem, even though we designed it and helped create it, is really an important aspect to get ahold of, because it's that hands-off approach, 'Here's the project. You guys manage. If there's any problems, you take care of it, too.'. . . "

That type of effect on the environment and on rivers from these public works projects is something that Reclamation still today has a hard time in trying to deal with. The aspect of repayment, that it's not a Federal problem, even though we designed it and helped create it, is really an important aspect to get ahold of, because it's that hands-off approach, "Here's the project. You guys manage. If there's any problems, you take care of it, too." We're still dealing with it today. That's *part* of the environmental hammering on us about environmental issues of what we've caused by the public works projects that we've put in. And, quite frankly, I don't think that it's fixed today, Muddy Creek. I think

it's still operating pretty much the way it is.

". . . another aspect of those early years that was really important to understand is about really the human resources. Reclamation is an agency that sort of hires them and does RIFs [Reduction in Force] on a routine basis . . ."

I think another aspect of those early years that was really important to understand is about really the human resources. Reclamation is an agency that sort of hires them and does RIFs [Reduction in Force] on a routine basis and did so . . .

END SIDE 1,. TAPE 2. NOVEMBER 17, 2000.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2. NOVEMBER 17, 2000.

Storey You were saying that Reclamation used to hire and then do RIFs when it didn't need staff anymore.

Todd Yes.

Storey Still does it some even now.

Todd Still does some a little bit now. But much, much less than what it used to. But as projects were being built, they would hire for them and then as they were being finished or completed or as funding would go down, then they would do reductions in force. And then when funding would come around, then they would begin hiring again.

When I got hired in the fall of '76, I

moved from Burns, Oregon, to Billings and sort of had about three or four months on the job.

"The very first thing I was faced with was a reduction in funding of both Garrison Project and Oahe, which was in the Dakotas. That was the first thing I began to understand about a RIF . . . And, as the funding from those projects was reduced, so was the funding in the regional office. . . ."

The very first thing I was faced with was a reduction in funding of both Garrison Project and Oahe,[8] which was in the Dakotas. That was the first thing I began to understand about a RIF, because my position was in jeopardy. And, as the funding from those projects was reduced, so was the funding in the regional office. So depending on how the funding was all going, which at that time I didn't really understand, but as those projects were helping fund some of the folks in the regional office, and my position was one that was being looked at as a reduction in force. Eventually, after they worked through it for a few months, luckily for me, anyway, it wasn't reduced. Although it seemed like it was really touch and go there for several months.

". . .probably every year for a number of years the

8. The reference is to the Garrison Diversion Unit and the Oahe Unit of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program–both of which units are only partially built. The Oahe Unit was planned to deliver irrigation and municipal and industrial water, through a pumping plant and canal, from Oahe Dam/Lake Oahe, an existing Corps of Engineers Project on the Missouri River. The Garrison Unit was a center of environmental controversy, and, for various reasons, it lost support among the groups that originally supported development of the irrigation project.

Upper Missouri Region was going through some kind of organizational change, either reduction in force or reorganization within the region, or within our branch, or the division, or *something* . . ."

The important thing about that is is that probably every year for a number of years the Upper Missouri Region was going through some kind of organizational change, either reduction in force or reorganization within the region, or within our branch, or the division, or *something* going on.

"We had the mergers of the regions sort of one right after another. Before that time either our branch or we had reduction in force because of Garrison or Oahe . . ."

, and Oahe eventually, you know, went by the wayside. Garrison is still alive, but even with Garrison that was up and down and so forth.

". . . I don't really believe that there was any stability that employees could really hang their hat on . . . from basically the time . . . I was hired until the late '80s. Even at that it was a little bit suspect, because at that point we were doing completing Buffalo Bill Dam, we'd taken on other regions, but basically it was an operations and maintenance program. There wasn't a lot of construction and so forth. . . ."

So I don't really believe that there was any stability that employees could really hang their hat on or that they felt like, anyway, from basically the time that I was hired until the late

'80s. Even at that it was a little bit suspect, because at that point we were doing completing Buffalo Bill Dam,[9] we'd taken on other regions, but basically it was an operations and maintenance program. There wasn't a lot of construction and so forth.

". . . from an employee's standpoint . . . it was a very uncertain time. It was a time of change. It was a time of a lot of organizational disruption. . . ."

So it was, from an employee's standpoint, I think, living through all that, it was a very uncertain time. It was a time of change. It was a time of a lot of organizational disruption.

". . . the Lower Missouri Region, which had employees of probably around 150 to 200, and that that whole region was going to be merged into the Billings region, and yet not very many people came. I'll bet you less than, I don't know, probably less than fifteen or so out of all that whole group came. . . ."

I mean, when you consider moving the Lower Missouri Region, which had employees of probably around 150 to 200, and that that whole region was going to be merged into the Billings region, and yet not very many people came. I'll bet you less than, I don't know, probably less than fifteen or so out of all that whole group came. Many of them went to the engineering research center. Some found other jobs. Some came to

9. Buffalo Bill Dam was originally completed in 1910, and it was raised some twenty-five feet beginning in 1985.

Washington. But not very many of them came up to Billings.

". . . it was a complete disruption for that region. It was certainly additional work for the Upper Missouri Region and trying to merge in the processes of how records were kept from one region to another and how they dealt with the different districts. The whole thing was really quite a challenge to try to get it all figured out. . . . Then a year to a year and a half later to do the same thing with the Southwest Region . . ."

So it was a complete disruption for that region. It was certainly additional work for the Upper Missouri Region and trying to merge in the processes of how records were kept from one region to another and how they dealt with the different districts. The whole thing was really quite a challenge to try to get it all figured out. Then a year to a year and a half later to do the same thing with the Southwest Region, I would say even then that probably there was not very many people that came up to Billings then from that region either. There was a few people that went to the Oklahoma office, which is a field office, when they merged the regions. But that was only a handful of people, and there was only a few that came up to Billings. So that was a complete disruption and shutdown of probably 150 to 200 employees, also.

". . . from '76 through the late '80s, there was a tremendous amount of changes going on within Reclamation human resource-wise and stability-wise . . ."

So from ‘76 through the late ‘80s, there was a tremendous amount of changes going on within Reclamation human resource-wise and stability-wise and wondering where Reclamation was headed and what was really going on here with that kind of change and so forth.

“. . . as I recall, . . . I probably went through a reorganization or a RIF of some sort every year for the first ten years that I was with Reclamation. . . .”

I think that, as I recall, that I probably went through a reorganization or a RIF of some sort every year for the first ten years that I was with Reclamation.

Storey Rather often. Would you like to stop for today? We’re almost at the end. I’d like to ask you whether you’re willing for researchers to use these tapes and the resulting transcripts?

Todd I didn’t quite catch the question? Now, what?

Storey Whether you’re willing to let researchers use these tapes and the resulting transcripts.

Todd Yeah, sure.

Storey Good. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Todd You’re welcome.

Storey And congratulations on your new job.

Todd Oh, thank you.

Storey Director of Operations.

Todd Yes. That's a whole other story.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. NOVEMBER 17, 2000.
BEGIN SIDE1, TAPE 1, APRIL 10, 2002.

Storey This is Brit Allan Storey, Senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Larry Todd, the Director of Operations at the Bureau of Reclamation, in his office in Washington, D.C., in the Main Interior Building, at about one o'clock in the afternoon on April the 10th, 2002. This is tape one.

1988 to 1992 Was in the Montana Project Office, Later the Montana Area Office

Todd So, okay, '88 to '92, that time period. I, in particular, was in the Montana Project Office, which was changed to the Montana Area Office. The project manager at the time was Jim Wedeward. Jack Suphin was the operation maintenance chief, and then I was the chief of the Lands, Environmental, Recreation Branch.

The Region Both Wrote Policy and Then Implemented it in the Field

As I recall, the main things that were going on during that time was really a decentralization of responsibility. Before then, the region had actually functioned as a project office in some aspects. In other words, they

would write policy, and then the very same people—and I happened to be one of those when I was in the regional office—would go out and carry that policy out in the field.

There was a thought then that really what we needed was the field offices to take on the execution of the policy and of the actions and that sort of thing at the field level, and that we needed some separation there so that the same people writing policy wouldn't automatically go out and carry the action out.

The Montana Field Office Resulted from the Merger of the Upper Missouri Region and the Lower Missouri Region

So what came into being was is that there was the Montana Field Office, which really came out of the merger of the two regions. The Lower Missouri Region merged first, in that '83-'84 time frame, and then the Southwest Region, out of Amarillo, merged second. That's when we got the Great Plains Region, and that happened in that '85-'86 time frame.

Merging the Field Offices into the Montana Area Office

That really set the stage for the need for the field offices because of the expanded role of the regional office. It really couldn't carry on any field activities, and then they also realized that they needed to be more of a regional office rather than executing field operations. So the two offices in Montana that were still—or the three

offices, actually, that were still separated, but kind of connected to the regional office was the Superintendent out of Canyon Ferry, the Superintendent of Yellowtail, and then this Montana Field Office, which was an operation-maintenance office that took care of the rest of Montana. The discussion then were to merge those three.

Storey [unclear]. I'm sorry.

[Tape recorder turned off.]

Todd Okay. The discussion at time was to merge those three field offices into a project office. So we took the Canyon Ferry operations [office], which was really managing the Canyon Ferry Dam and Reservoir, along with the power generation and so forth, and we took the Yellowtail operations [office], which was really the Yellowtail maintenance of the dam and the operations of the powerplant, and merged that in with the Montana field offices, that responsibility for all the other projects in Montana, and then called that the project office.

That really completed project offices then within the whole expanse of the Great Plains Region. There was a construction office in Cody at the time, and that was for the Buffalo Bill Dam, and as soon as that office was going to be closed down, then it was going to be really merged in with either the Montana or the Wyoming Area Office. So that was what was happening, really, then, in that '87, '88 time frame.

One Initiative Was to Transfer Land or at Least Management to the Locals

When that office was created then, there was a lot of administration, a lot of sort of procedures, a lot of things that we were dealing with, just to try to get on track. At the same time, what also was going on was a movement from the administration, which, really, the political administration, to try to get as much management or land into private hands. That's when that was really starting up, was to try to get less government. One of the ways you get less government is to transfer the land, or you transfer the management to the locals and so forth.

Since Montana Had Returned Several Areas to Reclamation, the Bureau Began to Look to BLM and the Forest Service for Management

So some of the things that we were dealing with in the Lands Branch was the transfer of management from Reclamation to either state or local, which, at that time, Montana didn't really have the money and the funding to do the land management, so they had turned a lot of these areas back to us. So the second alternative then is to maybe get it out of Reclamation's hands, since we were thought of at that time as not being a land management type of an entity. We were more engineering, and therefore BLM [Bureau of Land Management] or Forest Service or some other entity was more into the land management.

So we were dealing with taking some of the projects like East Bench, Clark Canyon, like

Canyon Ferry and so forth, and trying to work deals with either BLM or others on managing lands. East Bench was a big one. We had a lot of negotiations about turning that over to BLM and working through that.

Reclamation was Reviewing Withdrawn Lands with BLM

We had a lot of land issues that we were dealing with at the time, with BLM, on withdrawal review.

The FLPMA [Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976], which is BLM's organic act that had come into being about '76, had required reviews of all the withdrawn lands. So we had went through and dealt with BLM throughout the '80s on that, but it really culminated back in that late-'80s, early-nineties time frame about what Reclamation would keep and what they wouldn't.

"Reclamation viewed this as that there were certain benefits to keeping things in a withdrawn status. The withdrawal designation . . . means that mining, homesteading could not have taken place on those lands . . ."

Reclamation viewed this as that there were certain benefits to keeping things in a withdrawn status. The withdrawal designation itself means that the land is withdrawn from public entry, which means that mining, homesteading could not have taken place on those lands, so that it was withdrawn for a public purpose. Reclamation had

thousands and thousands of acres of withdrawn land. As a matter of fact, most of our land is probably out of a withdrawn status of some sort– especially in the northern plains states.

". . . BLM thought that Reclamation should just have a right-of-way and that the withdrawal ought to be revoked, and therefore the *management* status given back to BLM. . . . Reclamation had a hard time with that philosophy, because the management of lands and minerals and activities around reservoirs and lakes has a direct impact upon the public project that we were managing . . ."

The BLM thought that Reclamation should just have a right-of-way and that the withdrawal ought to be revoked, and therefore the *management* status given back to BLM. Along *with* that, BLM was also saying that they would manage, do all the land management, recreation, wildlife, and so forth, on these lands, because that was their responsibility and duty. Reclamation had a hard time with that philosophy, because the management of lands and minerals and activities around reservoirs and lakes has a direct impact upon the public project that we were managing, which was the water supply.

So there was lots of discussions throughout that late-'80s, early-nineties time frame about that whole philosophy. That whole issue, coupled with the thrust to try to get Reclamation to move its management from Reclamation over to other agencies, basically to get it off-budget or to get a more narrow focus

and all that, was really high on the list back then. I mean, we were doing a lot of work, trying to figure that whole thing out.

Meeting Between Reclamation and BLM to Discuss the Issues and the Examine the Authorities of Each Bureau

It tended to culminate with the withdrawn thing in a meeting of BLM and Reclamation. There was two real meetings going on. One was, and I don't remember the time frame exactly, it was in the early nineties, down in El Centro, California, where we had about five people selected from Reclamation and five from BLM and we met down there. We heard from districts, we heard from BLM people, and we got together and talked about what it is that we really should do. We went through all the authorities from both [bureaus] and so forth. It was really an education on both sides, but I think really especially for BLM, because BLM tended to ignore that Reclamation had the authorities that it did, and they really downplayed what authorities Reclamation *did* have.

Working out How to Review Withdrawn Lands

What came out of that meeting was a process by which these withdrawals would be reviewed. And as that tended to be executed, not everybody on Reclamation's side and BLM wanted to follow along. You'd get different views in the field offices and different places, and things would crop up. So after I was transferred to Loveland, Colorado—this would have been

about ‘93—I got a call from the Washington office that said we needed to have a meeting of the minds, and so there was two people from Reclamation and two from BLM that went to Reno, stayed in a meeting room for several days, and our direction was to not come back until we had agreement on how these withdrawn lands issues were going to be handled for each of the bureaus.

A lot of tough discussion in those meetings, but the product that came out of that, it turned out to be a good meeting, and what came out of that was a five-point paper that was presented back here to Reclamation and then to Washington. Ultimately, there was a change of administration in ‘90, right in there.

Let me back up here just a minute. The change of administration had caused sort of a BLM-favored decision, and with the change of administration, they backed off that decision and decided to have this other body take a look at the withdrawals and come up with the agreement. The second body was the one that *I* was involved with, and that ended up being this, I think, five-point paper that we put together on the agreements on how withdrawals were to be handled, and then *that* was agreed to by both the assistant secretaries of each of those agencies. And then that’s how the withdrawals were carried out for Reclamation. Sorry to say, I don’t remember what all was in there.

So, sort of back on what I was doing back in that time frame. A lot of land management

issues, a lot of efficiency issues, of who manages what, about jurisdiction, about what was important to each of the agency's missions, a lot of sorting out. Most of that was occurring then.

Reclamation Recognized Refocusing of its Work as Construction Funding Dropped and O&M Funding Increased

The other thing that was occurring within Reclamation was budgetary issues, a lot of big budgetary issues about where do you spend your priorities. The funding of construction was going down and the operation and maintenance was definitely going up, and we knew that that's where we were going to focus the agency and its energies.

Reclamation Was Also Scrutinizing Budgets and Where Money Was Being Spent

So, from an agency standpoint, there was really a lot going on about, well, do we need to spend money this way or that way. Big emphasis on operation and maintenance, getting our facilities back up to a good working order and so forth. In the same time frame, we were looking at—there was a lot of scrutiny on the budgets themselves and the line items, and what was coming a lot out of Denver. The assistant commissioner for resource management was really looking hard at the budgets themselves and the line items and who was really spending money where and where it was needed, and so forth, and so just a lot of scrutiny.

Development of the Budget Review Committee (BRC)

Out of that effort and a lot of the budgetary issues that were going on at the time came what we call the BRC, which was the Budget Review Committee. I certainly wasn't part of the development of that, but as a field person, being around and being in one of the first meetings that the Great Plains Region had, from the Budget Review Committee, it was pretty interesting from my view.

The thought was that the Budget Review Committee would go around and visit each region, and each regional director would have to present their budget with their group of folks that needed to be there. This Budget Review Committee was made up of a regional director, the appropriations budget person, which happened to be Austin Burke at the time. There was a third member; I can't remember who that was. But there was a rotating regional director that was set up to be on each one.

And so at the first meeting there was a little education process about the appropriations, about what Congress was asking us, as an agency, and about these issues we were getting into. And then there was time for a discussion about where Reclamation and the Great Plains Region, particularly, was headed, and what was contained in the budgets and so forth.

One of the issues that came up in the very first meetings were the aging infrastructure that

we had. The Great Plains Region had a lot of old dams and old power plants that were fifty to seventy years old, and so there were things like transformers and other things that had been there for the life of the project and there was a lot of concern about replacing these.

But, in general, those were the discussions in the BRC, so a lot of emphasis on budget and the tight budgets and so forth, and spending things efficiently.

Storey: Were you on the BRC?

Todd I was not on the BRC. The BRC held a meeting with each region, and so in the meeting of the Great Plains Region, I happened to be in that meeting.

Storey Oh, okay.

Dennis Underwood's Strategic Plan

Todd: So that was my recollection of that first meeting. Also in that time period, there was a lot of emphasis on the Strategic Plan.[10] There was a lot of energy placed on the strategy of where Reclamation was headed. Dennis Underwood, the commissioner at the time, had the Strategic Plan as his focus, and so there was just a lot of energy placed on it. But once the Strategic Plan was in place, the next effort was to put together these

10. United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, *Reclamation's Strategic Plan: A long-term framework for Water Resources Management, Development and Protection,* June 1992.

sub-plans. They were the implementation plans for each of the different categories that they had. I'm not sure how many categories, but there was many a dozen or so, one of which happened to be the land management/recreation implementation side, so I happened to be tagged with being a part of that particular team that was working on that implementation plan.

". . . Reclamation was changing so it needed a . . . forum to really think through these different issues and about where we were headed. . . ."

It seemed like that we had worked on those things for a couple of years. There was teams for each of the different categories of them. A lot of effort and a lot of thinking was really put into those teams, and I really think it was a good effort, because, you know, Reclamation was changing so it needed a place–it needed a forum to really think through these different issues and about where we were headed.

". . . to bring these teams together and to bring the discussion out and to really talk around all corners of those issues was really fruitful . . . some implementation plans that I believed were finalized, maybe one or two. The rest of them were in draft. . . . . when the administration changed . . . a lot of the discussion, a lot of the thinking, a lot of the formulation about where we might be headed had taken place and was sort of added to the organization and . . ."

And so to bring these teams together and to bring the discussion out and to really talk

around all corners of those issues was really fruitful, I think. There *were* some implementation plans that I believed were finalized, maybe one or two. The rest of them were in draft. Some were near final when the administration changed, and so I think that what that showed was that even though they might not have been finished, that they were so close to being finished that a lot of the discussion, a lot of the thinking, a lot of the formulation about where we might be headed had taken place and was sort of added to the organization and so forth.

". . . the administration changed and the implementation plans really didn't take off. . . ."

So what happened then was, the administration changed and the implementation plans really didn't take off. There were some changes here that I want to talk about in a minute, but it was still basically a setup for the big changes that were going to be happening here in the nineties, that Reclamation was faced with. This was some more of that pre-work of Reclamation realizing that it had to change and get with the times, and a lot of that work was done in these implementation plans and the Strategic Plan efforts.

Reorganization Effort in 1988

Also in that time, Reclamation realized there was a need to try to get closer to its customers, closer to its base out West. And since Reclamation is in the seventeen *western* states and has no eastern states, they had a head office in

Washington that made policy and gave direction and that sort of thing. There was a thought that it was too far away from the people that it served.

So one of the big efforts between that '88 and '92 time frame was moving much of the Washington office to Denver, and so that happened. What happened was that there was a core of people of this, say, a number of around seventy or so, that was left here in Washington, and those folks would carry on the Washington work, the liaisoning, coordination, the political strategies, the communications with the different departments, and so forth.

But a lot of the real leadership kinds of things were going to be taking place out in Denver, and so a lot of the technicians and a lot of the policy people, people that were doing planning back here and so forth, were basically moved to Denver. And so as the administration changed in ['93] ~~'92~~, what the administration then had here was this smaller core of people, with a piece of the commissioner's office located in Denver, and that piece of the commissioner's office ended up being the Policy and Program Office, where they would be the ones to really focus on developing policy, carrying out directions for the different programs, and so forth.

". . . huge changes that were upon us in '93. In '93 the administration changed, but Reclamation was still facing the need to change, regardless of the administration that came in. We were facing, I think, pretty monumental changes either way. We had to get more in line with the values of the

country . . ."

I think that brings us up from about when I started in '76, kind of through the '80s, and what I believe was setting the stage for the huge changes that were upon us in ['93] ~~'92~~. In ['93] ~~'92~~, the administration changed, but Reclamation was still facing the need to change, regardless of the administration that came in. We were facing, I think, pretty monumental changes either way. We had to get more in line with the values of the country and the values of the money that we were spending on these public projects and in the way that we were operating those projects, and have a better sense of the environmental impacts and more of an assertive role in trying to mitigate some of the those impacts and not resist them.

So I think that what came in the nineties was a real thrust, regardless of which administration came in, a real thrust of being more efficient, being more environmentally oriented, and being able to really account for and watch out for how we were spending the tax dollars. It seemed like that that was the big thrust.

