

CAP Oral History

Pam Stevenson (Q):

Today is Wednesday, December 3, 2003, and I'm Pam Stevenson and we're here in Loma Creek, California to do an interview with Wes Steiner about the Central Arizona Project and water in Arizona and in California. Why don't you give me your full name so we have that on tape?

Wes Steiner (A):

My full name is Wesley Elwood Steiner.

Q: Tell me when and where you were born.

A: I was born in Monrovia, California, on January 23, 1922.

Q: Why don't you give me just a little background where you grew up in Monrovia, where you went to school and your education?

A: My father was a school teacher in Monrovia, California. He started out teaching agriculture with a class at each of the grammar schools and rather substantial garden at the local high school, which serviced not only Monrovia but Arcadia and Duarte. I went through the grammar school that was only a few blocks from the house and in those days it was safe for us kids to walk to school and back home for lunch and then go back to school. After grammar school and through the 6th grade, there was an intermediate school for grades 7th and 8th and then I was in high school. My father was, by that time, the agriculture program, the population had taken over most of the agriculture in that part of California and he had converted from teaching agriculture to teaching geometry and algebra and business mathematics. Anyway, I went four years to the high school my father taught in and I graduated from high school in 1940 and went for one year to Pasadena Junior College, thinking I wanted to major in chemistry and after a year of that, I decided no, I don't want to major in chemistry. And I don't know what I, I

really don't know what I wanted to do. At that time, they were seeking, this is 1941, there was quite a market for aircraft and ship building and jobs. And I went to work for Lockheed Aircraft building wing sections for the P-38 fighters for better than a year maybe, closer to a year and a half. And a friend of mine who had done something similar to that said to me, he says, "Elwood let's go out to Berkeley and get into one of the military college programs." And I said fine. I gave up my, if I stayed at Lockheed, I probably would've spent the whole war there building airplane wings, helping build airplane wings. But I did go, I quit because of my eyes. I couldn't get in to any one of the college programs, service-orientated programs. After about six weeks I guess I withdrew and enlisted in the Air Force with the idea of getting into, and requested that I be assigned to weather making, not weather making but the weather bureau part of it, of the military.

Q: Predicting?

A: Yes, predicting the weather, thank you.

Q: If your eyes weren't good enough for the college program, how could the eyes be good enough for the service?

A: You tell me. I don't know. There was no question though that they were going to accept me if I didn't get into that program. I wasn't really trying to stay out. I went in and they assigned me to Ft. MacArthur down near on the coast by Los Angeles and went immediately to the other extreme of our nation to basic training on the boardwalk of Atlantic City in December in the middle of winter with the raw ocean wind coming from that raw ocean. Boy, we had to serve guard duty once a week, something like that, out at night on those boardwalks. It was brutal for us Southern California boys. Anyway, they ended up sending me to radio school in downtown Kansas City, the Midland Radio School. And from there to radar school in West Palm Beach, Florida, just outside of West Palm Beach, Florida. And I received training on how to repair the first radar sets that were built for the Army and were being used in Africa. And I was never in my whole life, I never won any

money at prizes, or anything, any big items, but I was lucky through my whole life in many respects. And the experience I had in radar school brought that clearly to my mind. And it followed me, that kind of luck, followed me through the rest of my life. The problem in radar school was that the first thing that General Rommel and the Germans tried to knock out was the radar stations. And the mortality rate of radar operators and repairmen was extremely high. So the people that were sleeping in the bunks next to you or in the classroom sitting in the seats next to you would be there one day and gone another day. And that's where they went, they went to North Africa.

With me, I graduated from the course and they decided that I ought to go to college. With my father as a school teacher, I learned good study habits early in life and so I was always at the top of any of the Army classes that they asked me to take. I spent almost a year living in a hotel in downtown Brooklyn and marching to class at Brooklyn Polytechnic, through the streets of Brooklyn. I didn't feel that the education that I was getting there was going to be accepted as college education when, if, I did live through the war and went back to college that it wouldn't count for anything and I was really wasting my time so I tried to get out. Well, because the rank of the Army officer that was associated with those in those classes depended on how many students he had, you couldn't get out. But the whole program collapsed just about the time that year...the profession would've expired. Again, I was one of the lucky ones. Most of the people that came out of that class were sent right to Europe in the infantry. Alright, they sent me back because of the record I had going through the other electronic courses, they sent me back to Ft. Monmouth in Red Bank, New Jersey, to take fixed transmitter repair courses which I did. And then was sent, and it was a team, to relieve troops or repairmen that had...I'm sorry they sent us over, they were sending us over to China to provide fixed station transmitter stations for the air bases that we had, the United States had, in China in the Chongqing area. As we were flying, being flown, overseas, the Japanese captured those bases, so when we got to India, they didn't know what to do with us. They ended up, we sat in the replacement camp for a month or so, and they ended up relieving a crew up near the Shan province,

up near the border was Burma and where a major air base was located for the flights for flying the hump. And they sent us up there to relieve guys that had been there for three years. On the way up, we saw a train load of "Merrill's Marauders" troops coming out of Burma on their way home. The railroad tracks that ran between Calcutta, Chabua, and Ledo, where most of the way where single track and so you'd have to go on a side track and let the train coming the other way go by and they'd usually stop because you had to stop for water, only a few places that had water. So we got a real close look at these guys. And I'm telling you, boy were they tough, all young and they'd really been through hell. A very difficult assignment for them, I'm sure.

Anyway, the Japanese had actually at one point, a few months before we got up there, they had gotten barely into India and then were driven back by these young men. And they were retreating then back into China. So I got through the war and back home without actually having anybody shoot at me. So when I got back, I went back to Pasadena Junior College. I started all over with a general engineering thinking I would go into electrical engineering and then I got married to Odanah in 1948. We then went up to Cal where she worked on campus for Clark Kerr, who died just this last weekend, a wonderful man. And she helped put me through and Uncle Sam put me through those two years that I spend at Cal.

Q: What was your major?

A: My major, well I started off as electrical and I decided well Odanah's father was a building contractor building commercial buildings primarily, homes once in a while, a lot of gas stations, and this sort of thing. And I was planning then on coming back and helping him out and taking over the business. Well, my younger brother who had been in the Navy's college program and got most of his education, college education, that way, was just graduating from Cal when I went up there and he was going to go down and go to work and did go down and go to work for Odanah's father. Well, things didn't work out too well on that end so after, well that was the reason then that I, plus the fact that I liked my civil

engineering courses better than I did the electrical courses, I decided to switch to civil engineering.

I ended up graduating a structures major of civil engineering, got my bachelor's degree. A couple of years before at a neighbor's wedding, I had met a fellow that was working, was a college roommate of the groom, and was working for the division of water resources in Sacramento. And I asked him what he did and it just sounded so fascinating that I got in touch with him before I graduated to see if there were any job openings in water resources because I'd always been interested in water. He made an appointment for me to meet with some of the managers of the department, officials of the department, and they received me with open arms and promised me a job. They wanted me to take over