Dan Beard Has Commissioner's Program and Organization Review Team Report (CPORT) Prepared on Many Aspects of Reclamation's Work

So when Dan Beard came in as the commissioner, he came in in about the summertime, I think, after the administration changed, he commissioned a team that put out a

report[11] about sort of all aspects of Reclamation. In that report there were a lot of changes recommended to the human resource side of things, in other words, getting hiring done quicker and faster, and efficiency of work and so forth. A lot of recommendations, if I remember it right, about the information technology side and about the planning side and about sort of all aspects of Reclamation, what really needed to happen.

"Blueprint for Reform" Prepared in Response to the CPORT Report, Resulting in a Series of Organizational Changes

And what culminated out of that report was then Dan's "Blueprint for Reform,"[12] and then that made a lot of the organizational changes and so forth that we can talk about here in a second.

About 1992 Acted for about a Year as Head of the Regional Policy Administration Office in the Great Plains Region

For myself, let me just talk through where I was, sort of before the administration changed and then afterwards, and sort of get in a different place here with my location. In around '92, there was a opportunity for me to go over and act in a position, which was an administrative position. It was the policy administration office in the region, and that position was going to be vacant for quite a while. At first it was going to be several

11. Commonly referred to as CPORT (see port), this was the *Rerport of the Commissioner's Program and Organization Review Team* of August 1993.
12. Daniel P. Beard, "Blueprint for Reform: The Commissioner's Plan for Reinventing Reclamation," November 1, 1993.

months, and it turned out to be about a year.

". . . I left the Montana office and went to that office [Great Plains Region] to act. That office had not only the policy responsibility development for the region, but it also did a lot of the administrative things . . ."

In that time frame, I left the Montana office and went to that office to act. That office had not only the policy responsibility development for the region, but it also did a lot of the administrative things like the regional aircraft. It had the organizational analyst in it, where you'd have an analyst that might go to an office and actually analyze their organization, their communications, their procedures, their operations, and help the manager kind of focus on how they could do things better.

So we had those kind of functions in there, along with we were the anchor tenant for the Federal Building and so we had a lot of issues to deal with with just the Federal Building itself and sort of managing that piece.

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. APRIL 10, 2002.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. APRIL 10, 2002.

Storey You were saying you had the travel office and so on.

Had the Travel Office

Todd Had a travel office in there, so that was dealing with all the different travel and arrangements and

sort of you name it for the region. So just a lot of *different* things in that particular office.

Cost Analysis of the Regional Airplane

A couple of key things that happened during that time frame, and I ended up being in there for a year, and then there were some changes and I stayed in that office for a second year. The first year, we did an analysis on the aircraft, and really went through how much that was costing us, what kind of benefit it was giving the region. With our region being so large, being from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, was it really beneficial to have a regional aircraft, especially when we were flying routes that were so closely aligned with commercial aircraft at the time?

The end analysis turned out to be that it really wasn't cost-effective, and so as we worked through the analysis there and had a lot of discussions about that, the final decision made by Neil Stessman, who was the regional director at the time, was is that we should get rid of the aircraft. And so that particular aircraft went down to Salt Lake City, because they had need for one, and so the aircraft and the pilot went down there.

The other real major thing that happened during that time frame was, we were having a lot of discussion about the efficiency workings of the government. That was the thrust of the country, was to get government working more efficiently, and that businesses were having a lot of benefit by using a lot of different techniques like quality circles and other things.

Region Piloted the TQM (Total Quality Management) Program in Reclamation

So the total quality management started to really be prominent across the country, and there was a lot of discussion within Reclamation about what total quality management could bring to it and how we should incorporate some of those benefits and so forth and so on. The outcome was is that, as I understand it, there was an agreement, at least between, I believe, Neil Stessman and Commissioner Underwood, that Reclamation would be a pilot project for TQM. As a matter of fact, it could have been between Roger Patterson, who was the prior regional director, before he left, that we would be a pilot region to do total quality management.

Right when Roger had left, which was really the summertime of '91,[13] that we had already started to launch into a total quality management effort, and one of the things that was set up was a Total Quality Council made up of some area managers and division chiefs and regional director and so forth. That effort really took off and really grew.

Because this policy office was involved in all the policy kinds of changes, and because we had analyst responsibilities and all of those kinds of things in that office, that sort of became one of

13. Roger Patterson has also been interviewed as part of Reclamation's oral history program. He was regional director of the Great Plains Region from 1988 to 1991. He was then regional director of the Mid-Pacific Region from 1991 to 1999. He then retired to work in Nebraska State government and subsequently moved to the Metropolitan Water District in Los Angeles.

the hubs of this TQM effort within Reclamation. Right when Neil [Stessman] first assumed the duties of the regional director's job, this TQM effort was really growing and one of the things that was determined was is that we needed to have a quality advisor of some sort that had expertise in this subject, because all of the rest of the us in Reclamation really didn't have that expertise. And so we needed to know how to think about and deal with certain things.

There came that need, and so some effort was spent on, well, what would this person be, and what kind of a position, and sort of how do you get them hired and that sort of thing. Along with that was sort of how you developed this effort. In the TQM, there's a lot of talk about training people, understanding what the processes are, modifying those processes specifically to get the product out that you want, making sure the people had the tools that they really needed, the coaching mechanisms that they needed, the communication tools that they needed to make everything work, that it wasn't just sort of a decision to do something and then you had an end product; that there was all of these aspects of the job that *had* to come together and *had* to be related together *before* you could really get efficiency out of a particular process.

And so a lot of work was going into making sure that each of the different offices—if a letter, for instance, was routed to different offices, what they would actually do with it and how they would actually function with it and so forth, and train people on how to cut out all the

extraneous *stuff* that went on and *cut* down the time frame and do benchmarking with other places that had good processes.

So it was just sort of a holistic look at sort of *everything* you do in the office, and *really* trying to put your focuses on the efficiency to put out a really topnotch product. And so as Reclamation was working through all of that, just a lot of effort and a lot of discussion and a lot of thinking about *how* you transform an agency that has procedures already set up for certain things, and then you have to modify that and really change the culture. You change people's thinking, you change their jobs, you change what they do, you change how they do it into a different kind of operation. It became seen as really difficult to do, but there was a lot of effort in doing that.

"Reclamation had to do some change, get in line sort of with the public of the nation . . . get this organization more focused on the times that we were living in . . . restrained budget that we were under, and going to continue to be under . . . *all* of that lined up so that when there was this administration change and Commissioner Beard came in, it lined up with where *he* was going to take the agency . . . in the way it *thought* and the way it operated. . . ."

I think that that effort, when you look at sort of going back in the '80s, recognizing Reclamation had to do some change, get in line sort of with the public of the nation, where you recognized the *Strategic Plan* that we had to

change and get this organization more focused on the times that we were living in, when you look at the budget issues and the restrained budget that we were under, and going to continue to be under, when you looked at the business side of things and said, "Look, there could be a lot of efficiencies and other business ways to make the government run better," *all* of that lined up so that when there was this administration change and Commissioner Beard came in, it lined up with where *he* was going to take the agency, which was the next step, and really changed the agency in the way it *thought* and the way it operated.

"So a *huge* amount of pre-work had gone on through the agency, I think, for probably eight or nine years, good hard work. . . ."

So a *huge* amount of pre-work had gone on through the agency, I think, for probably eight or nine years, good hard work. And especially in the Great Plains Region, because as we went through that TQM stuff, that was sort of the final preparedness activities that we were going through. A lot of the TQM stuff lined up with where the next step was and where Commissioner Beard was going to take the organization.

"A lot of the TQM stuff lined up with where the next step was and where Commissioner Beard was going to take the organization. . . . So I think that we in the Great Plains Region were really ready for this change, *probably* more so than other regions . . ."

So I think that we in the Great Plains

Region were really ready for this change, *probably* more so than other regions, even, and mainly because we had worked through this so much. Some of the training that we did in the Great Plains was is that we had—I forgot the total number, but it was somewhere around two dozen training sessions, where we went out and actually did a two-day training session on TQM, what it meant, how people needed to use it, what kind of thinking they needed to do, what the coaching meant, what the supervisor's responsibilities were, what the employee's responsibilities were, all of those things. I happened to do sixteen out of the twenty-four of those training sessions, and we really went around to and had small groups of each of the area offices all throughout the region doing those, so that from a Great Plains perspective, we were bringing everybody on board with the same information, with the same training, so that we could align all the employees up and move the same direction.

About the time that that training was completed, and I think it was completed in maybe the fall of '92 or somewhere in there, that's about the time when the elections were taking place, and so we were gearing up for a change in administration, whether it was going to be the same administration with maybe possibly some new appointments, or whether it was going to be a new administration. We were still poised to really take on the TQM effort, what we called the quality service effort, and move that forward. We had found a lot of benefits in it and so forth, and so that was the effort the Great Plains was headed into.

"Many of the things that the 'Blueprint for Reform' did matched up a lot with where the Great Plains Region was headed with this quality service effort . . ."

So, now, to match that up with the first thing Commissioner Beard did when he came on was to commission this team and end up with a "Blueprint for Reform." Many of the things that the "Blueprint for Reform" did matched up a lot with where the Great Plains Region was headed with this quality service effort, and a lot of that quality service effort was the empowerment out in the field.

Creation of and delegation of Authority to Area Offices under the "Blueprint for Reform"

One of the first things and one of the biggest things that the "Blueprint for Reform" did was to get a delegation of authority out to the area offices. And of course, it changed the project office concept of implementing and just doing the fieldwork on projects, but they changed it to the area office concept, which was a little bit broader role in really carrying on the day-to-day activities and empowering the area offices to actually carry out the day-to-day activities and to answer customers' questions and to be responsible. They were the first line of being responsible to the public and to the customers and so forth.

That whole concept of delegating out and empowering and moving things out to the field was one of the big philosophies behind the quality service effort. So when the "Blueprint for

Reform" came out, for the Great Plains Region it was more a matter of a name change than it was much of a function change. There was some function changes in it and so forth, but I think we were poised and more ready to accept those.

"One of the function changes that was really apparent and really hard to get over was the change from the responsibilities of a division chief in a region and then what the area manager all of a sudden had. . . . historically the division chief within the regional office, was a real influential position. They had the ear of the regional director, they had responsibility for the program, they did a lot of the calling the shots"

One of the function changes that was really apparent and really hard to get over was the change from the responsibilities of a division chief in a region and then what the area manager all of a sudden had. This was one of the things that we just really ran onto sort of all through Reclamation, I think, is that historically the division chief ~~within an area, or~~ within the regional office, was a real influential position. They had the ear of the regional director, they had responsibility for the program, they did a lot of the calling the shots on certain things.

For example, the chief of the Water and Land Division, for instance, would call a lot of shots on operation and maintenance, would call a lot of shots on decisions on land management, recreation. All those kind of things were underneath that person's responsibility, *even* over some of the project managers.

Responsibilities for Many Things Quickly Moved from the Region to the Area Offices

So that responsibility, when the area office concept came into being, changed that function and responsibility to the area manager, and it did it really quickly. It did it like from a Friday, the division chief was in that position, and then like on a Monday when they reported to work, that function had changed and so it was the area manager that really had that responsibility.

". . . you still had people in their same positions. . . . individuals in the regional office that were experienced in dealing with issues and those things . . . and had exposure and training and experience and . . . you moved that out to the area manager and the area offices staff, those people had been trained in functioning in a little different way. They hadn't really had the exposure of thinking about all the things that was necessary to go into a particular decision or a particular document and so forth the way that the regional office had thought about things. . . ."

The confusion that it caused was this–that you still had people in their same positions. It was just a function change. And you had individuals in the regional office that were experienced in dealing with issues and those things, so that they had already been set up and had exposure and training and experience and all that in dealing with these kinds of situations. And when you moved that out to the area manager and the area offices staff, those people had been trained in functioning in a little different way.

They hadn't really had the exposure of thinking about all the things that was necessary to go into a particular decision or a particular document and so forth the way that the regional office had thought about things.

And of course, the responsibility then *shifted*, was immediate, and I don't think that there was a recognition that the area office staff *needed* that training and *exposure* to deal with things. For instance, like environmental kinds of documents that all of a sudden shifted out to the area manager's responsibility, and some of the letter-writing responses to customers and that sort of thing that would come out from the area office, especially on sensitive issues.

The empowerment idea about,"Well, you know, the area office is now empowered to make certain kinds of decisions, most decisions, actually. So, well, what were those?" There was a lot of discussion just about, "Well, do they have that decision delegated to them or do they not, or who is it? And if it isn't them, then who is it?" Just a lot of discussion and confusion went on, actually, I believe, for several years, until all this stuff started settling out as to what the area managers had versus what the regions had, and what the function of the region was versus the function of the area office and so forth.

Never Returned to the Montana Area Office

Well, at the end of my acting in this policy office and the region, and when that position was filled, I became a analyst in that office and I

didn't ever go back to the Montana Area Office. And as I was a analyst there, I acted in this advisory role for this quality management for the GP Region until that one was filled.

Moved to Loveland, Colorado, as Deputy Area Manager in the Eastern Colorado Area Office

While that was going on, and this was in that '92, early '93 time frame, there also was an opportunity [for the] deputy area manager job that had come up in Loveland, Colorado, and so I had applied for that and ended up getting that job. And so in the first part of April of '93 was when I started down there. One of the reasons why that seemed to be a good fit at the time was that Jack Garner, who was the area manager down there, wanted to make some organizational changes.

Major Effort in Loveland Was Implementation of TQM

And at the time, the Great Plains Region was really looking heavily at this quality service effort, and so when I went down there, one of the major tasks that was before me was to try to transform the Loveland office into basically a office that had embraced and was functioning in the quality service aspects.

Reorganization and Reduction of the Number of Division Chiefs in Loveland

So, a big thrust on efficiency. I think at the time Jack had maybe seven, if I remember right, seven or eight different division chiefs for

that office, of the size of about 120 people. And so the thrust was was to get more focus on the kinds of functions that was there, and whether or not the need for, well, that many division chiefs for that number of people, and what the functions were really carrying out and how all that fit together, and so a big effort on that.

At the same time, one of the efforts on the quality service and TQM was to try to get an expanded supervision rate. I think the supervision rate for Reclamation at the time was around four to four and a half employees per one supervisor. The goal the businesses were going to and ultimately the government was really looking strongly at, and ultimately adopted, was a one supervisor per fifteen ratio, which meant then that there was going to be a lot of mid-managing positions that were going to be merged, and the supervision, the numbers of people that managers would actually supervise would go up.

"At the same time, as I went down there, I think Commissioner Beard come on that summer and then the 'Blueprint for Reform' came out sometime later. So it sort of all fit together with what we were doing in Eastern Colorado [Area Office] and what he was doing. . . ."

So there was a lot of effort then down there to go through an organization, a reorganization, change and when I went down there as a deputy, then that was one of my main responsibilities, to carry that on, which we did. At the same time, as I went down there, I think Commissioner Beard come on that summer and

then the "Blueprint for Reform" came out sometime later. So it sort of all fit together with what we were doing in Eastern Colorado [Area Office] and what he was doing.

The effort then took several months, really, because we wanted to make sure that we had everybody on board. We talked with all the employees, we talked about the quality of service efforts, we set up a Quality Service Advisory Board for the office.

"We really worked hard at trying to communicate this, even though there was a lot of resistance . . . to new things. . . ."

We really worked hard at trying to communicate this, even though there was a lot of resistance, and there's a lot of resistance to new things. There's no doubt about that. But there's a lot more resistance when it's new and people can see that where you're headed is to try to get more efficiencies, which may affect them and their job and their positions. They just had a lot of fear about what this meant to them.

"There was a commitment early on not to affect anybody's grade and not to put anybody out on the street. That was *not* what the effort was about. . . ."

It was to get more efficiencies in government, to get better organized and get more focused. And so even though that was an early-on commitment, there was still a lot of distrust, I think, among the employees about what the effort

was really about.

But we went through it, had a plan, ended up with, I think, four division chief positions. Some people had *already* retired when I got down there, and I think some other people had retired after that, and so that left a good opportunity for us to try to work and merge some of this.

"I ended up being there really a little over a year, and then an opportunity for me came up in the Oklahoma-Texas Area Office. . . ."

I wasn't there long, actually, though. I ended up being there really a little over a year, and then an opportunity for me came up in the Oklahoma-Texas Area Office. The situation, as I recall, was that I was able to be reassigned into another step-level position, so what happened was, I think Neil Stessman, who was regional director at the time, had made some personnel changes within the regions. One of them was is that he wanted the area manager from Oklahoma office to move into Billings and to take over the planning function. Instead, that area manager retired, but that left open a vacancy for an area manager position down in Oklahoma-Texas Area Office.

Moved the Area Manager's Office from Oklahoma City to Austin, Texas

And so in August of '94, then, I moved down from Loveland actually to Austin, Texas, rather than Oklahoma City. And that starts a whole 'nother sort of story about the Austin Area

Office and being area manager there.

Under Commissioner Dan Beard Each Region Set up a Regional Leadership Board to Discuss and Carry on the Business of the Region

Before we get to there, let me talk just a little bit about when Dan Beard came in and when our efforts at Loveland to reorganize that into a quality service-oriented office. One of the big thrusts that happened, I think, once the "Blueprint for Reform" came out and we had these changes in these area offices set up, at that time there was also to be set up a regional sort of "board of directors." And so each of the regional offices set up what they considered their board. Each of them called them maybe different names, but they functioned similarly.

The Great Plains Region was the "regional leadership board," and the first part of that board was, or when it first got started was that there was three or four regional people on it, which included the regional director.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. APRIL 10, 2002.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. APRIL 10, 2002.

Storey This is tape two of an interview by Brit Storey, with Larry Todd, on April the 10th, 2002.

You were talking about creating the GP regional board.

Todd The three area managers that were on it would meet and so forth, and carry on the business of the

region when they met at the regional leadership board, but that also left out the other three area managers, since Great Plains Region had six area managers. And so there was supposed to be a disbursement of information and that sort of thing. But all in all, I think the upshot of it was is that it really didn't work as well with that setup as it was meant to be. It was meant to be a smaller group so that you could really get some decisions done and that sort of thing. But all in all, what it evolved into was is that all six area managers needed to be on this regional leadership board and so they eventually went to that. And then the regional director, the deputy regional director, was on it, and then we had some advisors that were to set up the meetings, help us run the meetings, facilitate the meetings, and that was the quality service advisor. And then we had trained facilitators that, through all of this quality service training that we had, we put on a lot of training on facilitation and so we had facilitators come in and help facilitate the meetings.

"That board, I think, was really one of the success stories out of the Great Plains Region. It was a struggle at first . . . it got to a place where a lot of candid conversation could take place. . . you could really *air* the differences of opinion and really work through them and really *understand* a lot of the rationale and the drivers behind the opinions and behind the feelings of the employees and . . . leadership . . ."

That board, I think, was really one of the success stories out of the Great Plains Region. It was a struggle at first, there's no doubt about that,

but as it got to a place where a lot of candid conversation could take place about the workings and decisions of that region, it *really* got to a good place, because you could really *air* the differences of opinion and really work through them and really *understand* a lot of the rationale and the drivers behind the opinions and behind the feelings of the employees and on the perspective, both from employees and leadership and so forth.

It really became, I think, a great forum to really get your thinking aligned, thought through, analyzed, and eventually, when you walked out of the room, aligned with where we needed to go as a region, from the employee side, from manager side, from leadership side, from administration side.

All of that, I think, was really dealt with in the issues that we had to deal with within that room, and so I think it was—for me, it was an extremely fruitful meeting time. We tried to meet once a month, and for the most part I think we did that. Sometimes they stretched every couple of months, maybe six weeks, but they were frequent meetings and everybody was there. We carried them on for a day and a half, and really dealt with some tough issues.

We dealt with things like, you know, just kind of the diversity issue, and how you really implement that and how you try to—well, what the barriers really were and how, as managers, we really needed to try to get over those barriers, and how we needed to sort of act in our walk and our talk and our speech and our display and our

invitation to people, and how we needed to really look beyond just numbers and have an inviting atmosphere, and what that really meant and so forth. I mean, it really got into the nuances around that issue, as we were able to see it at the time.

Operational and Environmental Issues Discussed

Got into other issues. You know, the operations issues, about replacements of our equipment and our aging dams and so forth. We got into the endangered species issues that we had to tack on. Things were coming up, and the wetlands program, which was more of an environmentally sensitive, you know, just being sensitized to the environment and what we might be able to do as a bureau, and how the wetlands program was working and all those things.

It was just a variety of things that the region was facing and had to deal with administratively and program-wise, so it was really a good—I think it was really a good forum.

Probably the thing that wasn't so good was that the employees really didn't see a lot coming out of that, because there was no meeting notes. I mean, well, there were some. I mean, there was notes from the meeting and that sort of thing.

But what wasn't in the notes was all of the *richness* of the discussions and the nuances and the real things about the deep meaning behind coming together and having a common direction

and so forth. You know, you couldn't display that on meeting notes and, of course, to me, that was the real uumph [phonetic] behind that whole effort. I can't really emphasize enough how important I think those bodies are for running a region and making sure that the region is lined up and focused on the things it needs to be focused on.

And I'm talking like I was at those meetings, and I was when I was an area manager. I wasn't when I was in Loveland, but soon after that I was.

Title Transfer under Commissioner Dan Beard

One of the other major issues that we were dealing with when Commissioner Beard came in was the thrust of moving title of facilities from the government into the private hands. The theory was and the thought was was that with a smaller government, one of the ways you get there is by taking the functions that the government's responsible for and transferring that function, including the title and the ownership and all that responsibility, out of government.

"There was discussion from a lot of folks, a lot of Reclamation customers, a lot of power industry people, a lot of the irrigation district folks, about wanting to take over the Reclamation projects and basically having title transferred to them. . . ."

And so there was a big thrust and, quite frankly, it carries on somewhat today, about moving the responsibility and the title of facilities

over to the private sector. There was discussion from a lot of folks, a lot of Reclamation customers, a lot of power industry people, a lot of the irrigation district folks, about wanting to take over the Reclamation projects and basically having title transferred to them.

"One of the things that was driving this was, from their perspective was, what they saw was a horrendous amount of environmental compliance that had to be completed . . ."

One of the things that was driving this was, from their perspective was, what they saw was a horrendous amount of environmental compliance that had to be completed on just about everything that they were doing, from their perspective. And if it wasn't environmental compliance, then it was endangered species, which they kind of put it all together into one lump.

"There was a lot of thrust in the '80s about the government shouldn't do everything for free, and so things that we did do maybe for the district . . . for no fee, then we would actually charge them a charge for the O&M assessments and so forth. . . ."

And any other regulation, including repayment. There was a lot of thrust in the '80s about the government shouldn't do everything for free, and so things that we did do maybe for the district or in conjunction with the districts for no fee, then we would actually charge them a charge for the O&M assessments and so forth.

". . . so there were a lot of things about sort of the operation of the government at the time that was different . . . so the thrust was was that, well, if we owned—'we' the districts—owned title to these projects, we wouldn't have to go through that. . . ."

And so there were a lot of things about sort of the operation of the government at the time that was different for our customers. And so the thrust was was that, well, if we owned—"we" the districts—owned title to these projects, we wouldn't have to go through that. We wouldn't have to go through environmental analysis, we wouldn't have to go through and deal with the Endangered Species Act, we wouldn't have to go through *paying* for these services, which we can't afford, and those types of things.

". . . wrapped up into a huge frustration from our customers in that time frame about things that were changing, things that they were used to that Reclamation was changing right out from underneath them and they were feeling the impact of. And this was really serious to them. . . ."

So all of that was really wrapped up into a huge frustration from our customers in that time frame about things that were changing, things that they were used to that Reclamation was changing right out from underneath them and they were feeling the impact of. And this was really serious to them.

"The agriculture community . . . just across the West, wasn't doing well, financially . . . so you had

people that . . . the only reason that they could make it farming-wise was because they had lived there long enough where they didn't have any land debt . . ."

The agriculture community was not, you know, just across the West, wasn't doing well, financially, and so forth. A lot of the communities were facing aging operators, where the livelihood of the children of family farms and so forth really couldn't accommodate the children staying on the farm and so forth, so you had people that were, really, the only reason that they could make it farming-wise was because they had lived there long enough where they didn't have any land debt and so forth.

". . . coupled with paying extra fees and the government having a tight budget, which also drove the government to making sure that it was not subsidizing anything extra . . . and so there was a lot of frustration out there . . . coupled with all of the environmental issues that cost more money . . . that was just a tremendous frustration for the irrigation districts across the West. . . ."

And so, economically, just the agriculture community across the West was not doing well. And so, coupled with paying extra fees and the government having a tight budget, which also drove the government to making sure that it was not subsidizing anything extra and so forth, and so there was a lot of frustration out there just on the economic basis. And then coupled with all of the environmental issues that cost more money and so forth, then that was just a tremendous frustration

for the irrigation districts across the West.

There was a lot of interest, then, in coming to Reclamation and saying, "Well, we can run these things." Many of them already did the operation and maintenance of the particular facilities, anyway. We didn't have any operators out on some of these projects and so forth, so it was kind of a natural thing then to really focus on and want to have the title transferred to them.

Title Transfer Issues That Had to Be Worked Through

So what happened was was that there was a framework of what it would take to transfer title, in other words, the kinds of the things that we ought to study, and we ought to do it in an open forum in public. If there was sort of Native American concerns, for instance, then that would be a limitation, and that we ought to work through all of the environmental ESA-type [Endangered Species Act] concerns up front, and we ought to work through what the aspects of transfer would be, and sort of where the land management issues, how they would be dealt with. You know, *all* those kinds of things. That was the framework that Reclamation had come up with.

"I think that the customers early on believed that this was going to be an easy deal. You request it, and Congress would authorize it, and it would be transferred, and it would be sort of like a house. . . . a lot of the districts felt like that they had paid off their mortgage . . . The repayment aspect wasn't exactly like a mortgage on a house. It was less

than a mortgage on a house, because there were aspects of projects that had not been repaid. It was funded by a tax base, like flood control, and recreation benefits, and fish [unclear] benefits, and so forth. And so there were things that needed to be dealt with in those arenas and talked through and so forth. . . ."

> And so part of the issue then was to deal with title transfer, and then how would you actually go through a transfer and what would it be, what would it encompass, and how would it be transferred. I think that the customers early on believed that this was going to be an easy deal. You request it, and Congress would authorize it, and it would be transferred, and it would be sort of like a house. If you bought a house and you paid off the mortgage, then it was your house. And a lot of the districts felt like that they had paid off their mortgage, at least the paid-out districts, and therefore the project should go to them, even though it was still in the United States' name.
>
> A lot of nuances like that came out, is that Reclamation didn't have the authority from Congress to transfer that to them. The repayment aspect wasn't exactly like a mortgage on a house. It was less than a mortgage on a house, because there were aspects of projects that had not been repaid. It was funded by a tax base, like flood control, and recreation benefits, and fish [unclear] benefits, and so forth. And so there were things that needed to be dealt with in those arenas and talked through and so forth.

Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District Wanted to Take over the Eastern Colorado Area Office in Loveland

The first title transfer that we dealt with was a request from the Northern Colorado Irrigation District [Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District] to take over the Eastern Colorado Area Office. And what was basically proposed was that they could and would take over the maintenance of powerplants, the operators, and, therefore, there really was no need to have more than maybe a handful of government people maybe down there on that project, and maybe not even that at all. As I recall, this was a transfer to Northern. Then there really wouldn't necessarily be a need, but if there was a need it would only take, you know, a few, and so out of the 120 there could be just a few left that would take over any government responsibilities that was left, and sort of manage that.

". . . it was pretty interesting to have moved away from Billings, which I'd spent probably . . . seventeen or so years . . . and then within a few months realized that you may be without a job . . . [yet] deal with it as a objective government representative. . . ."

That came on about four months or so, four- or five months after I came on in April of '93, and so as Jack, and Neil, and I, and others talked about this proposal, we were able to talk through, well, how would we handle this and so forth. And I can tell you that it was pretty interesting to have moved away from Billings,

which I'd spent probably since '76 to '93, so it was seventeen or so years, or eighteen years, and then moved to Loveland, and then within a few months realized that you may be without a job, and so you were also in a position to need to deal with this proposal and to deal with it as a objective government representative.

". . . it really caused an enrichment in my life, and it also prepared me for other bigger deals that I would have to deal with as area manager and acting regional director and so forth on down the line. . . ."

And so that was a pretty interesting deal for me to work through in my own personal *side* of things, but it turned out good. It was one of those things that even though you have to think through and you have to realize that you are a government representative and you have to negotiate that, if that's really the right thing to do, it really caused an enrichment in my life, and it also prepared me for other bigger deals that I would have to deal with as area manager and acting regional director and so forth on down the line. So it was really a good experience.

Reestablishing Communication with Northern

There were certain aspects about that that was really important that we had to deal with. One is is that we needed to really have some good communication with Northern, because those communications had really gotten further apart than I think anyone had ever intended. But with the changes that Reclamation needed to take on,

with the new administration coming on, with a new commissioner talking about transferring title, and with the ESA kinds of things that were coming on and so forth, it was really necessary that we get back with northern and start talking about this and talking *with* them about all the aspects of it.

So one of the things that we did was Jack and I asked the northern manager and his deputy that it would probably be useful if we would have some periodic meetings together, just to talk over things or whatever was going on. One of those, of course, was the title transfer. But we had breakfast meetings. Because everybody's schedule was so busy, going everywhere, it was hard to meet during the day, but generally we could meet at seven in the morning, and so we would meet down at this café about once every few weeks, and we would just be able to hash over and talk about a few things. We really didn't have an agenda, but we never needed one, because there was always certain things to talk about. Sometimes there was a letter that came out from the area office from a division chief, or sometimes there was talk about a certain issue that was headed a certain way. Those things could be talked about in more of a casual conversation, and sort of get the background and get it straightened out. Or if we didn't know about something or if they didn't know about something, they could look into them.

So, those breakfast meetings really became an extremely important part of the communications between us and Northern, not

only through this title transfer time, but also through the time of just getting our relationship built back up and really closer together.

Through those conversations, I think it really became apparent to Northern how difficult a title transfer would be, from the aspects that the northern district pulled water from the Western Slope that was included in an endangered species [declarations] for the Colorado River, that the Platte River endangered species issues were just gearing up, and since they were on the South Platte, they were involved in environmental issues on both sides of the mountain. For the Federal Government to divest itself [of] ~~in~~ that title, which would be seen as divesting itself also [of] ~~in~~ those issues, would be a really difficult thing and really be debated.

All of those, plus just the cost and sort of the analysis and how big of a deal that this would become, that it wasn't going to be a simple thing. I think *all* of that became apparent to Northern in sort of the negotiating sessions that we had, as well as these breakfast meetings, and those breakfast meetings was one of the things that I believe repaired the relationship so that it's a strong one today. And I believe that they're probably still carried on today in some form or another, where Northern gets together with that area office to talk about things, so that they can continue that kind of close relationship that they need.

Storey Let me ask you then if the material that we've recorded today can be used by researchers in the

future.

Todd Yes, it can.

Storey Great. Thank you very much.

END SIDE 1, TAPE 2. APRIL 10, 2002.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 1, JANUARY 27, 2009.

Storey: This is Brit Storey, senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Larry Todd, former deputy commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, at his home in Billings, Montana on January the 27th, 2009. This is tape one.

I understand you have a couple of topics you want to talk about? Why don't we start out with whatever you're interested in (Todd: Okay.) talking about?

The 9/11 Attack on the World Trade Center Twin Towers in New York City and on the Pentagon

Todd: I think the first and the most important one that I want to talk about is the 9/11 and what happened after that mainly. There's a little bit of history leading up to 9/11 for Reclamation, but it's really not a lot.

Was in a Meeting to Organize the Day

Let me start by just saying that on 9/11, that morning it was about eight o'clock, I think it was like 8:07, if I remember the clock right. Three of us, Bob, Quint, and I, and–maybe there were four of us, I don't remember–but we were in sort of a

pre-day meeting getting organized, and Dana Cooper, who worked for us at the time came in and said, "Hey, did you guys know that a plane crashed into one of the 'Twin Towers'?" And, we hadn't. We didn't know that. She had heard it on the way to work.

"So, we turned . . . on the TV and began watching it, and of course everybody knows what the TV was showing with the first plane and so forth. But then, the camera switched to a second plane, and in it came and right into the "Twin Towers." At that point . . . we all knew, that something big was happening in America and we immediately broke up the meeting. I told folks I was going to call the security people in Denver and get the level of security up. . . ."

So, we turned around and turned on the TV and began watching it, and of course everybody knows what the TV was showing with the first plane and so forth. But then, the camera switched to a second plane, and in it came and right into the "Twin Towers." At that point I knew, we all knew, that something big was happening in America and we immediately broke up the meeting. I told folks I was going to call the security people in Denver and get the level of security up. We had four levels at the time. So, I called Bill Chesney and he told me that they were aware of the situation too and that they had put everything up to a Level 2, and I said, "Well, put all the facilities up to at least a Level 3 until we understand a little bit more of what's going on."

The Level 3 at that time, I think, was get

prepared to send people home and so forth at a Level 4, and except for emergency personnel and that sort of thing. So, it was, you know, right on the brink of basically sending nonessential personnel home. About somewhere in the neighborhood of 8:30 or so, or maybe twenty-five after, I'm not sure, somewhere in that neighborhood the emergency management person from the department had walked down and walked into my office as I was trying to get a hold of the commissioner, which I couldn't get a hold of because he was out West, and the phones were starting to be jammed, and he said that there was a fire out at the Pentagon, but they didn't know what it was, and he just wanted me to know. About a few minutes later as we were poring over the "Emergency Management Plan" and seeing what was necessary here and getting prepared for decisions that were upcoming–and let me, let me say this, Bob Quint, the commissioner had left Bob Quint as acting, I was the operations director, and so under the "Emergency Management Plan" if it's an emergency I become the lead director then when, when we're under emergency conditions if the commissioner's gone. So, so that put me in charge. And so, as we were poring over this with Jack Brenda, who is responsible for this and so forth, there was people, we were coming out for another meeting or something, people coming out of the room saying, "Hey, we heard on the radio that there was a bomb that went off over at the State Department." Now, that turned out to be false, but at the time with, with a fire out at the Pentagon, with two planes into the "Twin Towers," with potentially a bomb going off, and then we also through our windows can

see some of the things that are down at the old executive office building, which is connected to the White House, and I think that people were starting to get out into the streets.

"And, at that point I said, 'Okay, look. Evacuate, and tell people to, you know, get home as soon as they can.' That was without Department of Interior instructions. . . ."

And, at that point I said, "Okay, look. Evacuate, and tell people to, you know, get home as soon as they can." That was without Department of Interior instructions. They were still trying to figure out what was going on, and so forth. So, it was about a quarter till, if I remember right. So, all this stuff was happening within thirty-five or forty minutes.

". . . I had a car in the basement and . . . we needed to get out to the next alternate site. And, so I told, Mike Gabaldon was back there at the time, he was my Deputy. Jack Brenda, and Bob Quint lived out west in the direction we were headed so he drove his own car to his home. . . ."

So I said, I had a car in the basement and I, and we needed to get out to the next alternate site. And, so I told, Mike Gabaldon was back there at the time, he was my Deputy. Jack Brenda, and Bob Quint lived out west in the direction we were headed so he drove his own car to his home. So, so we drove out into, we went downstairs. Everybody was evacuated. We made sure of that.

"We went downstairs, got the car, drove out into

the street. The streets were absolutely jam packed with cars. There was not *any* traffic moving. People were milling around outside. All the buildings were empty and everybody was trying to get on their cell phones and call, and so forth. . . ."

We went downstairs, got the car, drove out into the street. The streets were absolutely jam packed with cars. There was not *any* traffic moving. People were milling around outside. All the buildings were empty and everybody was trying to get on their cell phones and call, and so forth. And at that point we, we recognized, we recognized that we were going to be in, it was going to be slow-going, that we didn't know if we were going to get really out to a site in time to sort of manage Reclamation or not from the D.C. side of things. And so, Mike Gabaldon got out of the car and halted and directed some traffic so that we could get *into* the flow, and did that a couple different times or three, maybe more, and we got going then across the ~~Theodore Roosevelt Bridge. And . . . no, excuse me. It was the Lincoln Memorial Bridge. We got across~~ Lincoln Memorial Bridge.

". . . at that point you can see the smoke, black smoke, billowing up from the Pentagon. It was, it was big, it was black, it was absolutely disheartening, and that image of that, of–and at the point, at that time we knew then that a plane had crashed into the Pentagon–my heart just sank at that point . . ."

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smoke, billowing up from the Pentagon. It was, it was big, it was black, it was absolutely disheartening, and that image of that, of–and at the point, at that time we knew then that a plane had crashed into the Pentagon–my heart just sank at that point and that image is burned into my mind. Because, the leader of the military world, headquarters, had been attacked, which no one ever thought could be possible. Washington was paralyzed because of what was going on, and people couldn't get home, and didn't know what to do. The traffic was snarled. We made it out onto the Highway 66, Interstate 66, and we were actually going pretty good until we got just about past Rosslyn, and then traffic absolutely just came to a screeching halt. There's a little bottleneck out there, but beyond that with everybody leaving and going home and so forth, traffic just absolutely stopped. So, what we decided to do at that point was to get off on one of the ramps. And, I and my wife lived in an apartment a few blocks from there.

"So, we got off one of the ramps, we went to my apartment, and basically we set up a command center there, because we knew we weren't going to be able to get out to this site and do anything. . . . we couldn't call out on the phone, because the phone lines were just jammed, but if I called into the FTS [Federal Telecommunications System] . . . then we could get into some of the calls that we were supposed to make and . . . call outside of Washington, D.C., and inside Washington, D.C., . . ."

So, we got off one of the ramps, we went to my

apartment, and basically we set up a command center there, because we knew we weren't going to be able to get out to this site and do anything. It was going to be hours before we could get there. So, so at that point a couple of interesting things. One is that we couldn't call out on the phone, because the phone lines were just jammed, but if I called into the FTS [Federal Telecommunications System], at the time, then we could get into some of the calls that we were supposed to make and get a, and basically call outside of Washington, D.C., and inside Washington, D.C., and basically make some contacts. We were able to–and by the way, all the while we were in the traffic and so forth no cell phone worked, at all, not one. Couldn't get out. Couldn't get a call, period. They were absolutely just jammed.

". . . with the FTS line we got out to the commissioner, who was in Boise, and at that point the commissioner, John Keys, told me that he had put the high facilities with powerplants up to Level 4, and so basically emergency personnel was there. The, I believe I also remember that the Denver Building 67, where Reclamation is, [on] the Federal Center, I believe that there was an evacuation going on there as well. . . ."

So we, but with the FTS line we got out to the commissioner, who was in Boise, and at that point the commissioner, John Keys, told me that he had put the high facilities with powerplants up to Level 4, and so basically emergency personnel was there. The, I believe I also remember that the Denver Building 67, where Reclamation is, [on]

the Federal Center, I believe that there was an evacuation going on there as well. So, we learned sort of what was going on with, with the different facilities through, we talked with the commissioner. The commissioner couldn't get a call into the secretary's office or talk with anybody that, back in Washington because of the phone problems, but I could because of the way that we got hooked into the FTS line. So, the secretary was having conference calls with department heads and bureau heads and so forth, and so I would talk with the commissioner, we'd then get on the phone and talk with the secretary in her meeting with the bureau heads, and we communicated that way for probably five-, five hours or so, or six. It was late in the afternoon, anyway, when we ended up, the traffic had lessened enough to where we could make it to the next site. And of course, the emergency sites were moving right along and so we ended up that night going to a different one and got coordinated then and reunited then with the Department of Interior folks and sort of understood what was going on, and that sort of thing. We ended up getting home at about, I don't know, two o'clock I think or something in the morning. So, that was, that was the 9/11 day, and I know that the field people and the people outside in Reclamation, and of course, you know, all of America was absolutely stunned and so were we.

I knew that we had a huge job ahead of us after this because we, we basically did not really have much of an effective security program. We had a few levels, we had a few procedures, we had a few unarmed guards, we had the police

force down at Hoover, but so far as really understanding and knowing, knowing technically what to do and knowing security wise what to do with all of our facilities we, we really didn't.

". . . next day we reported to work as ususal, and . . . somewhere around nine o'clock we got a call from the Department of Interior . . . that everybody needs to evacuate their offices and go into the basement into the cafeteria. . . ."

The next day we reported to work as ususal, and that's what all of Washington did. And, I think that we were there only about an hour. It was, I don't know, around nine o'clock I think, it was early in the morning. We got an emergency . . . We reported to work that morning and somewhere around nine o'clock we got a call from the Department of Interior to, that everybody needs to evacuate their offices and go into the basement into the cafeteria.

And so all of, all of the Interior, which is, you know, several thousand people, are down in the cafeteria and, and Steve Griles, the deputy secretary at the time, basically stood up on a chair and said, "Look. There are a couple of planes, unidentified, heading towards the United States. We don't know what they are, but we're taking precautions. And so, we're basically just going to stay down here. So, everybody keep calm until we find out from Defense and others what's going on."

Having had 9/11 the day before happen and then this happen really shook some people up,

you know. People were really nervous about what was going on in the world, and one woman basically come up to me and she was absolutely distraught, and nervous, and tearful, you know, right on the edge of panic, and basically wanted to know, you know, "What are we going to do? What's going on? You know, I can't take this anymore, you know." And, and so I put my arm around her and I said, "Look, you know, everybody's nervous, but what we need to do is just calm down. Our leaders are going to handle this and we're going to figure out what's going on, and we're going to end up being safe. And, as soon as we can get out of here, why, you know, you ought to go home and then we'll figure out, as we move along here, what to do here," and that seemed to calm her.

But, I know that several people that I talked to as we were standing around waiting on the answers about what was happening with these planes were really quite, you know, quite nervous. I think everybody recognized at the time that, including myself, that we didn't have procedures that were in place that basically told us what to do and what to follow. I don't think that we had any exercises on this type of thing. I think that we were basically doing the best we could with what we had and really hadn't tested out much of anything.

So, all of that was a huge realization for probably people all over America, but certainly in our group standing there in Reclamation and in Interior. So after about, I don't know, I think we were down there maybe an hour and a half or

something and they got word that the unidentified planes were identified and so no problem. We could go back to work. We also sent, basically said, "People, look, you know, if you want to take leave or you want to go home, you want to, you don't want to be here in the building, you know, do so." So, there was quite a number of people that actually left and went home, and there was kind of a core of people that stayed and kept, basically, Reclamation and Interior functioning and going. *That* sort of thing happened for, you know, I think through the rest of the week basically. It was, more people maybe showed up the third day, but there was still a number of people that basically stayed home and just, and just out of the building. From that point on my position as director of operation, and Mike Gabaldon as a deputy director of operation, because we had the security responsibility under that office, we were the lead security people for Reclamation, and a ton of things have changed (Laugh) since, basically from that day on as everybody knows it.

What a tragic event to basically wake up America, and Reclamation woke up as well as to what was necessary and needed in safeguarding our facilities. I think up to that point the public and Reclamation itself felt like that these dams were pretty much indestructible and that we didn't have to really worry about it. We were, our security was more around public safety and vandalism than it was about really taking down facilities and failing them. It was, it really wasn't very strong at all.

"We immediately wrote a memo to the Department . . . that said what we were going to do and it outlined several steps . . . put in a security program. . . . That memo was important because it outlined for us, for the department . . . the steps that we were going to be taking, and it helped people understand that we weren't going to just stand still, which is really important. . . ."

So, from that point on everything really, really changed. We did a couple of things that was, I think, really critical in importance. We immediately wrote a memo to the Department, signed by the Commissioner, that said what we were going to do and it outlined several steps, and one is is that we were going to assess the facilities and figure out what the security problems were. We were going to put in a security program. We were going to analyze and make decisions as quickly as possible on, on things. That memo was important because it outlined for us, for the department, for even the press about the steps that we were going to be taking, and it helped people understand that we weren't going to just stand still, which is really important.

Dealing with the Press after 9/11

With, right after basically 9/11, as the country kind of got itself together a little bit, we were getting calls from the press a lot, and obviously their main question was, "Are the dams safe?" And, although we really had a firm belief that, that they were probably safe, we had no technical information, we had no technical analysis that really could define that for us. You

know, we had sort of a basic engineering sort of a knowledge that would know that it would take, take a lot to take one down, but we didn't know really the extent of that. And so, so it was a little bit of a struggle to be, you know, honest with the press and still be able to say that things were safe. What we ended up saying most of the time was, "Look, we're doing everything we can."

Putting Guards at Reclamation Facilities

We employed guards and law enforcement from other agencies out to stand guard on our highest critical facilities. We allocated a lot of funding to that to protect, in-place, as best we could at the time, by guarding facilities and so forth. And, we did. We had, we had a *lot* of guards and a lot of contracts, and a lot of money that we sent to Park Service, and BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs], and BLM [Bureau of Land Management] was part of that, and so forth. So we, you know, we really did a lot in that, in that work and they really, those agencies really stepped forward and helped us out.

Working on Security at an Area Managers Meeting

So, with the guarding, with this memo, with the, the next thing we did was I think in October that year we had a, there was an area manager's meeting coming up and so we held an area manager's meeting and the subject was security, and "What do we need to do?" and so forth. We changed the topic. We had the departmental people, security people there and so forth. And so, we wrestled around with, sort of, the security issue. We basically told the area managers what

this memo had said. We handed it out and that sort of thing and we said, "Look, we're going to do assessments. We're going to figure out what we're going to do, when we're going to do it, and how we're going to, what's vulnerable, what's not, and we're going to sort through this stuff and make, make basically the right decisions." And, I felt really good about that, but still in all the main thrust of the meeting was, "Look, we have a culture change that we're going to have to work on. People are going to have to start thinking security when they never had before, and sort of in everything that they do, and every, all of their operations throughout the day they're going to have to be thinking security and build that into their, to their work." That was in October of that year.

"From September through October, through that wintertime I spent almost all of my time, and I think Mike Gabaldon spent most of his time, sort of dealing with security issues. We were there late at night. We were working with the Security folks of the Department. We were working with the guard issues, the law enforcement issues. . . ."

From September through October, through that wintertime I spent almost all of my time, and I think Mike Gabaldon spent most of his time, sort of dealing with security issues. We were there late at night. We were working with the Security folks of the Department. We were working with the guard issues, the law enforcement issues.

The Congress and Law Enforcement Authority for

That fall, when the Senate came back in session, Senate and House, we had had a bill over there to have law enforcement authority for a number of years and it never did get passed. It was mainly, Reclamation's push was to have it for recreation so that we could give citations. Well, the Senate at the time took the bill and made it, basically made that bill into a law enforcement authority. And so what it *did*, I think it was in October, and this was, this was during the time that the anthrax issue came up for the Senate ~~and the,~~ and the Senate was evacuated. And so our bill lost some, some of the legislative history because of the Senate sort of being down, but they were passing this bill kind of during that whole time and working things out. And so, everybody was, was in a, you know, trying to do the best they could with what they had and what was going on at the time. Well anyway, it got passed and basically what it did is it gave us authority for law enforcement, but it didn't give us authority to hire any law enforcement officers. We had to get the officers from other agencies, Interior, outside Interior, that had law enforcement authority. So, so we at least had it.

Assessing Dams as Critical Infrastructure

The other main issue that I, workshop that I was on was the, at that time, the Homeland Security Office[14] was formed by President Bush and they were doing assessments on all critical infrastructure of America. So, I went to some of

14. The Department of Homeland Security.

these workshops and they had it divided out into water, and energy, and you know different sectors. One of the issues that came up though was dams. They had placed dams, because they dammed up water, they had placed it in the water side, which was going to be under the EPA's [Environmental Protection Agency] lead. And yet, the power side was wondering about the dams, the hydroelectric dams, and so "What about the power side?" The Agriculture was worried about the water for agriculture, and "What about the agricultural side?" What I was promoting and telling people at the time was, "Look, dams have all these different uses and depending on the dam you may have different security features for one kind of purpose than you would for another, and therefore none of these agencies have the expertise that Reclamation and the Corp of Engineers do on dams and you should separate it out."

Reclamation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency Share Responsibility for Assessment of Dams

So, in the final analysis it ended up getting separated out into a dam sector, and so there is a working group for dams, basically because of, of the consequences of dams, maybe unrelated to, if they fail, unrelated to the actual purpose that they're there for. And so, so it took it really out of EPA's hands, out of Energy's hands, and out of Agriculture's hands and put it really where it needed to be and that was with Reclamation and the Corps and the, and FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency]. So we have been working together ever since then, even after

the Department of Homeland Security was established. So, it was, it was *that* kind of stuff that we were totally consumed with, along with trying to get assessments and other things going, and contracts, and trying to figure out where we were security-wise. It was, it was really, it was really a horrendous undertaking with everybody wanting to know immediately . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. JANUARY 27, 2009.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. JANUARY 27, 2009.

"Reclamation, to give you an idea, didn't even know how to talk about what was classified or what wasn't. We only had a few people that had classification credentials, and basically we, you know, we had, we just had no knowledge on this side of things at all. So, it was really a growing, it was really a growing experience . . ."

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"About March or April timeframe, I was realizing that I was not doing the commissioner any good as director of operations, because I was basically a hundred and, over a hundred percent on security issues. . . ."

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realizing that I was not doing the commissioner any good as director of operations, because I was basically a hundred and, over a hundred percent on security issues.

Proposes New Security SES Position to Commissioner

So, the commissioner had been thinking about the same thing, so he and I talked one day about this issue and about what we should do. And I told him that I had been thinking that I, that I'm about ready to give him a proposal to separate out and sort of make a security function more functional and more prominent, and really be able to take on this stuff, and allow the director of operations to do director of operations work. And so, so I did. He was agreeable with that. He thought that was a good idea. So, I gave him the proposal and that proposal is what we ended up with. It was basically a, a SES [Senior Executive Service] position that could change the culture of Reclamation, drive through the organization the security aspects that we needed to have to really do all the technical work necessary to come to grips with what decisions we should make, and really focus on that and get something done, and it had to be prominent.

"I didn't believe that he should put a security or law enforcement person in charge of that organization. He *needed* a person who knew Reclamation . . ."

The other thing I told him was, I didn't believe that he should put a security or law

enforcement person in charge of that organization. He *needed* a person who knew Reclamation, that Reclamation, and their dams, and all that kind of stuff had a certain culture and that the security/law enforcement had a certain culture and we had to mesh those that worked with Reclamation. And, you couldn't just bring in security, because they don't understand the other side of the culture. And so, he agreed with that. And so, he asked me at the time, "What do you want to do? Are you proposing that you *stay* as director of operations or are you proposing that you go?" And, I told him at the time, "Look, I want to go be the director of security and law enforcement because I was here on 9/11. I have a burning desire to make our facilities safe. It was something that had motivated me from the very time that we drove across the bridge looking at the, looking at the Pentagon."

". . . I was reassigned at the end of June, less than a year after the, after 9/11. . . ."

And so, so we did. We fixed up the proposal and got it through the department, and I was reassigned at the end of June, less than a year after the, after 9/11. Now, I was assigned but we didn't have an organization. What was in place at the time was, Jack Garner was out as deputy, west, and ~~he was kind of over the, well~~ he was over the security office that we had. We had just one security officer and two individuals from other offices that were working for the security person, for the most part. And, and Jack was actually coming in, I think, that spring to take over Mike Gabaldon's job, because Mike had

moved over to a different position under a reorganization that the commissioner had made.

To go back and put a calendar to this, the commissioner was signed in at the end, was, came in at the end of July and he reorganized to split out some of, the director of operations' job and some of the administrative jobs, and so Mike Gabaldon went to the technical services, administrative side, and I stayed with director of operations. So, that created that position. Jack Garner came into that position that spring. That left, really, that position out there vacant. We put Lowell Pimley in there for a while as a, as somebody who had gone through the SES training and that sort of thing. So, we put him in there for a while. And then as we were developing the, this proposal and so forth, once I got reassigned then, then I basically built the office. And so by, by August 25th, I think is what sticks in my mind, we made reassignments and, initially, and we started building the structure of that office, and then I moved that fall out to Denver and was stationed out there. What we did was is that we–well, I've got to back up. Very important point here.

In November, right after 9/11 . . .

Storey: This would be 2001 then?

Dave Achterberg Brought into the New Office

Todd: This is 2001, November of 2001, we knew that we needed to have some technical person, safety of dams type of person, to really bring together some of the technical work and all of this stuff on

security. We wanted Dave Achterberg, because he was the chief of dam safety. There was a meeting out in–he was up elk hunting when we decided this. (Laugh) So, after elk hunting he came. When he came down from the mountain a few days later we got a hold of him when he was down and said, "Look, you've got to cut this short and come into this meeting." And so, in Salt Lake City he and Bill Chesney and I, one evening in a room in one of the hotels, we papered the wall with flip charts about what we needed to do, and how we needed to do it, and how we needed to go forth building a security program. Those, that work and those flip charts, there must have been, I don't know, fifteen of them, lined out all the steps we were going to take, what was necessary, how we were going to do it, what Reclamation needed to do, sort of how it was differing from safety of dams, but how it meshed in with safety of dams and how we'd use safety of dams information, and so forth. So, that formed the kernel of where we were going to go, and what the direction was, and how we were going to do this, and that was a very good kernel. It worked out very, very well, and it really formed the credibility that we have which is, which is really good as of today. So that meeting was really instrumental in forming our guidance.

Establishing the Security, Safety, and Law Enforcement (SSLE) Office

So, after I was appointed then in late June and put this office together, we needed to reassign people in there and we put in the Safety of Dams Office, the Security Office, sort of any law

enforcement we needed at the time. We didn't know what that was. We put in a, and then we had the Safety Office itself. So, that's what formed that office.

Staff Reassigned to the SSLE Office

We made reassignments then on August 25. We continued to hire people.

Hired a Security Officer

We didn't have a security officer, because I think Bill Chesney had left that, about the time that I was, that fall sometime, and so we hired a security officer.

Detailed Law Enforcement Officer in from the National Park Service

We detailed in a law enforcement officer. We had one working for us, Gary Van Horn, who was from the Park Police back in Washington for a while, but when we went out to Denver we, we brought in a different one. It was Mike Wood. We hired Don Taussig, who was the security officer and still is today. So, a lot of things were happening right into that timeframe when we organized the office in the fall. We were spread out all over Building 67. We didn't have a room. We didn't have a floor. We were just sort of in nooks and crannies and in our old, the old offices that people had and so forth.

Ninth Floor in Building 67 Assigned to SSLE

And so, there was a floor, 9, that was vacant and was ready to be renovated, and so we, we talked with people and got that, basically that floor, for what we needed in the security, and dam safety, and all that, and so that was renovated for that.

Dealing with Classification Issues

At the same time we had to deal with classification issues, how to have a secure room, all of that kind of stuff. We had no idea what level of classification we might end up with. We knew that some of our assessments coming back *were* classified. We had Defense Threat Reduction Agency doing work, and so forth, and so they were giving us some instructions. And so, we ended up with a person that we brought in, basically on contract, through, through Sandia [National Laboratories] at the time, I believe. His name is Doug Days. But he, he was a Special Forces person. He knew inside and out what, what the classification issues were about and really got us on the right foot about that. And so that, that whole fall was the design and sort of what we needed to do with the security office, the placement, the buildings, what function we needed to have, what equipment, what procedures, all sorts of things.

". . . the most notable thing for that fall was that we had an assessment come back from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency on Folsom Dam . . ."

And so, so that started that and then probably the most notable thing for that fall was

that we had an assessment come back from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency on Folsom Dam and they had done some analysis on explosive work that really, really concerned us.

Reclamation Closed the Road Across Folsom Dam

And so, from that assessment I sat down with the commissioner and with Tom Weimer, the deputy [assistant] secretary, and talked about what, what this assessment was and showed him, and we talked that thing through and decided, along with Bennett Raley, who was assistant secretary, and obviously we had decisions all the way up to the secretary, but basically that, we went out and closed the road that went across Folsom. It was, it was a very political issue. It upset the public. There was 20,000 cars going across that road every day for commuting to Sacramento. There were people that really used the dam for viewing, for recreation, for a lot of things. I mean it was, it was really, it was really hard on the public and we knew that. However, the other side of that was is that the uncontrolled nature of the road and really not being able to stop or thwart a placement of an explosive and that sort of thing really concerned Reclamation to the point where we believed we had to close it. And with Sacramento downstream it was, the consequences were, and the risks were, just too great, and so we felt we had to close it. So, we went out and closed, closed that road.

That also then began sort of a lot of issues that, questions of the press and other things about, "Well, are you going to close all the roads across

dams? And, if you're not, which ones *are* you going to close?" And, we didn't have answers to those things because we didn't have all the assessments in but, but we did on this particular one.

As we grew here, and I think the real point I want to make about the development of the office and the credibility that Reclamation has on dams, came from the assessments, our growth, and really the people who worked on it.

". . . people that we brought into the office really wanted to do great work. . . . They really had a good strong belief that this was, this was the greatest job that they could be working on. . . ."

Our people that we brought into the office really wanted to do great work. You know, they had a loyalty, doing it for America. They really had a good strong belief that this was, this was the greatest job that they could be working on. That included the engineering department, and we had a fellow in there named Perry Hensley, who was, who just did great work, and he had others that helped. But those engineers really went to work on understanding the technical aspects about failing a dam, what decisions we needed to make, how we needed to make those, what choices we had, what the risks were, how we needed to deal with road closures, and guards, and all of this stuff that was coming in with all of the different assessments and so forth that we were rolling in at the time.

". . . I had never worked in an office in

Reclamation where we had gotten so much support, so much, really, loyalty and people just willing to do more than their share to come to grips with all of this stuff. . . ."

And so, I tell you I had, I had never worked in an office in Reclamation where we had gotten so much support, so much, really, loyalty and people just willing to do more than their share to come to grips with all of this stuff. That didn't mean that we didn't have spirited discussions and a lot of, a lot of, a lot of *hard* discussions about what decisions had to be made, but I'll tell you everybody, everybody really pulled together.

". . . we really became a leader in the Homeland Security Department about how to secure dams. . . ."

And so with the, with the engineering change that we had and a focus on not only how to build a dam but, "How do you take one down?" we really became a leader in the Homeland Security Department about how to secure dams. We went from basically nothing to being the leader in America on, on dam security, and I believe it's still that way today. It's, it was really, we really did a good job and all the credit goes to, to those folks in the security office and all throughout, on the projects and everything. It's just really done a great job. Let me take a break here, just for a minute. [Recording paused] Any questions come to mind for you as I was rambling on?

Storey: No. I know there were a lot of people that were transferred into that office.

Transferring People into the SSLE Office

Todd: Oh yeah. Yeah, let me talk about that, because that was important.

Storey: So, I think obviously there was a lot of *training* involved?

Todd: Uhm-hmm. Right. Oh, absolutely. You know, yeah, let me touch on that because that . . . okay. I think–let's go again here for a little bit.

Storey: Okay.

Listing Dams as Critical National Security Facilities

Todd: I want to back up again to the fall of 2001 and talk about a couple things that went on, and there was *so much* going on, and we did, we did so much that it's hard to, you know, talk about everything. But, in that fall we also had another meeting where we brought in project people, some area managers, some people in Denver in Engineering and so forth, and we–what the question was was "Which are our critical vulnerable facilities and which one should we assess first?" We already had four facilities, or three facilities that were listed as critical national security facilities, and we added to that list Glen Canyon and Folsom.

Storey: What were the three?

Todd: The three was Hoover, Grand Coulee–I'm missing one.

Storey: Folsom or Glen maybe?

Todd: Let's see there was . . . I've lost it. I'll pick it up in a minute. You can fill that in. (Laughter)

Storey: Okay. We'll get it.

Identifying Reclamation Facilities for Security Assessments

Todd: I lost it. Retired, I guess. So, we added Folsom and Glen Canyon. That was before any assessments were done. So, we knew we had five we were doing assessments on and we had already started that, but we needed to have what other facilities, and so we had this meeting. And, basically what we told the people in the room, Jack Garner and I, was is that, "Look, you all know your facilities. You have an idea. I mean, you know what happened on 9/11. You have an idea of what's critical. We need to establish what the most critical facilities are just from basic knowledge and have a place to start. So, what are they?" We talked about the things that we needed to think about, which was access points and vulnerabilities, and if you're able to shut down certain functions, you know, "How critical was it?" and so forth and so on.

". . . we ended up with a list of fifty-five, which included the five nationally-critical infrastructure dams. . . ."

We went through those, and we ended up with a list of fifty-five, which included the five nationally-critical infrastructure dams. And so,

those were the ones that we were focusing on for assessments.

Work Done Before 9/11 Was the Basis for Assessing Reclamation's Critical Facilities

Now, prior to 9/11 there was some work done with Reclamation, and the Corp of Engineers, and Sandia on a way to assess vulnerabilities of dams, and so we employed that, that procedure. It was long, it was drawn out, it was pretty detailed, but we, it was basically what we had. So, we did that. And so on all these, on these fifty-five that's what we did. We learned a lot from those, from that procedure. I think it's since been modified and so forth, but that was our start.

And so, when the news would call, when the public wanted to know, that sort of thing, we said, "Look, we're doing the most critical facilities that we have first and these fifty-five are the ones and we're assessing those."

"From those assessments . . . and the discussions . . . about securing facilities, came a *lot* of information about the criticality of certain functions or certain pieces of a dam and so forth. It also made us think about, 'Should some of this information be classified?' . . ."

From those assessments came really, and the discussions around what we do after those assessments came in about securing facilities, came a *lot* of information about the criticality of certain functions or certain pieces of a dam and so

forth. It also made us think about, "Should some of this information be classified?" And, of course, it should. And we, as we developed the office, we put in the classified facility so that we could then basically understand how to, how to keep this information. There was no classification manual though on, on dams, or what should be classified or what shouldn't be. And so, we had an individual from USGS that had worked a lot with classification. We had that individual working with, and also with Don Taussig, working with Homeland Security Department.

Reclamation staff ". . . wrote a manual for classification on dams and it was based on Reclamation information . . ."

And basically, they wrote a manual for classification on dams and it was based on Reclamation information on what should be classified and what shouldn't be. And so, that's in effect now and that became the manual and the standard for what we should do.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Tom Weimer Had a Background with Sandia National Laboratories in Security Assessments

The other thing, I want to back up to the fall [on] was the Deputy Assistant Secretary [of the] ~~for~~ Interior for Water and Science Tom Weimer. Tom had a background, had early in his career worked for Sandia as, and did assessments, I think worldwide, on American buildings and structures and so forth. He, in his background,

had a technical knowledge about security and about what assessments do and how you go through that. He was instrumental in supporting Reclamation and guiding and leading Reclamation down the right path as we made decisions, as we chose directions, as we formed where Reclamation should go. Tom and Reclamation had numerous, numerous conversations about where we should be, what we should do, what the priorities were.

". . . quite frankly, as of 9/11 Reclamation really didn't have credibility. . . ."

And quite frankly, as of 9/11 Reclamation really didn't have credibility. I think everybody was worried about the security program. They were worried about whether or not I, as an individual, could bring this together as a leader, because I had no security background.

"There were a lot of . . . questions about whether Reclamation could really pull this off. The security people of the department had lots of questions because we didn't have a law enforcement officer as the head of it. We didn't have a security person at the head of it. . . . we didn't have that background. . . ."

There were a lot of, there were a lot of questions about whether Reclamation could really pull this off. The security people of the department had lots of questions because we didn't have a law enforcement officer as the head of it. We didn't have a security person at the head of it. We, you know, we didn't have that background. So, lots of

questions. Tom really helped focus Reclamation and helped, and helped support us in the department, and I think that–I'm not sure how far we would have gotten without Tom, in reality. Let me shift then to sort of the trust issues and whether or not, the questions about whether or not Reclamation could really pull this together.

". . . Roseanne Gonzalez, who the was head of the policy office at the time, was really instrumental in helping staff the office. She offered to detail people in or transfer people in as necessary. And so, there was a lot of people that were transferred into the security office that had no security background. That was another thing that people in the department, security people in the department pointed to, that Reclamation wasn't doing the right thing . . ."

Along with that we were, there were offices in Denver and other places that were struggling with the numbers of staff and trying to figure out what to do and so forth. The policy office was one. And as we brought up the security office, Roseanne Gonzalez, who the was head of the policy office at the time, was really instrumental in helping staff the office. She offered to detail people in or transfer people in as necessary. And so, there was a lot of people that were transferred into the security office that had no security background. That was another thing that people in the department, security people in the department pointed to, that Reclamation wasn't doing the right thing because we had a lot of training to do. We had people that basically had no technical security background whatsoever.

Storey: Let's . . .

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. JANUARY 27, 2009.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. JANUARY 27, 2009.

Storey: This is tape two of an interview by Brit Storey with Larry Todd on January 27th, 2009.

I was wondering?

Todd: Yeah. There were, we were . . . we were moving and transferring a lot of people in to do certain work that had had really no background in it. And, my confidence in these people were that they wanted to come to work for us, they wanted to do challenging work, and they were willing to change and train, and do whatever it took to become proficient in the jobs that we had for them. And so, we transferred a lot of people in from the policy office and some other offices, and I don't remember everybody probably, but certainly I know that Rusty Schuster came down, Tony Linenberger came down, Pat Hagan came down, Gary Anderson came down. We had other people in other offices that were, where some offices were being disbanded and so I think Michelle Klossowsky came in. John Lambert, I think, came down. So, there was a lot of people who transferred in. (Storey: Uhm-hmm.) Are we still taping or not?

Storey: Yeah. We are.

". . . gearing up and training people and so forth was a *huge* job for Reclamation, and I know that we hired experts, like Don Taussig, we had Mike

Wood in there as the . . . chief law enforcement officer, who were experts, who had helped train people. They became quickly confident in these peoples' abilities and so forth. . . ."

Todd: Oh. So, there were a lot of folks and I may still not have gotten everybody. So, gearing up and training people and so forth was a *huge* job for Reclamation, and I know that we hired experts, like Don Taussig, we had Mike Wood in there as the law enforcement, chief law enforcement officer, who were experts, who had helped train people. They became quickly confident in these peoples' abilities and so forth. And, we hired a, well basically a security engineer from the [U.S.] State Department. What's his name? [Leroy Smith.] Who was really expert at putting in security systems and doing the technical work on, on that. So, we really brought together a huge amount of effort and wherewithal.

Kathy Norris was also brought down, but she was brought down, even before we established the Security office, to help out, and so she became kind of the administrative side of things and brought that whole piece together. And so, so we just had a huge amount of help from people being transferred in from other directors that were helpful in wanting to see this thing a success.

". . . I told the group at the time . . . that we really had to focus on prevention, to establish the credibility . . . and that security was really more about prevention than it was about catching somebody after the fact, that we . . . had to

establish these kinds of principles in order to . . . really make this work. . . ."

We–I think that when we, when I came out and established the office, that would be in, after I was assigned in June of 2002, what I told the group at the time was that we really had to focus on prevention, to establish the credibility, that we weren't going to do anything that would take away from our credibility, and that security was really more about prevention than it was about catching somebody after the fact, that we, that we really had to establish these kinds of principles in order to, in order to really make this work. And, as we worked through those principles we–that became part of our direction as well.

Law Enforcement Exercise on a Terrorist Attack at Flaming Gorge Dam

And, the example I use here is that, we went out to the exercise in Utah and the exercise was after the Olympics in Salt Lake City, and the FBI and others out there had been working with Reclamation. And so, so Reclamation had had a dam that the FBI and other law enforcement agencies would do an exercise on a terrorist attack for. [Recording paused] So, the regional security officer had worked with those folks out there and basically got an exercise of law enforcement, federal, state, and so forth, on Flaming Gorge Dam, and so we were invited to it. And, I think it was Mike, Mike Wood, myself, I think Don Taussig was out there, and also Kim Duran. By the way, Kim Duran was also transferred in to our office. She was doing a lot of work on

assessments and so forth, and so she was instrumental in helping the assessments get going. But, I think that we four were out there just as observers on the exercise and we really learned a lot about dam security with that exercise. It was a couple-day exercise, and terrorists had come into the visitor's center and got access to the dam. And so the, basically law enforcement had to figure out how to deal with the terrorists and how to get them out of there and that sort of thing.

"What we found was that there were barriers around trying to get people out of the dam. For instance, there are lots of tunnels and access ways, and other things that once people get in it's difficult to deal with them. And . . . people with a suicide mentality means that we had to do prevention. . . . Because, once people got in . . . the damage would have been done. . . ."

What we found was that there were barriers around trying to get people out of the dam. For instance, there are lots of tunnels and access ways, and other things that once people get in it's difficult to deal with them. And, we also figured out that with, people with a suicide mentality means that we had to do prevention. I mean, that *really* became apparent at that exercise. Because, once people got in it didn't matter if we caught them, or if we caught them after they committed suicide, the damage would have been done. And so, we really needed to focus on what would prevent people from getting to critical parts of facilities.

"That one exercise, I think, really changed the

momentum and the, and the focus behind Reclamation on decisions that would come after . . ."

That one exercise, I think, really changed the momentum and the, and the focus behind Reclamation on decisions that would come after that critically-important exercise. We also began establishing plans for exercises at other critical facilities. We realized how important this was. So, once that exercise was over, I think it was in the second day, I brought these four people together and we sat down in the office and had a little m meeting and, and I basically told them, "Look, here's how we have to do this going forward." And, we talked about it, and "Can we get it done?" and we lined out how we were going to get it done. And so, that's what we did. We went back and the slides and pictures that we took at that, at the exercise really became a communication piece back in the department, homeland security, and other people about, about the complexities of the dam, the complexities about the security of the dam, and where the focuses needed to be and so forth. It was just a real critical, I wouldn't say turning point but it was, but absolutely a critical focal point about where we were going to go, and what we were going to do next.

Decisions about Guard Forces at Facilities

That exercise led to the decisions that we were going to be making about guard forces. We hadn't really dealt with guard forces because we really didn't know what to do *about* guard forces

at the time. I think we were still having facilities guarded, but we had guards that were unarmed. We had guards that really didn't have training on prevention. We really didn't put the effort behind the guard issues at the time.

". . . that exercise told all of us that if we were going to have a guard force then we needed to have it be more of a response force than relying on law enforcement to come. . . . so we had a whole shift in how we really needed to do things from there on. . . ."

And, I think that exercise told all of us that if we were going to have a guard force then we needed to have it be more of a response force than relying on law enforcement to come. And law enforcement in these remote areas would be maybe two-, four- hours away, and law enforcement has a culture that basically says, "Well, we will contain the area and then we'll catch the, catch the perpetrators." But, in a terrorist case, and the suicidal intent to do damage, then *catching* didn't make any difference. And so, so we had a whole shift in how we really needed to do things from there on. So much so that as the Grand Coulee assessment came in and what to do with that, and so forth, we, as we studied the consequences, the risk, and the vulnerabilities and that sort of thing, we ended up deciding that it was necessary to protect Grand Coulee with an armed response guard force. And, they don't have law enforcement authority up there, but they do protect the dam with arms, and they are trained, *highly* trained, in response force tactics. And, the rationale out of all that came

from (Phone ringing) this exercise. [Recording paused]

Safety of Dams as Part of SSLE

Okay, let me talk about safety of dams piece. The people in safety of dams were very good at the safety of dams program. They had a lot of credibility. The procedures were set. They knew how to assess risk. They knew how to assess consequences. They had brought the technical engineering side in with the public decisions that need to be made about the safety of dams.

". . . much of their work was so good and so established and had so much credibility, and it fit so much with the security side of what Reclamation had to do. Like with safety of dams you have to analyze the risk. . . . and so we picked up that model and we established, basically, the security model with the safety of dams model, and then we *changed* the model. . . ."

So, much of their work was so good and so established and had so much credibility, and it fit so much with the security side of what Reclamation had to do. Like with safety of dams you have to analyze the risk. You have to analyze the vulnerabilities. You have to understand what an event might do, which is the consequences, all that. Well, those same things apply to security. Instead of a natural act it's a terrorist act, but it's basically the same kinds of things, and so we picked up that model and we established, basically, the security model with the safety of

dams model, and then we *changed* the model. We made modifications to it as we needed to about, about risks, about decisions, about things, but we *still* used a lot of the technical information from safety of dams. For instance, one of the things that we used early on and throughout was, was the consequences of a failure of a dam. "Consequences" meaning damage to property and loss of life. The loss of life figures, the analysis that people made, the assumptions that went into failure and how that may drive *up* consequences, or drive *up* the loss of life, or reduce it were all factors that really went into the analysis on what we might do for security. The safety of dams community, not just the Safety of Dams Office itself, which was within security, but all of the safety of dams *technical* engineers that was in the TSC [Technical Service Center] really came together and were instrumental in analyzing all this technical work. It was, to be honest with you it was really fabulous to be a head of an organization that had these kinds of credentials and these kinds of individuals that could really bring this stuff together and, and come out with credible information and credible decisions that had to be made about them. It was really great.

I can't say enough about the technical side of Reclamation and what they do. I'm not an engineer, but I'll tell you–what they do, and what they did, and how they brought this stuff together, what they analyzed gave our office and Reclamation just tons of credibility throughout, throughout the government, in homeland security, in the Corps, and in other agencies. They just do a fabulous job. But that, but that model was

instrumental in how we, Reclamation, decided to carry out security, and I believe that it was absolutely critical. If we were starting over and didn't have that model to start with we'd be way behind the eight ball.

Law Enforcement Issues

The other piece here that I haven't talked about is law enforcement. Reclamation has struggled with law enforcement, and I believe that there are still struggles today about how far we should go, and what we should do, and so forth. And, the issue is not that we shouldn't secure our facilities. I think that that's well established, and people throughout Reclamation believe that and feel that, but when it comes to law enforcement, "How much law enforcement do we need? Should we be paying for it? Should we have our own law enforcement? Should we rely on sheriff's offices? Should we rely on other agencies? How should it be carried out?" Having arms on federal facilities was a big deal. The law enforcement culture, itself, is quite different than what Reclamation is used to. All of these played a huge factor in sort of where we got to with, with law enforcement.

The authority itself limited us from hiring people, and so forth, but what we ended up with was this is that we ended up contracting with BLM for six, in the initial stages six but basically it ended up with five law enforcement officers, one for each region, and then we had one extra one down at Grand Coulee for a while. But the, but we basically contracted with them. They

could use our authority for law enforcement, and they were law enforcement officers. But, the establishment of law enforcement, law enforcement is very procedure-oriented. They have a culture of procedure that everybody else has to sort of abide by.

". . . they have a culture that security, that's sort of a belief, that the security people, to some degree, are more second-class and that law enforcement ought to supervise security people. Reclamation, on the other hand, had a huge focus on security and less so on law enforcement. . . ."

Say, they have a culture that security, that's sort of a belief, that the security people, to some degree, are more second-class and that law enforcement ought to supervise security people. Reclamation, on the other hand, had a huge focus on security and less so on law enforcement. And so this, this is a ongoing philosophical, cultural issue within Reclamation and it probably, I'm not sure if it'll ever get really solved. It ebbs and flows depending on sort of what, what's going on. But, you need both.

". . . while I was there . . . part of the big issue was to bring law enforcement along but to have it partner with security, and [they] . . . have trouble just in the way that they're trained and in the cultures of the different professions . . ."

And so, while we were, while I was there, you know, part of the big issue was to bring law enforcement along but to have it partner with security, and the security side and law

enforcement side have trouble just in the way that they're trained and in the cultures of the different professions really how to do that. But a lot of time was spent in doing those kinds of things.

On the law enforcement side, though, Reclamation had to learn about law. We really didn't have law enforcement, other than the law enforcement down at Hoover, which was mainly there for more crowd control, at the time, and so forth, the visitor safety and that sort of thing rather than, you know, rather than the security of the dam, full security of the dam. So, there was even a lot of training with the Hoover police that went on.

". . . we went down to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. . . . to have a law enforcement for managers training session. . . . It's a fantastic training center. And so, we ended up with a . . . a course for Reclamation managers about Reclamation authority, and its law, and sort of what needs to be carried out . . ."

But Reclamation, we went down to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.[15] The law enforcement person we had brought in at the time, Mike Wood, took me down there. We went through that. We were being pushed by the Department to have a law enforcement for managers training session. We were in the development of that. We went down there and looked at what all it could do. It's a fantastic

15. The FLETC is headquartered at Glynco, Georgia, though it has other training facilities. It is a bureau within the Department of Homeland Security.

training center. And so, we ended up with a, developing a course for Reclamation managers about Reclamation authority, and its law, and sort of what needs to be carried out, and how law enforcement works, and all those things. It was a three-day session.

". . . what we ended up with . . . showed them what the life of law enforcement was like in shooting weapons and discharging weapons, in standing in front of a film . . . for sort of the shoot-no-shoot kind of thing . . . and you had to decide whether that was a situation that you would shoot somebody or not shoot somebody was, was *extremely* useful in learning what law enforcement is about and what situations you can get into, and what you have to know about, and so forth. . . ."

We took regional directors down there. We took other executives from Denver and from Washington down there, the commissioner, and basically what we ended up with was, showed them what the life of law enforcement was like in shooting weapons and discharging weapons, in standing in front of a film and they have mechanisms for sort of the shoot-no-shoot kind of thing, like you were a real law enforcement officer. And for somebody to come in and, like myself, and other directors, and be placed in that with a weapon with a, with a real, sort of a real-live action film in front of you and you had to decide whether that was a situation that you would shoot somebody or not shoot somebody was, was *extremely* useful in learning what law enforcement is about and what situations you can get into, and what you have to know about, and so

forth. And, so those issues about weapons on federal lands, and who has the federal facilities, and who has them, and sort of what training they have to go through and make sure what, what level they are before, before you want people to handle them, and all the procedures around that, was extremely instrumental at the training center. And, we also had sessions where we learned about explosives and sort of what the different feel for the explosives were, and so forth, from the ATF [Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives] folks.

"We only need to have what we need to have. And, so we established the law enforcement positions and so forth for about a five-year period so that we could figure out what kind of law enforcement needs we really needed to have and which ones we didn't. . . ."

And so it was just, it was an extremely good training session. That went a long way to sort of sanctifying the law enforcement within Reclamation, *although* there is still a firm belief that it shouldn't get too big. We shouldn't be sort of a law enforcement agency. We only need to have what we need to have. And, so we established the law enforcement positions and so forth for about a five-year period so that we could figure out what kind of law enforcement needs we really needed to have and which ones we didn't. If you didn't have law enforcement you may be missing things. If you did have them, you could at least assess and then after five years sort of figure out what the needs were. So, I think they're probably going through that now. But,

that's where we got to with law enforcement.

And, we talked with the solicitor's office at the time and basically hired a lawyer specific for law enforcement so that we could write regulations and other kinds of things for a, not just security, which we did, but also for land use and what law enforcement issues about land use, facility use, all that kind of stuff. So, we have basically two regulations. One for security issues around the dams themselves, around the facilities themselves, and then, and then the land use, and that came strictly out of the law enforcement function and the law enforcement focus that we had to get established. [Recording paused]

Area and Project Offices Did a Lot of Independent Work on Security Issues

A couple other things that I want to talk about is the project offices, the area offices, and their help and support, and then also communications. The project offices, early on, they were really supportive of the security and they did a lot of things out there by themselves, thinking through security on, from little things to big things about doing things in the interim, until the security assessments got in, until the decisions were (Cell phone ringing)–is that me? [Recording paused] All right.

Storey: Okay.

Todd: Doing, but they were doing a lot of things out there in the interim until the assessments were done, until decisions were made about what

specific security things should be done on their facilities. Tom Weimer and I had a couple of different trips to go out to major facilities. We took a week each summer and went out and visited with people on the ground, took tours of the facilities. They showed us what they were doing. We talked about vulnerabilities. We talked about, sort of, consequences, and what the operations were, and a lot of different things.

". . . what *amazed* me was that the people out on the ground were extremely thoughtful about what could happen . . . how entry could be gained . . . and they did things . . . to prevent access and . . . to prevent entry in certain places, and in strategic places, critical places. . . ."

And, what *amazed* me was that the people out on the ground were extremely thoughtful about what could happen, or what somebody could do, or how entry could be gained, and they, and they did things, the best of their abilities to prevent access and to prevent, to prevent entry in certain places, and in strategic places, critical places. And so they were, they had really incorporated a great amount of thought and then carried out fixing of those. They would maybe design their own hinges, (Laugh) or they would design their own gates, or they would do whatever, but they would have their maintenance people and welders come together and . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 2. JANUARY 27, 2009.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2. JANUARY 27, 2009.

Todd: So, there was a tremendous amount of work and a

tremendous amount of credit goes to those people, because they were really on the ball out there. So, as Tom and I would visit these places we really came back with a lot of good ideas about what they were doing, along with, of course, the big vulnerabilities that they couldn't do anything with until the assessments came back. But, what it showed us was that Reclamation people really were coming together throughout the organization, top to bottom on the security efforts, and what was being said in Washington or implemented in Denver was also being implemented right out at the facility level. And, and that in itself gave us, and the commissioner, and the department a tremendous amount of confidence that we were, our facilities were safe, and safer, and going to be safer because our people were really pulling together and implementing things.

Working with the Department and Other Agencies

The other thing I want to talk about is the communications back at the department, and it involves ground level work as well as, you know, the Denver work and so forth. But, on these trips I took pictures.

"We developed PowerPoints . . . of the work that was being handled . . . I felt that my job was to be the communicator to the department and to other agencies in Washington, and I'm a visual person. Anybody who has worked with me will tell you that. And so, my main communication tool was the PowerPoints. . . ."

We developed PowerPoints[16] in Denver of the work that was being handled there. I felt that my job was to be the communicator to the department and to other agencies in Washington, and I'm a visual person. Anybody who has worked with me will tell you that. And so, my main communication tool was the PowerPoints. And, we would build hard-hitting PowerPoints that weren't just with words on the screen, but with pictures, with maps, with consequences, with moving parts, with basically models of failure, and we would put those together so that we could tell the story about certain vulnerabilities and what the consequences were, and we could show that.

"Those PowerPoints, and many of them are classified, but those PowerPoints were eyeopeners to folks in the department, to the homeland security council, to the homeland security department, to, you know, others back in Washington who had really never set foot on a dam, to OMB . . ."

Those PowerPoints, and many of them are classified, but those PowerPoints were eyeopeners to folks in the department, to the homeland security council, ~~to the homeland department,~~ to the homeland security department, to, you know, others back in Washington who had really never set foot on a dam, to OMB [Office of Management and Budget], people that really hadn't set foot on a dam, and if they did or when they did thought that the dam was so large that really nothing could be, could happen to it. But,

16. Referring to Microsoft PowerPoint digital slide shows.

what we showed them was what could happen and the risk associated with certain things that could happen, and then showed them what we needed to be doing.

"That kind of communication, and of course with OMB along with the budget numbers to support where we were going, was really instrumental in the credibility and the support of Reclamation of building this strong security program. . . .:"

That kind of communication, and of course with OMB along with the budget numbers to support where we were going, was really instrumental in the credibility and the support of Reclamation of building this strong security program. With OMB we outlined the step-by-steps of what we were going to be doing, how much money we believed it would take. We supported that with these PowerPoints and backup material. Whatever we'd show them on screen could be demonstrated by the technical data. Everything had a line that went back to credibility, somewhere along the line. And, it was, quite frankly it was very hard not to support.

". . . a lot of people in Reclamation thought that, you know, we were getting scads of money, and we were. We were well funded. There's no doubt about it. But, it was supported with the work throughout Reclamation that culminated in these, in these communication tools. . . ."

And, I know a lot of people in Reclamation thought that, you know, we were getting scads of money, and we were. We were

well funded. There's no doubt about it. But, it was supported with the work throughout Reclamation that culminated in these, in these communication tools.

". . . so we had these, these slides back on a classified computer and we'd pick them out and go and pretty much at a moment's notice we could give what we needed to give to people that were really wanting to understand. I gave many of these classified briefings to congressmen and senators . . ."

And, those communication tools, sometimes we'd get a call and say, you know, "We need somebody to come over and tell us about this or that." We could, we had a number of them and we could pick out the number of slides that would make the point on that particular subject. And, and so we had these, these slides back on a classified computer and we'd pick them out and go and pretty much at a moment's notice we could give what we needed to give to people that were really wanting to understand. I gave many of these classified briefings to congressmen and senators in their areas where issues were coming up, to show them what was going on, where our decisions were going, why we needed to make these tough decisions, why they were getting calls.

PowerPoint Presentations Were Instrumental in Politicians Understanding Why Reclamation Was Making Decisions and Allowing Them to Deal with Constituent Issues about Reclamation's Direction

Those kinds of graphics and those kinds of PowerPoints were really instrumental in basically quieting the situation and really those congressmen and senators would go back to their constituents and say, "Look, I've seen it. Reclamation's doing the right thing." And, much of this would be quieted. And so, I . . .

Storey: Are you talking about concerns about costs, and repayment, and all that?

"There were concerns about costs, repayment, access, road closures, barriers, *all* the kinds of things that people would see that they were used to having freedom of and now all of a sudden they would see restrictions. . . ."

Todd: There were–yes. There were concerns about costs, repayment, access, road closures, barriers, *all* the kinds of things that people would see that they were used to having freedom of and now all of a sudden they would see restrictions. And so, they would have lots of concerns about, you know, a variety of things. That was a big issue. (Storey: Uhm-hmm.)

". . . the water user community was concerned because we had established early on that we would put in the capital improvements to the security program and that that would not be a repayment factor, but then came an issue of maintenance, and replacement . . ."

Specifically to costs, the water user community was concerned because we had established early on that we would put in the capital improvements

to the security program and that that would not be a repayment factor, but then came an issue of maintenance, and replacement, and you know, "How much is too much?"

". . . another thing was . . . we had classified information. And so, we'd say, 'Look, we want to share this stuff with you but you've got to have your background checks and get . . . credentials before we can really sit down and tell you the ins and outs.' And, many of them didn't want to do that . . ."

And, another thing was is that we had classified information. And so, we'd say, "Look, we want to share this stuff with you but you've got to have your background checks and get, get your credentials before we can really sit down and tell you the ins and outs." And, many of them didn't want to do that because they didn't want to have one person go and have credentials and then be the communicator back to a board, or whatever. They wanted more information. So it was a real struggle about, about how much *involvement* that we had with the power users, water users, that sort of thing. We tried to bring them in as much as we possibly could, but there were certain restrictions around classified materials. So, so we always had this struggle about how far could we talk and in what kind of detail, and so forth, so that they could *help* us but we could help them too. And so, there was a lot of those issues around, that floated around for years.

"I think that they're, they're better now. But when

people don't know and you can't tell them it's really disheartening. . . . and if they don't know then they invent things . . ."

I think that they're, they're better now. But when people don't know and you can't tell them it's really disheartening. It's really a communication problem because you want to be able to say things about why you're making certain decisions, but if you can't then they don't know, and if they don't know then they invent things, and you know, they don't know where it stops, or where it is, and whether, there's no check and balance to the government making decisions and all sorts of things. And so it's really, it's really a struggle. And so, so we did it. So, all of this kind of stuff was big issues for certain facilities because it, because the congressmen and senators were hearing about it. And so, we went over and did several briefings to folks that were on the appropriations committee, the folks that were on the homeland security committee, and a lot of different places on all these issues. But those, those kinds of slides, those kinds of PowerPoints, those graphics, those pictures, those models really, really brought home the point about where we're going and why we were making decisions the way we were making them. And I, you know, I really can't say that, say that enough.

"I want to go back to a point on how committed people were within Reclamation. . . ."

I want to go back to a point on how committed people were within Reclamation. After 9/11, every day, we had questions about

what was going on, "What were people doing? Where we were going? How far we would go? When we were going to have answers?" from everybody. It didn't matter whether it was OMB, the department, congressional people, aides or, you know, the media, or whatever. It was just daily.

". . . Washington really kind of gets going about 8:30 to 9:00 o'clock, and so we established at 8:15 in Washington that we would have a [daily] conference call with the Denver people and the heads of the security folks that were out in Denver. . . ."

And so, we started, back then the–Washington really kind of gets going about eight thirty to nine o'clock, and so we established at 8:15 in Washington that we would have a conference call with the Denver people and the heads of the security folks that were out in Denver. And, and so that meant they would have to get up at 6:15 because of the two-hour difference. And, we established these on a daily basis, that we would have them, and we continued them when I came out to Denver, because every day the Commissioner, the department, somebody would call me about questions that people were asking about this and that, and where we were, and it might involve things that we were doing that day or changes that we were, we were doing, or people going out to assess a certain thing. And so, for me to be able to say, "Look, this is what's happening. This is what we're doing. This is–so and so's out there doing that *today*, and we'll have an answer by thus and so." was critically

important. And so, we ended up establishing this, and that lasted, I think that lasted two years or three. It lasted a long time. And, people would, one person (Laugh) basically had their coffee pot timed at the foot of their bed and would wake up at 6:15, pour a cup of coffee, get on the phone because we had a fifteen minute conference call about what everybody was doing that day, because things were changing so quickly and so fast that we just continued to have to be updated. But, we made sure that they didn't last more than fifteen minutes. It was more about, "What's going on? What's changed? What are you doing today?" so that we could have up-to-date information (Storey: Uhm-hmm.) every day. That was an interesting thing. People wondered, you know, really why were we doing that?

". . . that was another critical piece that helped us gain credibility about–that we knew what we were doing, we knew where people were, we could answer questions, and if we couldn't we'd get it for them . . ."

But, that was another critical piece that helped us gain credibility about–that we knew what we were doing, we knew where people were, we could answer questions, and if we couldn't we'd get it for them, and they, and we knew when. So those were, those were good things that happened.

". . . we were being observed by several different entities, but we also brought in people to do assessments of what needed to be done. Early on we had Sandia. . . . We had the Inspector General's Office . . . The Defense Threat

Reduction Agency . . . the National Academy of Sciences"

The other quick thing that I want to mention was is that we were being observed by several different entities, but we also brought in people to do assessments of what needed to be done. Early on we had Sandia. They had done some work. We had the Inspector General's Office looking at us doing work. The Defense Threat Reduction Agency was telling us things about what we might do. We did these assessments and then we would look at their recommendations and then we'd implement things. We, I think the last one that we did was with the National Academy of Sciences, doing an update, an assessment about where we should go. About a year prior to that the IG [Inspector General] had finished their, I think they took six months to do an assessment of us, top to bottom, about a security program and so forth.

I think through it all certainly there were things that we needed to do and people recognized it, and I think people were working on things and making things better. Those assessments were good things. But, I think through it all the IG, even the National Academy, in the first assessment, we really ended up with good reports. We *didn't* have such negative kinds of reports that basically said we were falling apart. Basically they said, "Look, you got a good organization. You're doing the right things. You need to shore up this or that or you need to do these and those kind of things." But basically, it really established with all of those assessments that

Reclamation really put in a solid program and it had matured, and that it was really the kind of model program that I think people wanted. That's what I took away from it. So, I think that those, the work that we did was really recognized by the people that had jobs to come in and critique, and so it's really a tribute back to the people of Reclamation and what we did, that everybody pulled together, top to bottom, clear down into the projects. And so, so it really made a difference. [Recording paused]

The National Academy of Sciences Did Several Studies for Reclamation

Let me separate out here a little bit on the National Academy of Sciences. Reclamation had, basically had a contract with the National Academy of Sciences on *several* kinds of studies. The National Academy is seen as highly credible to look at, scientific data, and engineering kinds of data, and that sort of thing and assess where things are. They have different boards. One of them is an engineering board. One of the studies that we had done prior to this was from a different board.

Study of Endangered Species on the Klamath Project

It had to do with Klamath–Endangered Species Act. I think we employed them to do one on water runoff of forest areas on stream flow, and so forth. We also had them do, I don't know, there are several different ones we had them do.

Study of Reclamation's Security Program

But, on this particular one the security one was with the engineering board and so they, we wanted them to assess Reclamation's program from the security side of things.

". . . they had to bring onto their committee that did this people that understood classified material and what they could say and what they couldn't, and what they had to hold out of their report and put in a classified side of the report . . ."

And so they, they had to bring onto their committee that did this people that understood classified material and what they could say and what they couldn't, and what they had to hold out of their report and put in a classified side of the report, or what they could talk about. They, so there was a lot of specificity around the National Academy and this particular assessment on the program of Reclamation and what it entailed.

Working with the Inspector General's Office

The inspector general was, we had a good relationship with them, and I'm not sure when it started but I had a good relationship with the administrative side with one of the assistants there, when I was back in Washington *prior* to 9/11. And, as the 9/11 progressed and as we gave reports, and PowerPoints, and had meetings with the department, we also included the inspector general people and made sure that we were telling them what we were doing as we were growing, and as we were changing, and making decisions

as those issues evolved we would let them know. We had developed basically a really good open relationship where, where we could go in and basically talk to them and get advice on certain things, and so forth. And so we, we had several people on the law enforcement investigative side of the inspector general's side of the house that we worked with quite a lot. It was kind of interesting because, you know, their job was to assess where we were and, and so there was, we would invite them to meetings, we would talk with them, but also they would take a wait and see attitude, see if it worked. And, if things weren't working then, you know, they would tell us. (Laugh) No, they would tell us very directly and so forth. But, the relationship, I think, was good, because it was candid, it was open, it was direct, it was honest, from both sides. They had a couple of people that they employed to do this assessment on us, and on the program. We knew that they were going to do it for a couple of years. They told us early on that, "Well, we'll wait and see. We'll let you have a chance to develop your program for a couple of years and then we're going to come in and assess you," and so they did. ~~And but they,~~ But they pretty much stood back and kind of watched and let us do what we thought we needed to do before they came in and really did a study on us. Now, the study took about six months. If I recall, they went out to a lot of different facilities, critical facilities, noncritical facilities and so forth. They talked with the regional people. They talked with the Denver people. They talked with Washington people. They did, I believe, a really, a thorough look at what the program was and what was

implemented. And, I think that in my discussions with the people who did the assessment, they were impressed. They had never seen, really, an organization come together as quickly as Reclamation has and establish the security program policies, the procedures, the assessments, the technical things, as quickly as Reclamation has, and basically be on the right track. ~~They really, although they really, although they, you know,~~ The IG can't really put this in a report, but they were really impressed with Reclamation, I think. Now, that doesn't mean that we didn't have things to do. We knew we did. We identified most of the things that they put in their report that we needed to do, because we already knew what they were. But they were, they were really glad to see that we were open, we were honest. The field people were great. They were committed. They were thinking about security. The, you know, the Denver people were doing what they were doing. Washington was thinking about it. So basically it was throughout Reclamation and quite frankly, I think, we established a culture change within Reclamation, and they recognized that and saw that. [Recording paused]

Staff in the Security Office

Within the security office we had a lot of different components, segments, you know, people that were doing different things, but they had, but they all come back together and were, and it was all connected within the security office itself.

Steve Jackson, Martin Chavira, and Bill Chesney

For instance, we had, part of the original, a couple of people that was original security as Steve Jackson and Martin Chavira. They were with Bill Chesney prior to 9/11. Steve Jackson had some ties with the FBI, and the terrorist center downtown. And, Martin Chivera had done a lot of work on assessments, and so forth. Well as these segments grew and as we incorporated the office we had other, other things where we had, technical parts of the assessments.

Kim Duran

Kim Duran became sort of the assessment manager. We had–and she was instrumental in making sure the decisions were implemented that came out of the, those assessments. We had the, we had a database that we needed to have to track all of these security things. We had that on the classified computer, I believe.

Wade Feltman

And, we had Wade Feltman, who was a database person that was out of the IT [Information Technology] Office, but he worked specifically for safety of dams to do their database. And so, eventually I think we transferred Wade in. But, *he* developed the database that we used for all of the assessments and tracking all of the recommendations, and what we did with those recommendations, so that we could show basically anybody who asked what we rejected, what we accepted, what we implemented. And

so, we had all these different people that were really focused on making sure that their piece was really shored up. We had, if we needed information to get to the FBI we had people to do that. If we had, and we had that communication back and forth. If we had classified information, which we just had basically started up, we had a person to deal with that and to deal with our classified records. We had to develop people who, sort of the personnel side of it to, to keep track of who had classified credentials, who didn't, who had background checks, who didn't, who should have them, which ones were going to get them.

Classified Meetings with Other Agencies Required That Security Credentials Be Sent in Advance

We had to, whenever we meet with other agencies and discuss classified information we had to have our security officer personnel send credentials so that they would know who really had the kind of credentials necessary to discuss at what level. I mean, all these things were new to Reclamation. We really didn't know what a security engineer was and what they did. We didn't know, really, what the law enforcement did and what their procedures were.

Emergency Management Systems Had to Be Expanded

And so, so as we, as we developed this stuff–emergency management was another one. We had emergency management for safety of dams but we really didn't have anything for, for

the kinds of things that happened on 9/11, so that had to be expanded. And so we, we had the emergency management people, we had the budget people, we had the administrative people, we had the security engineering technical side. We had relationships with the TSC. We had the relationship with the contractor from SAIC [Science Applications International Corporation] Corporation that had, basically, retired law enforcement to do investigations and to look at the risk assessment for certain areas, and so forth. We brought in the expertise, you know, to do, sort of set up the office. We had the security officer who had expertise. So, we had all these different people going all sorts of different directions and different ways.

"We had people that came from other parts of the organization that didn't really have training, but *they* got trained up. . . . So, they really basically have a whole different career than what they started out having. . . ."

We had people that came from other parts of the organization that didn't really have training, but *they* got trained up. They got trained up to do classification. They got trained up to do training on certain things. And so we had, everybody pretty much had a job and a responsibility for a particular piece of the puzzle, and all of it came together within the, within the organization there in Denver. And . . .

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. JANUARY 27, 2009.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 3. JANUARY 27, 2009.

Storey: This is tape three of an interview by Brit Storey with Larry Todd, on January 27th, 2009.

Okay.

Todd: I don't know that I talked about the help that the field offices had given us in Denver, but a number of regions–are you taping yet?

Storey: Yes.

Todd: A number of regions were able to send people in. We detailed, I know, people in from California, from Lower Colorado, from each of the regions, I think, Upper Colorado, Great Plains, Pacific Northwest, for sometimes months at a time to handle certain aspects of developing certain things within Reclamation. Sometimes it was working on assessments. Sometimes it was working on other things, background checks or whatever. And so we, we really did have not only people that were transferred in from other parts of the organization, but the contractors that we had and the detailees that we had from other parts of the organization really were helpful in bringing their expertise in and really lending a hand to this horrendous job that we had ahead of us. And so, I just can't say enough about all of the employees of Reclamation and the contractors alike that really pulled on this project and really got it going.

Affect of the Bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993 on Reclamation's Security Activities

Let me say something about pre-9/11,

because I think it was important to know a little bit about sort of where we got to prior to that. I think it was in '95 or '96[17] when there was an explosion from a vehicle at the bottom, I think, of one of the "Twin Towers." And, I think it was President Clinton at the time had written a, some kind of an executive order about security. That came down through the department and at the time I was back in a position as the reclamation liaison to [the office of the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for] Water and Science then, and Patty Beneke was the assistant secretary and Eluid Martinez[18] was the commissioner. And, at that time there was a need to do some security assessments and to try to do some security things. And so, what we did at that time was we established–I think that Reclamation was struggling about what to do an assessment on, and so forth and so on. We really didn't, didn't have anything (Laugh) going on really on that point at all.

Reclamation Decided to Do Security Assessments on Five Dams

So, Patty wanted me to see if we couldn't get something going, so I sat down with Bruce Brown and I said, "Look, Bruce, can't we have, let's just do five dams, like so and so," and I think I named off five dams, and said, "Look, can't we have the security people down in the department, there's

17. On February 26, 1993, a car bomb was detonated by terrorists in the parking garage of the World Trade Center under the north tower.
18. Commissioner Eluid Martinez has oral history interviews published in the Reclamation history program, and he briefly discussed security issues in those interviews.

only two of them, can't they just go out and a quick security thing, and come back with some recommendations and see what we're doing?" And, so we decided to do that and Bruce carried that out. And so, I think that was the initial, the initial security work.

There Was a Push to Establish a Security Position

Well, the other thing that happened is there was a push to have a security position. And so, there was a lot of wrangling about, "Well, where should the security person be?" and so forth. It finally ended up, I think, in the policy office and it was some time later, I don't remember exactly when, maybe '97 or '98, where I think Bill Chesney was finally hired, but without a lot of money, and funding. And, I think that it was, I think people within Reclamation really didn't understand the need, and sort of the why, and the necessity.

"I think Eluid Martinez understood he needed some security . . . Patty Beneke had . . . more of an idea about security. . . ."

I think Eluid Martinez understood he needed some security in certain places and that sort of thing. I think Patty Beneke had another, had more of an idea about security.

***". . . no one* thought that . . . a failure was the kind of thing we ought to guard against . . . I just can't believe that that was on peoples' mind. I never heard it mentioned. The only time failures of dams were talked about was in the context of safety of dams. . . ."**

But, quite frankly, you know, *no one* thought that, I think, that a failure was the kind of thing we ought to guard against, you know. I just can't believe that that was on peoples' mind. I never heard it mentioned. The only time failures of dams were talked about was in the context of safety of dams.

". . . Bill Chesney got here and he established . . . a call-out procedure and say, 'Okay, Level 1, you know, you've got to do these things. Level 2, you've got to do these things,' so forth, which became extremely useful on 9/11. . . ."

And so, so what I think happened prior to that, Bill Chesney got here and he established some levels so that, you know, you could have a call-out procedure and say, "Okay, Level 1, you know, you've got to do these things. Level 2, you've got to do these things," so forth, which became extremely useful on 9/11. And, you know, we were very glad that we had basically established *those* kinds of procedures. I don't know that we had exercises, though. We, maybe a few of them.

Steve Jackson and Martin Chavira Had Worked with Bill Chesney Before 9/11

Bill had done a couple of other things. He had gotten Steve Jackson, who was an engineer and had some interest in law enforcement, and Martin Chavira had an interest in security assessments and security things, and so those people were in TSC but they worked with Bill and for Bill doing lots of different things that could be

done then.

". . . Bill {Chesney] was able to . . . put together a rudimentary security program for Reclamation. . . ."

And so, I think that what we ended up with, what Bill was able to do was basically put together a rudimentary security program for Reclamation. I think the funding was like $1.5 million a year or something. I mean, it was just, for Reclamation's size it really wasn't much, other than paying for the position and paying for a few things to do. So, so it was, it just really wasn't much.

Before 9/11 Reclamation Established Some Collateral-duty Security Officers at Various Locations in Reclamation

Well, there was some money within that million and a half that went out for people to do, where we established, I think, collateral-duty security officers. So, there was like a regional collateral-duty security officer, in some of the major projects. There was collateral-duty officers, or security officers.

"Safety of dams had already established what they called "duty officers," which was people that were available twenty-four hours a day, and this would be rotated . . ."

Safety of dams had already established what they called "duty officers," which was people that were available twenty-four hours a day, and this would

be rotated, and if there was a dam safety issue that came up that there would be a call-in process and something that we could respond to from the emergency management side immediately. But, from the security side, you know, we just relied on, at the time, sort of the safety of dams duty officer side. So, we had collateral-duty security officer kinds of positions.

". . . there wasn't really much done, but what was done was really good because on 9/11 we used it. . . ."

And so, there wasn't, there wasn't really much done, but what was done was really good because on 9/11 we used it. We used the procedures. We used the people to do the evacuations. We used a lot of these things that we had, that we had done.

"Commissioner Keys used to say, 'There wasn't, . . . one kilowatt hour lost and there wasn't one drop of water not delivered on 9/11. . . .'"

And, I think Commissioner Keys used to say, "There wasn't, there wasn't one kilowatt hour lost and there wasn't one drop of water not delivered on 9/11." And, that's true. There wasn't. So, everybody did their job and I think that, I think that was good. [Recording paused]

Sandia and Lawrence Livermore Lab Studies

One other subject is sort of what we were doing with expertise outside of Reclamation, and that came to us from several different places, some of the contractors, but also through some of

the labs, Sandia laboratory in particular and also the Lawrence Livermore Lab.[19] One of the things that Bill Chesney had done, which really no one knew about within Reclamation, except for just a handful of people, I don't think any of the leadership knew, but he had commandeered a study with Lawrence Livermore about concrete dams, a certain type of concrete dams and explosives, and they did some really well-done modeling about placement, and failures, and size, and all these kinds of things. And, when, after 9/11 of course, as I was sort of dealing with security everyday as director of operations, and making some trips and talking with Bill, and so forth, this came out, you know. One day he told me, "Well, have you seen this study? This is more about what security is all about." and I was flabbergasted. I absolutely had *no idea* of the results of the study, let alone that a study had even been made, and I'm not sure, you know, much of anybody else did either.

Research Became a Significant Piece of Reclamation's Security Needs

But, but the results of the study was really good and it, I think what I came away from there thinking was, "Look, we got to do more of the research side of this to really *understand* what we're doing." And, of course, as I talked with Dave Achterberg, and Dave was *instrumental* in handling the technical side, the program establishment side of the security thing, since he

19. Sandia National Laboratories on Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in Livermore, California.

was, had been a past safety of dams officer, and so he was also big on the research. And so, as we talked this thing through, you know, research became a real significant piece of what we needed to do. We needed research on explosives so that we could then work that into the technical analyses so that we could tell people, "Look, here's what will happen. Here's the consequences. We know this because of the research which leads to the technical analysis, and it gives you a line of thinking about how you come to a decision. So, we also had had contracts with Sandia on a number of different things, and we contracted with them on some other kinds of research.

". . . the Defense Threat Reduction Agency had research on buildings and sort of flat ground things and so forth, but nobody had really done any research at all on dams . . ."

How this sort of came together was, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency[20] had research on buildings and sort of flat ground things and so forth, but nobody had really done any research at all on dams, and does that make a difference in the way they're built, and so forth and so on.

Reclamation Worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sandia National Laboratories, and the U.S. Navy to Do Research on Dams and Related Topics

20. Like Sandia National Laboratories, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency is housed on Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque.

So, we really started to do that piece and did some, hooked up with Corp of Engineers and their research facility, and with Sandia, and so forth, and Sandia did some modeling. We hooked up with the Navy and did some modeling on metal structures, because they did a huge amount of work, especially after the Yemen incident.[21] And sort of *we* wanted to know what, what sort of the metal conditions were that were with water, just as *they* wanted to know with the metal ships and water. And so, they did some work for us based on some of their work that was phenomenal on sort of the metal structures within, within the dams. We did work with Corps and with Sandia on both the earthen and concrete structures and so forth.

Storey: Let's, let's see if I'm remembering. The Yemen incident was the *U.S.S. Cole*?

Todd: Yes. Uhm-hmm. Yeah.

Storey: Okay. (Laugh)

Todd: Excuse me. Yeah. Right. And so, and so I think that Reclamation reached out to whoever it could that had technical abilities that would relate to what we were doing, and brought them in, or had some kind of relationship, or contract, or, you know, or something with them so that we could *all* bring this together and make the right decisions.

". . . the research side of this really had a lot of

21. Referring to the October 12, 2000, attack on U.S. Navy destroyer *USS Cole* at Aden, Yemen.

different fingers out in different places, and that information came back in, and I'll tell you a [lot of] phenomenal work was done. . . ."

And so, the research side of this really had a lot of different fingers out in different places, and that information came back in, and I'll tell you a [lot of] phenomenal work was done. The modeling depictions and the modeling consequences, and the stuff that our own engineers were doing in conjunction with this that basically showed consequences and failures in different ways, and so forth, and why we needed to make decisions and the way that we needed to make them was phenomenal.

"People just came . . . together on this . . . the American people . . . really benefitted from it because our dams are really protected now. . . ."

Sandia, I've got a lot of respect for those people down there. They do a lot of great work. Lawrence Livermore, the same way. The Navy, the same way. Corps of Engineers, the same way. People just came from *all* sort of corners of America and pulled together on this and really the American people, I think, really benefitted from it because our dams are really protected now. And, this research was a real critical piece to formulating the decisions that we made. [Recording paused]

Storey: Well, I see our time's almost up for today, so let me ask you if it's, if researchers inside and outside Reclamation can use these tapes and the resulting transcripts?

Todd: Yes.

Storey: Great.

Todd: I would ask you, though, to take the transcripts by the security office to make sure that I didn't say anything they might have concern about.

Storey: Okay. Good.

Todd: Before you do that. And then after that, then, yeah. Distribute it.

Storey: Thanks.

END SIDE 1, TAPE 3. JANUARY 27, 2009.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 1. JANUARY 28, 2009.

Storey: This is Brit Storey, Senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation interviewing Larry Todd at his home in Billings, Montana, on January the 28th, 2009, at about nine o'clock in the morning. This is tape one.

You had some security things we wanted to finish up, I believe?

Security, the Regional Directors, and Senior Management Team

Todd: Yeah. After thinking about this there was one piece that I did want to talk about, the regional director's piece, on the security thing. Obviously, we couldn't have done, had the success that we had with the security, and completed it like we did, without the regional directors, and the senior

management team.

". . . we all had really tough discussions on security because of the lack of information, the thoughts that people had about what the security should look like. 'Are we going overboard?' The other thing was . . . budget issues . . ."

You know, we all had really tough discussions on security because of the lack of information, the thoughts that people had about what the security should look like. "Are we going overboard?" The other thing was is that there was budget issues, and, you know, other projects that were really high on everybody's list, and people tended to see that as any money given to security is taken away from something else. So the discussions within the senior management team about how far we were going, what we were doing, how many people we were employing, all of that was tough. There were tough discussions.

Senior Managers Wanted to Protect the Facilities and the Mission and the Water Users

There was just no doubt about it. I've been up and sort of in front of the management team talking about this stuff and answering a lot of tough questions, a lot of tough concerns, and so forth. So, you know, I don't want to say that it was smooth sailing, because it wasn't. We had a lot of things to figure out and to the credit of the regional directors in particular, but other senior managers as well. There was a lot of responsibility in the room to make sure that things went like they should and protect the facilities as

well as protect our original mission and our water users and so forth. So, so just a lot of, a lot of concern, you know, about that. In the end, though, and I think this is a major, major point and one that goes to the credit of the regional directors is that every one of them, to a person, as we finished the discussions really lined up with a strong security program and they, they would go back to their regions and make sure things were implemented. And so, you know, a ton of credit goes out to the regional directors for both asking hard questions, making sure that we were doing the right thing at the right level at the right time, and then as things were figured out going back and implementing things and not, not being resistant, and not getting in the way of the implementation. And so I, you know, I really have a lot of respect for the regional director's job and for the regional directors there, because they, they really did pull the security program along as we went, and did a great job of it.

". . . Reclamation had a cultural change to make . . . from Washington out to the field level . . ."

So, as I said before, basically Reclamation had a cultural change to make from, from Washington out to the field level throughout Reclamation and everyone really pulled to make that happen and the regional directors had a huge piece in that. [Recording paused]

Storey: I've been sort of curious about 9/11 and the fact that emergency numbers in the United States are 911. Do you think that's a coincidence or do you think there's a connection?

Hasn't Seen Any Connection Between 9/11 and Use of 911 as the U.S. Emergency Telephone Number

Todd: You know, there was a lot of speculation about that early on, and in my job I've been a lot of places in looking at classified information in meetings as well as non-[classified], and talking with a lot of different departments and so forth, and I don't believe that I've ever seen any kind of information that made that connection. That's not to say that it didn't happen, but from what I've seen is is that–and, well, and I haven't seen everything either. But, but I have never heard that, that there was that connection, (Storey: Uhm-hmm.) and I don't think it's ever come out in the papers or that anybody ever divulged that, that I know of. So.

Storey: Hmm. Interesting.

Todd: So, as far as I'm concerned my opinion is that it was coincidental.

Managing for Excellence (M4E)

Storey: I believe you also wanted to talked about M4E [Managing For Excellence]?

"Let me . . . talk about sort of how I see sort of the M4E effort coming to fruition. And it was really a long time coming, quite frankly. . . ."

Todd: Yeah. Let me, let me back up and talk about sort of how I see sort of the M4E effort coming to fruition. And it was really a long time coming,

quite frankly.

". . . with the budget issues of the '90s, with the administration . . . with sort of Reclamation revamping and reorganizing, and . . . a thrust to. . . pay-for-services . . . There was a disenfranchisement of the water users and power users . . . and a separation that had never really occurred with Reclamation but it occurred then. . . ."

But, back in the '90s, with the budget issues of the '90s, with the administration at the time, with sort of Reclamation revamping and reorganizing, and basically there was a, there was a thrust to, for pay-for-services, and make sure that people paid for everything that they got, that sort of thing. There was a disenfranchisement of the water users and power users, and a big wedge, and a separation that had never really occurred with Reclamation but it occurred then. And so the, I think the feeling that I had was that the water and power users felt like that they were kind of alone out there where Reclamation had always been their partner.

Klamath Project and Environmental Issues

And then in the late '90s the problems with the Klamath Project, and the environmental issues, and the water issues and all that was really coming to a head, and I think in the late '90s, for instance, there was fairly good water years and with a few fish kills, if I remember right, that was concerning. But really people were getting their water and that sort of thing. But, the winter of

'99-2000–oh, excuse me. Let me back up. It's the winter of 2000 and 2001, basically saw a real decline in the weather.

And, all along I think Reclamation had been working with the tribes, and the water users, and BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs], and Fish and Wildlife Service, and basically everybody involved in that to really understand the data of the fish, both on the salmon side and on the sucker side.[22] And, we had a contract out and we were waiting on data, but, so that we could sort of make some adjustments in how we might manage water.

A Low Water Year Caused Problems at the Same Time There Was an Administration Change and Political Staff Were Not in Place

But, that winter basically provided not much snow. The spring, we didn't get any, we didn't get any rain, which normally helps that system, and so it was an extremely low water year. That was also the change of the administration. So, in the spring of that year, for the first six months, we had an acting commissioner, which was Bill McDonald, who was the regional director in Boise, and he was the acting commissioner. We

22. According to the Fish and Wildlife Service at http://www.fws.gov/endangered/klamath.html there are two endangered sucker species: the shortnose suckers (*Chasmistes brevirostris*) and the Lost River suckers (*Deltistes luxatus*). Both species are a lake-dwelling fish that migrates into streams to spawn. Both species "have suffered from a similar combination of over-harvesting, pollution, and habitat loss which reduced their numbers, their reproductive success, and the area in which they can survive." Website accessed April 19, 2010, at about 5:45 p.m.

didn't have assistant secretaries in place, yet, not until the end of July. And so, and so that whole thing really couldn't have come at a worse time for, for basically an administration change and not having people in place, and so forth and so on. The situation really became, you know, dire about April when, when water was supposed to flow and we knew that we had very low water conditions. Fish and Wildlife were *really* worried about the, about the fish. They believed that there would be a significant reduction in the suckers, in particular. And so, so that whole thing really, really came to a head. Now, at this point let me back up a minute, because I want to back up to the year prior, the year 2000.

As we were struggling with data and Reclamation was looking at data and kind of saying one thing. I think environmentalists were looking at data and saying another thing. Probably each agency had sort of their own view of what the data said, and so forth. I worked with the Fish and Wildlife Service at the time trying to work out issues with the Klamath, and I was, at that time I was the acting director of operations, and what we come to the conclusion of was that we really needed an objective viewpoint of the data and of the results.

Reclamation and Other Bureaus Worked with the National Academies of Science to Study the Environmental Issues on the Klamath Project

And so, I remember them asking me, "Well, what do you think of the Academy of Sciences and what do you think if we actually had

commandeered them to have a study done?" And I said, "Well, that's probably okay. I mean, the Academy is credible. We need to know what the answer is, because Reclamation firmly believes one thing and other people believe something else. And so, you know, it probably would be good." So, what we did was is we got money together from three agencies, if I recall. I know that Fish and Wildlife was one, we were one, and the . . . and it might have been NOAA [National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration] was the other one. I can't remember for sure. But anyway, we got, I think – or, maybe it was BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs], I don't remember. We got three parties together. Fish and Wildlife basically did a contract with the Academies, and so we started the Academy work. And, so that was, that actually culminated as well in the spring, I think, of 2001. That's when, that's when that got going.

So, along with having this bad [water] year we also had this Academy study going. I'm losing my years here. So, I may not be exactly right. But anyway, the Academy study basically came out, when it came out, and I remember it came out in a February time frame, but basically it came out and pretty much shored up a lot about what Reclamation was saying. You know, not everything, but it certainly wasn't, wasn't one-sided towards the environmental side. So that study was ongoing and a really important piece here as the Klamath thing moved along. But in April of the year 2001 there were talks about what we should do. "How can we provide water? How can we still provide water to the fish?" And, there

was lots of discussions and, you know, Fish and Wildlife and others would bring data into the secretary's office and, you know, we would all get around the table, we'd look at this stuff, we'd try to figure out where we ought to go, what we ought to do, the hydrologic models were there.

". . . as conditions worsened it became apparent that . . . there wasn't a lot of choices to be made with the data that we had in front of us . . . And so, that's when the secretary made a decision to cut off the water. . . ."

And, as conditions worsened it became apparent that, that basically there wasn't a lot of choices to be made with the data that we had in front of us, and so forth. And so, that's when the secretary made a decision to cut off the water.

". . . the people across the West it caused a . . . bigger divide with the water users and Reclamation, because water users saw Reclamation as not . . . supporting them. . . ."

And, of course, that, that caused a real upheaval in . . . well in the people out there, in the people across the West it caused a huge, a bigger divide with the water users and Reclamation, because water users saw Reclamation as not, not supporting them.

"In fact, I know . . . that we supported them a *great deal*. But, but the facts came out to such that, that the decision was made to cut off the water. But . . . it caused a huge, huge gap, and mistrust. And so, that was one of the major key issues that

began to lead towards the M4E . . ."

In fact, I know, I was in the discussions, that we supported them a *great deal*. But, but the facts came out to such that, that the decision was made to cut off the water. But, but it caused a huge, huge gap, and mistrust. And so, that was one of the major key issues that began to lead towards the M4E, as we went along and dealt with the Klamath issue over the years.

". . . John Keys came in as commissioner at the end of July, and then 9/11 happened just about six weeks after that. So, you know, the country's focus was changed immediately too. . . . Klamath was dealt with . . . John did a huge amount to try to repair this gap and did a huge amount on repairing and then trying get the right things going on up at Klamath. But regardless of his efforts there still was an issue about Reclamation, and their decisions, and their costs, and sort of the lack of communication with the water users about how things ought to be done . . ."

And, of course, John Keys came in as commissioner at the end of July, and then 9/11 happened just about six weeks after that. So, you know, the country's focus was changed immediately too. But, as Klamath was dealt with alone over the next several years with a lot of things, John did a huge amount to try to repair this gap and did a huge amount on repairing and then trying get the right things going on up at Klamath. But regardless of his efforts there still was an issue about Reclamation, and their decisions, and their costs, and sort of the lack of communication

with the water users about how things ought to be done, and so forth and so on. So, there was, there was still that going on.

Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Bennett Raley wanted a "study on this issue of costs, of engineering, of construction, of everything that was sort of a big deal about, you know, whether Reclamation had a future in that or not, and whether we were organized to take on the future issues. . . ."

The other piece here that I think was, as sort of M4E–and, quite frankly it wasn't called M4E until after the Academy study–but as it progressed there was agreement that, we had done an Academy study on Klamath before, maybe two of them, I don't remember, by then. There was, I think, an idea by [the assistant secretary for] water and science that we could probably do an Academy study on this issue of costs, of engineering, of construction, of everything that was sort of a big deal about, you know, whether Reclamation had a future in that or not, and whether we were organized to take on the future issues. And, you'll read this in sort of the instructions to the Academy. And, and so, and so they commandeered that study.

And, I think the layout of the situation, the Academy usually has some, some meetings early on to get everybody briefed, and then they have field meetings and so forth, and that's what happened here. And so, Klamath issues and other issues was a big, big deal with the Academy and with their focus. They really looked at those

kinds of issues where things were not going well, and then they also looked in pockets of areas, and we had lots of different areas where things were going really well. And so, I think the thrust was to try to use the examples where things were going well and, and try to give direction to Reclamation in the areas where things were not going well. So, all in all I think when that study came out it was, it was really good for Reclamation, but this was the kinds of issues that really started and was the driver of that.

". . . because of this big divide there was a thrust about basically, "Look, if Reclamation, if you can't take care of these facilities then give them to us and we will, and we'll do it cheaper, and better," and so forth and so on. So, that was the context about where M4E was. . . ."

There was, because of this big divide there was a thrust about basically, "Look, if Reclamation, if you can't take care of these facilities then give them to us and we will, and we'll do it cheaper, and better," and so forth and so on. So, that was the context about where M4E was.

Right after this study–I believe the study came out in December of 2005, if I remember right, and there was also underway, that fall, some reorganizational changes at the leadership level, and John Keys was looking for a deputy of a position they called the policy administration.[23] Well it's the one I got but I can't remember the title of it now. (Laugh) (Storey: Hmm.)

23. Deputy Commissioner, Policy, Administration, and Budget.

Anyway, we'll pull that.

Storey: I don't have anything here.

Todd: Anyway, so, so as the, as the report was coming out and I think I got named as this, the deputy commissioner in December, there was a big push from the department and from the commissioner to get this thing started so that Reclamation could deal with all the recommendations, and the report, and so forth.

Assigned the Lead in the M4E Study

So the, I showed up, if I remember right, like on January 7 in the office and John takes me into his office early that morning. We always had a nine o'clock meeting and it was before the nine o'clock meeting. And he says, "Larry, I am going to appoint you as the lead for this effort on the Academy report. So, you need to be thinking about how to deal with this." And so, up until then I had no idea. I knew I would have some involvement but I had no idea that, that I would be the lead for that.

Secretary of the Interior Requests a Report on the M4E Effort

So, as things progressed here, the secretary within, I don't know, a few days of that, I think, sent a letter down to the commissioner that said, "By the end of February I want a report on how you're going to handle this and what you're going to do." And, and so within that timeframe I

named a team to help me prepare that report to the secretary and through the commissioner, and I got really good people on it. I'm not sure I remember everybody on it, but it's named somewhere. But, I got really good people on it. We had really hard and long discussions and then we sat down and we wrote that thing, and quite frankly everybody else wrote it. I didn't have much of a hand. I wrote a couple of pieces. But, and then we had a writer out in the Policy Office that really shored up everything and made our thoughts sound good. And, we turned that in and I think that began the first step towards, towards gaining some trust, both with the department and maybe even with our customers. Because, I think people really didn't believe that Reclamation or the government could really respond in a quick, efficient way, and be on point. And, I think the secretary signed that report really immediately and we got good, good feedback on it both from, you know, from customers and from the department. And so, so I think that was the first step in the huge effort there and the repairing.

Issues with Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District

About that time, and I'm not sure exactly when it was. It was coming up, another issue that was coming up, it was probably the year before, but I'm not sure exactly when it was, I wasn't totally involved, but it had to do with the Northern [Colorado Water Conservancy] District, Conservation District, and they wanted to put an outlet in Carter Lake, and the, they had evidently come to TSC and the TSC's bid they thought was,

not bid but their estimate of cost was more than double what *they* thought, what they had, what their engineering firm said it would be. And so that fueled a lot of issues, and they had written a letter to Congress and explained their side of it, and one of the issues that they had was when they went to the TSC they had a meeting with seventeen people and that was an example that it shouldn't take seventeen people, and that Reclamation didn't know how to manage their engineers, and that's why the costs were up, and so forth and so on. As that issue kept going on, as the M4E was started, that became a big fuel to sort of the . . . the thought that Reclamation couldn't manage, couldn't do things efficiently, and couldn't, couldn't basically run like a business, and couldn't handle, couldn't handle things. It was really portrayed that way in a big way. As I talked with people, because it was a piece of the initial Academy study, the, as I talked with people inside Reclamation what I got back was this, is that, the way the depiction was was that there was seventeen government employees all in one room listening to two people, or three, from Northern. In fact, I guess what happened was is that there was two to three to four people at a time that would come in and talk about a particular engineering subject. In other words the, probably some experts or the head of that group or something with younger engineers, and so they would, they would talk about that particular subject and then, then they would leave and then another group would come in, and so I guess it all totaled seventeen, but it wasn't quite like we had all seventeen there. But, I think that those things really *drove* a lot of the issues around what M4E

had to do.

"What it said to me was that, that the communications that we have with our customers was something the Reclamation really needed to improve on . . ."

> What it said to me was that, that the communications that we have with our customers was something the Reclamation really needed to improve on, really needed to learn, really needed to train people about, about how to communicate and how to deal with things, how to have some sympathy for the water users and what they're going through, and how to communicate this stuff and be able to work with them. I really think that we, in our technical side of things, had let that go and not really dealt with it as much as we should. The other issue, of course, was the, I think the estimate was around $2.5 million from TSC and $800,000 from Northern, somewhere in that neighborhood. The thing about that issue was is that our estimates, as I talked with people, were about . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. JANUARY 28, 2009.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. JANUARY 28, 2009.

Storey: Estimates were about design.

Reclamation and Northern Used Different Methodologies to Estimate the Cost of the Disputed Project

Todd: About a pre-design and then construct. So, you fully design it and then you get bids and you

construct. That's a different methodology than what I understand Northern had. They had a, sort of a design-build methodology, which you have some basic designs, but then you design it as you build it, which meant basically that you don't have all the costs included up front. And so, there was this huge issue between the methodologies. And so, that particular issue, that basis for those huge discrepancies wasn't really coming out in the discussions or in the communications with congressional people and different things. It's a, you know, those methodologies make huge differences in how you, how you look at costs. The, as I recall now though the, there was a study done after this was all over with Reclamation and with Northern to see, you know, sort of what the technical issues were around, around that issue, and the final job and all that. I believe that Reclamation was pretty dang close and about what it would cost, and where things were, and that sort of thing. And so, you know, I don't believe that there's been any, really, correction of the record, but, other than this report, but, you know, I don't think that we were that far off.

But this issue, these kinds of things, were really driving the M4E effort. And so, when, when I got there I think I saw my job as leader of this to try to first of all get communications, get understanding, and then second of all, as we get understanding and feedback, and that sort of thing, is to put in recommendations and implementation to, to really improve Reclamation on what it was doing, how it was carrying out its services, you know, and sort of the whole ball of wax. And, if we were wrong, or we needed to

improve something I saw it as, "Then we needed to do it. And, no questions asked. Let's get to it and let's do it." So, then let's fast forward then to some of the initial meetings that we had after the report, you know, that the secretary signed.

"Water users, in particular Family Farm Alliance, and Northern [Colorado Water Conservancy District], and others, they were, they were basically skeptical. . . ."

Even though that was a good step towards trust it wasn't, it was only one step. Water users, in particular Family Farm Alliance, and Northern [Colorado Water Conservancy District], and others, they were, they were basically skeptical. It was sort of a wait and see, to some degree.

"They believed that we . . . didn't have the wherewithal to make hard choices, and one of their hard choices was, if they didn't see a reduction in personnel, and the number was thrown around of 300 or whatever, that, that basically that was a sign that we couldn't manage. . . ."

They believed that we basically didn't have the wherewithal to make hard choices, and one of their hard choices was, if they didn't see a reduction in personnel, and the number was thrown around of 300 or whatever, that, that basically that was a sign that we couldn't manage. We ~~had some, we had, we~~ had some hard discussions about that issue and I know that in one discussion with Family Farm Alliance, in our public setting there, and basically it was Family

Farm and some others in a room with some Reclamation folks, but I told them point blank, "Look, it is inappropriate for me as a leader here to agree to a reduction when I don't have any data. There's nothing to support that yet. Now, when we go through these studies and we go through this analysis and it points to a reduction, then I'll be the first one to support it and to say that that's what we need to do. But not, not as a precondition. Absolutely not." And so *finally*, they understood that, "Look, okay, we will," and I think at the time reluctantly agreed to, "we will go through this and we'll, we'll see at the end." We did go through it, and I think, I think at the end there probably was, there was some, I think some organizational changes in TSC and I think they had already identified some places where they needed to shift positions, and I think there were some reductions eventually and so forth.

". . . the point was is that you really shouldn't . . . have a precondition like that . . . without the data, and without the knowledge, and without understanding what's going on. . . ."

But the point was is that you really shouldn't, you really shouldn't have a precondition like that without, without the data, and without the knowledge, and without understanding what's going on. And so, I think we did the *very* right thing in that. And so that sort of started, that was at the very first, one of the very first meetings that we had with, with the customers, and so I think that that helped set the tone that we were, we were going to go through the analysis and then we were going to make decisions, and we're going to base

it on the analysis not on, not on preconditions. That was a very, I think a very important point. As we went along, and we did, we had a lot of analyses, a lot of data, a lot of explanation.

"One of the things we found was . . . Reclamation had not done any training of its people to tell them how Reclamation worked in the finances . . . And, because Reclamation didn't know the customers didn't know either. . . ."

One of the things we found was is that basically Reclamation had not done any training of its people to tell them how Reclamation worked in the finances, in the billing, in how costs were distributed, and how the TSC costs worked, and any of that. And, because Reclamation didn't know the customers didn't know either. We presented PowerPoint after PowerPoint on how things worked, and where issues where we would point to certain organizations about, "When you get this on your bill, this is who does that, or this is what that cost means." And, it was, it was really enlightening *to me* that Reclamation folks didn't really understand it to that depth, and that the customers didn't understand it to that depth, *at all*.

". . . these discussions that we had throughout M4E was extremely helpful, both to us as leaders so that we knew . . . what to focus on in changing knowledge and interaction with customers within Reclamation, and then also what the customers needed to know. . . ."

And so, these discussions that we had throughout M4E was extremely helpful, both to us

as leaders so that we knew how to, what to focus on in changing knowledge and interaction with customers within Reclamation, and then also what the customers needed to know. They were, I think they were surprised at some of the stuff that came out that they didn't understand, that they didn't know, and so forth. And so we *tackled*, point by point, those issues, and I think that, that every step, every meeting, everything that we did we continually had communication with them, [and] so forth, every step of the way, [that] really helped solidify a better relationship. And, and I think today there, there is an enjoyment of a much, much, much closer relationship and a candid one, and an open one, with the customers all across, power and water users, you know, all across the West. And so, you know, I think it was absolutely a good thing.

"I'm *really* glad Reclamation went through it [M4E]. And, I have to say though that, you know, Reclamation is one of the few government agencies that goes *through* this every few years. If you look at the history, they were going through it back in the '20s. . . ."

I'm *really* glad Reclamation went through it. And, I have to say though that, you know, Reclamation is one of the few government agencies that goes *through* this every few years. If you look at the history, they were going through it back in the '20s. I think we pulled up an old newspaper article or something that had this *same* kind of a thing in it with the *same* issues. And so, you know, you point to Reclamation's over 100-year history and about every fifteen or twenty

years we seem to adjust ourselves to what's going on with the economy, and the country, and our customers, and that's necessary. And I think that, I think that people should not get nervous about these things. I think that they ought to recognize that that's the way, that's the way Reclamation is built. That's *exactly* what we need to be doing and I think that it, I think that it was really helpful. I know that there's a ton of things to be implemented, just a lot of them, but I think that as these get implemented, Reclamation and the water and power users will be much, much better for it. [Recording paused]

On Arriving in Loveland the Office Was Faced with Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District Wanting to Take Title to the Colorado-Big Thompson Project

If we pick up about the time that I was in Loveland, Colorado, as the deputy, the area manager there was Jack Garner, one of the things that happened there was that right after I was transferred down there and showed up on a job there was a move by the Northern [Colorado] Conservancy District to basically take over title of the project, and which meant that the 120 people or so that we, positions that we had there, including, including my own and Jack's was, would be abolished and that everything would be transferred to Northern. That was the proposal.

"That was in line with sort of a big push for transferring title of facilities that was happening back, back in the '90s. And, as we worked through that it ended up that Northern finally backed away .

. . ."

That was in line with sort of a big push for transferring title of facilities that was happening back, back in the '90s. And, as we worked through that it ended up that Northern finally backed away from that and decided that they didn't want to do that. But, that was one of the examples about the title transfer. And, and Jack and I worked feverishly on that, with Northern, with others, to try to figure out what was the appropriate thing to do, along with Neil Stessman, who was regional director at the time too, and had lots of meetings, and very useful meetings. And I learned a lot out of that, and I think both parties did.

"I was there [in Loveland] about a little over a year and the area manager job for Oklahoma/Texas came up and I was transferred down to it. . . ."

But right after that, I was there about a little over a year and the area manager job for Oklahoma/Texas came up and I was transferred down to it.

Transferred the Area Manager's Job from Oklahoma City to Austin, Texas

And, at the time the area manager's job was in Oklahoma City, but most of the big issues were actually in Texas, I think. If I remember right we had about ten *huge* issues that kept reaching the commissioner and secretary's desk, and about nine of them, I think, were in Texas. So, as Neil and I talked about me going down there, we decided that, that the better place for the area manager to be was in Texas. And so, when I moved down there

that's where I moved the office, to–now the office in Austin was much smaller. It only had, I think, around eight people or something. Something like that. The office in Oklahoma City was bigger. It had, I don't know, twenty-eight or thirty people. So, so you know, quite a discrepancy in people. But, we had to make it work, and so we did. The issues were varied.

Storey: Excuse me. Before you go on, what happened to the staff? You said twenty-some in (Todd: Oh.) Oklahoma City.

Todd: We didn't transfer anybody. All we did was transfer the location of the area manager's office.

". . . the *staff* remained the same in Oklahoma City . . . The staff in Austin remained the same . . . so, basically we left them the same. . . ."

So, the *staff* remained the same in Oklahoma City, because they needed to take care of things and there was a lot of technical staff there. The staff in Austin remained the same, because there was a lot of tech, there was, not technical, well a few technical, but they were handling technical issues in Texas. And so, basically we left them the same. We had lots of communications with, by telephone.

". . . I was traveling to both places a tremendous amount, making things work, but going to a lot of different meetings trying to handle these issues. . . ."

I made, I was on, I was traveling to both places a

tremendous amount, making things work, but going to a lot of different meetings trying to handle these issues. And so, so we made it work. It was a little bit separated, as you might expect, but I think that, I think overall it was good that we did that. But, the issues themselves were varied.

". . . deep-well injection issue over at Lake Meredith . . . an environmental issue in southern Texas . . . which was a wetland and a coastal issue, a fresh water issue that was really a biological issue we had to do. We had a contract issue that was several million dollars of a nonpayment . . . We had a Caddo Lake issue that was going on that wasn't even in Reclamation's authority . . . and so forth. . . . they were just sort of *all* over the place. "

We had a deep-well injection issue over at Lake Meredith, in between New Mexico and Texas. We had an environmental issue in southern Texas . . . which was a wetland and a coastal issue, a fresh water issue that was really a biological issue we had to do. We had a contract issue that was several million dollars of a nonpayment issue that, of a project. We had a Caddo Lake issue that was going on that wasn't even in Reclamation's authority, but there were commitments made about how we needed to help the Caddo Lake thing, which was in eastern Texas, and so forth. So, they were just sort of *all* over the place. And as we worked those issues our focus was to really get to the solution. Oh, we had a safety of dams issue over in Central Texas that was a huge, big issue. And so it, you know, it was a lot of things.

". . . my tenure there was about a year and a half,

but in the year and a half . . . we really focused on what the solution would be and then we carried those things out. And to, I think, all of our surprise there were many of these issues that got solved or resolved, or well on their way to getting resolved. . . .”

And so, my tenure there was about a year and a half, but in the year and a half I think that we and the staff we, we really focused on what the solution would be and then we carried those things out. And to, I think, all of our surprise there were many of these issues that got solved or resolved, or well on their way to getting resolved. And so, and so I think that that was, that was it.

Title Transfer for Palmetto Bend

Now, a couple of issues that came up, one of them was a title transfer issue that surfaced not so much when I was, well a little bit, I guess, when I was down there, but more after I left, but it had to do with Palmetto Bend and the title transfer there.

“. . . title transfer issues were really going big in the West and . . . Reclamation had developed a, basically a data sheet that needed to have the kind of data together before . . . we would look at a title transfer, and users had to pay costs for doing this and so forth, and so there was lots of problems with all of that. . . .”

At the time the title transfer issues were really going big in the West and we had, Reclamation had developed a, basically a data sheet that needed to have the kind of data together before, you know,

we would look at a title transfer, and users had to pay costs for doing this and so forth, and so there was lots of problems with all of that. But in essence, I think, as we said during the M4E effort there was a lot of title transfers. There was, I don't know, over twenty, I think, title transfers of different makes and kinds that we did, and eventually the Palmetto Bend had a title transfer too.

Transferred as Area Manager in North Dakota, but Never Actually Went to the Job

When I left there, Neil Stessman, the regional director at the time, had, he was looking for a area manager for North Dakota, and he had asked me if I would go up there. And, and I told him that I would, that I would do that, and that was in the fall of '95.

Served as Liaison to the Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Rather than Going to the North Dakota Area Office

And during, in that same time they were also looking for a liaison to [Assistant Secretary for] Water and Science. Patty Beneke had been named acting in there and Steve Magnussen had moved upstairs and, I think, was acting commissioner at the time, and he *was* the liaison. And so it, they were looking for somebody who could fill that spot. And so, as I told Neil that I would go to North Dakota, this other opportunity came up. And so, well it was kind of interesting. I'm not sure if this has happened to anybody else, but I was named the area manager in North Dakota, and then

about a week later I was named that I was going to go back and serve for a temporary time, one-year time, in Washington, D.C., as liaison to Water and Science.

". . . then the deputy regional director position opened up . . . in Billings, and so I ended up getting *that* position and basically never showing up in Bismark . . ."

My, we sold our home. Our furniture went to North Dakota, and it was stored there while we were in Washington D.C., and they named Denny Breitzman as the acting area manager. Through that year then the deputy regional director position opened up, some few months before my year was up, in Billings, and so I ended up getting *that* position and basically never showing up in Bismark as the area manager. And then Denny got the area manager's job. So, some of the personnel and I joke all the time about me never showing up, or an area manager who (Laugh) (Storey: Uhm-hmm.) never showed up for work, or whatever. So it, it was kind of interesting. My furniture stayed there a year but I didn't. So, that was kind of interesting.

". . . what I learned through the different jobs that I've had, and especially with Water and Science was tremendous. I mean these, these positions of, of leadership, whether you're deputy area manager, area manager, liaison, whether you're on the senior management team, the focus that you have to have between the technical side of the house and the political side of the house just becomes more extreme . . . the further you go up

the ladder, and you have to make that work. . . ."

Now, what I learned through the different jobs that I've had, and especially with Water and Science was tremendous. I mean these, these positions of, of leadership, whether you're deputy area manager, area manager, liaison, whether you're on the senior management team, the focus that you have to have between the technical side of the house and the political side of the house just becomes more extreme as, the further you go up the ladder, and you have to make that work. You have to realize that you are sort of in the middle of both sides of that, and that is your job is to be the bridge across those things and to make them work.

Sometimes Technically Feasible Projects Aren't Feasible Politically and Vice Versa

Sometimes the political things do not sound doable, technically, and sometimes they're not, sometimes the technical positions just do not seem doable politically, and sometimes they're not. And so, through all these jobs and through the issues, the ten or so that we had down in Texas, and the ones we had in Loveland, and through my experience through all these different positions, that's been the big deal, to really understand that that's what you have to know and that's what your job is.

After about a Year in Billings as Deputy Regional Director, He Became Acting Regional Director for about a Year

When I went to, to deputy regional director in Billings, I went there at the end of ~~'97, at the end of~~ '96, basically '97, beginning of '97, and worked for Neil there for about a year and then I think at the end of that year, or in January of the next year, he went to Denver and I became the acting regional director there for the next year, basically.

Two Major Issues While in Billings Were Title Transfer and the Nonpayment of Several Million Dollars on a Repayment Contract, Both at Palmetto Bend

Through that tenure there, whether I was deputy or not, two issues that sort of boiled up there from the Texas was the title transfer of Palmetto Bend, and the contract issue, the, several million dollars of what we called "nonpayment" came up.

Storey: And that was on what project?

Todd: Palmetto Bend.

Storey: Oh, it was on Palmetto Bend?

Todd: It was on Palmetto Bend, both issues. The title transfer issue was becoming a real problem because we had a manager of the Palmetto Bend Project that *used* to be a Reclamation employee and was *tenacious* about getting this thing transferred. And, and the area manager, Liz Harrison at the time, was trying to do the right thing. We ended up with bringing, I think, Jack Garner down there to sort of help out. He, at the time, was the leader of the Reclamationwide title

transfer effort, and to, you know, to try to figure out what, what all we needed to do down there. Eventually, what happened was is that we ended up with a title transfer that went to Congress and the thing was transferred. At issue, though, was how much was the payment going to be to the government. Not that the title transfer should or shouldn't occur, but how much was the real payment going to be? And so, so that finally got worked out and we got, but those title transfer issues were big deals.

Middle Loup Irrigation District Title Transfer Issues in Nebraska

The other title transfer issue, before I get to the non-contract issue, but, or the payment issue, but the other title transfer issue that came up while I was deputy was the one of Middle Loup [Division of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program], the irrigation district.

That was an off-stream storage project in Nebraska and they, *they* wanted full title transfer, and we worked through that really a lot. And, Tom Knudson, who was manager up there, and I, and our staffs, and the project offices really, really worked tirelessly trying to work out all the details. And, quite frankly, we were supportive of, of it, but the details of trying to work out all the different things that were necessary, for instance who, who stood liability, and how you dealt with, you know, dam safety, or how you dealt with, you know, some of the contracts that we had with the state game and fish, and different things. I mean, archaeology and all that stuff, all those things

were details that would come up to me. But, we finally got that one through and that went through Congress and was approved after I had left. But, we did really a lot of good work on that while I was there. So, those were big issues on title transfer that was happening in our region at the time.

". . . Palmetto Bend and the contract issue. You know, you might think it's easy to just say, 'Well look, if it's in the contract that's what it is. If it's not, that's what it is.' But, what was happening was is that we were looking at one view of the contract. They were looking at another. . . ."

The other issue though was the Palmetto Bend and the contract issue. You know, you might think it's easy to just say, "Well look, if it's in the contract that's what it is. If it's not, that's what it is." But, what was happening was is that we were looking at one view of the contract. They were looking at another.

Making the Issues Clear at Palmetto Bend

And, as they were working with their congressional people, all sorts of topics would be interwoven in the discussion, and it was extremely difficult to sort out as to what the issues were. So, when I got the deputy job in the region, and since I was area manager in Texas, I became the lead to work with the Palmetto Bend people on this contract issue, and what we found was this. What the solution was is that we had several technical meetings to talk about technical issues about what was going on, what the actual

payments were, you know, where things ended up, what the, where the records were, all that kind of stuff. And so, we went through that. And, what I ended up doing eventually as the acting regional director was signing a decision document that isolated each issue, and then our response to that issue. Our, what the problem was that our letters back to them was as convoluted and mixed up and wasn't as clear as they needed to be either. So, we focused on isolating the issue, isolating the authority, saying what we could and couldn't do, and then saying what the decision was, and then here was the background and here's kind of the description. So, we would make it extremely clear as to where we were, what we were doing. And, as I recall there was at least a half a dozen issues in there that we did that way. They, the Palmetto Bend people, they liked what we were doing. They didn't like the outcome because the outcome didn't favor them, but at *least* it was clear, and they appealed that decision to the secretary of interior and . . .

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. JANUARY 28, 2009.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. JANUARY 28, 2009.

Storey: This is tape two of an interview by Brit Storey with Larry Todd on January 28th, 2009.

The secretary went through the document?

"the department . . . upheld every decision, but their feedback to me was that that was the clearest document that they ever had to make a decision on. . . ."

Todd: As the Secretary's staff, the department, went through that they basically upheld every, well they did, they upheld every decision, but their feedback to me was that that was the clearest document that they ever had to make a decision on. They could tell right where things was. And so, I think that we did a really good job on that, even though it didn't, didn't pan out to [the advantage of] Palmetto Bend. After that, Palmetto Bend eventually got the title transfer through, and so that project is now private. [Recording paused]

Maryanne Bach Was Appointed Regional Director and He Was Moved in 2000 to Be Acting Director of Operations in Washington, D.C.

After the, I was acting regional director in that fall, October-November time frame, Maryanne Bach was named as the regional director, and they were, Steve Magnussen in Washington, who was director of operations had been transferred to out West as the deputy, what we call "deputy west," in other words deputy of operations west. And so, he had a small staff in Denver, but I think he was actually located in Phoenix where he would have kind of a virtual office in Denver, and so we were trying out some new, some new things there I think. Anyway, they were looking for an acting and for back in D.C. And so, it was right after the first of the year, I think, in January, and Eluid had called me. We were at a conference, I think, maybe even "four states," and Eluid had called me and asked me if I would come back as the acting operations director, and I accepted that. So, we went back

there in February of that year and . . .

Storey: "That year" being?

Finishing up an Election Year as Director of Operations

Todd: Being the year 2000, February of 2000. There were several changes back in the department, as you might imagine, during that year, because that was an election year, and there were a lot of things to be sort of finished up on the administration watch and there was a lot of focus on those things. I know the secretary's office had several Reclamation issues that they were dealing with in the West trying to focus up on. There were several that were coming up in my capacity.

Working on NAWS, the Northwest Area Water Supply Project and Issues with Canada

One of them I remember very specifically was one of the issues that were in our, was in the region too and that was the Northwest water line, pipeline, to, they called is "NAWS," –N-A-W-S, in North Dakota, and it went from the Missouri River up to Minot, to their treatment plant up there. And so, the issue there was that there needed to be a secretarial order saying that all of the environmental considerations were met, and so forth, and that the treaty, of the treaty between us and Canada had been met since that water was going to go into the drainage that (Storey: Hudson Bay?) ended up into Canada. And so, we worked on that with the State Department and I think the thing about that was when I was the

acting regional director we had some meetings with a committee with Canada that I was on, it was a subcommittee, and there was, over the last ten years there were a lot of studies done, and data gathered, and all sorts of things about what the environmental effects might be, what the condition of the water was, what, you know, what would be the risk of transferring organisms over to the other watershed, and all sorts of things. So that was, that was a huge deal. Well, I was the chairman of that committee in order to try to *move* things after that many years. During one of these meetings I got up with a flip chart and said, "Look, how about if we do this, you know. Let's write a letter to our bigger committee and say, 'Look, we've discussed these things. These are things we agree on. These are things that we haven't sorted out." And, the committee co-chair for Canada and the group agreed with that, which was to my surprise. But anyway, we did that. And so, that issue went up to Washington to the larger committee and then as it did I went up as the operations director, and so I worked on that issue through that year too.

Selected as Operations Director and Mike Gabaldon Was Selected as Deputy Director

Now, there were other issues, California issues, other things that came up during that year. At the end of that year I applied for and got the position of operations director and Mike Gabaldon was selected as the deputy operations director, and so he came, I think it was after the first of the year, and I was already there in place. And so, so that's how I ended up in Washington

for a while, and was there through the transition, through the Klamath thing, through when new Commissioner John Keys was sworn in, and 9/11, and so forth.

Storey: Right. Okay. Anything else you'd like to talk about?

Todd: I don't think so.

Storey: Okay. Let me ask then if you're willing for the information on these tapes and the resulting transcripts to be used by researchers both inside and outside Reclamation?

Todd: Sure. Absolutely.

Storey: Great. Thank you.

END SIDE 1, TAPE 2. JANUARY 28, 2009.
END OF INTERVIEWS.

Appendix I: *Centerline* Retirement Announcement

RECLAMATION
Managing Water in the West

The *Centerline*

Retirement Supplement - Spring 2008

From December 2007 to May 2, 2008, 91 Denver Office employees retired. These employees had a total of more than 2,000 years of experience with the Federal government. The following employees submitted information about their Federal careers and retirement plans.

Joy Balding

Joy Balding, Value Engineering Assistant, is retiring from the Estimating, Specifications, and Construction Management Group after more than 30 years of service with Reclamation. Throughout her Federal career, Joy has personified professionalism in all that she does, working diligently, tirelessly, and holding her co-workers to high standards of performance that should make any taxpayer satisfied in their investment.

After beginning her career with Reclamation in typing pool, Joy held a series of increasingly responsible positions, including secretary/stenographer, Technical Information Assistant, Editorial Assistant, Budget Assistant, and her current position. Throughout her varied career, Joy answered public inquiries for information, published the Advanced Construction and Advanced Equipment Bulletins, coordinated volunteer tour guides for Reclamation's research laboratories, and arranged technical update lectures. She received numerous awards for her quality work over the years, and her hard work, enthusiasm, and energy will be missed.

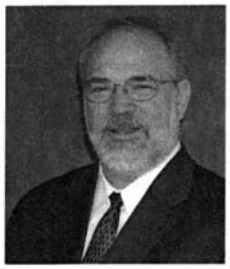
In retirement, Joy plans to continue her walking and other exercise programs. She has been active in her church food box program and plans to continue with this and other volunteer activities, as well as spend time with her family–her son Brad and twin grandchildren, both high school students.

Joy says, "I have enjoyed working for the Bureau and with the many people I've met here over the years."

Spring 2008

Mary Tjarks

Mary Tjarks retired January 3. She worked for the Forest Service for 23 years before transferring to Reclamation in March 2001, where she was an accountant in the Business Analysis Division, Financial Policy, Compliance and Audit Group. Mary was responsible for writing Reclamation accounting policy and procedures. She worked on the 5-year land reconciliation effort, and she was deeply involved the last 3 years in the $2-billion receivable reconciliation effort with Western Area Power Administration. During retirement, Mary and her husband, Myron, plan to spend a lot of time with their three sons, Mike, Scott, and Mark, and four grandchildren. Mary said that she learned a long time ago not to live today as if it were practice for tomorrow, but there is nothing wrong with living for the weekend.



Larry Todd

Larry L. Todd, Deputy Commissioner, Policy, Administration and Budget, retired March 3. Prior to being named Deputy Commissioner, he was Director of Safety, Security, and Law Enforcement for nearly 4 years. His experience spans more than 30 years of Government service in various land management, reservoir design and construction, and policy and management analysis positions held in Washington, DC, Montana, Texas, and Colorado.

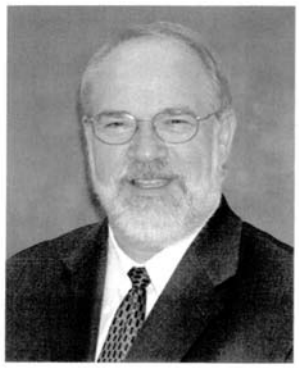
Russell Troutman

Russell Troutman, Construction Representative with the Construction Management Group, has retired after 32 years with Reclamation. Russ worked on numerous projects over his long career, including restoration and decontamination of Water Island in the U.S. Virgin Islands. His most memorable project was New Waddell Dam, where 15 million yards of soil were moved into the embankment.

Russ's plans for retirement include finishing his house and traveling to visit the many friends he's made over the years.

His family includes his wife, Mollie, 5 children, 12 grandchildren, and 8 great-grandchildren.

Appendix II: Denver On-Line Retirement Announcement



Larry L. Todd was named Deputy Commissioner, Policy, Administration and Budget, January 3, 2006. Todd has more than 30 years of government service in various land management, reservoir design and construction, and policy and management analysis positions held in Washington, DC, Montana, Texas, and Colorado.

RESCHEDULED

It is time to bid Adieu to Larry Todd

Larry has announced his retirement effective March 3, 2008.
Please join the masses in celebration of his Government service.

Monday, February 25, 2008

Denver Federal Center

6th and Kipling

Denver, Colorado

Building 67, Rio Grande Room

1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Please come forward during the "Open Mic" if you have a story to tell or presentation to make.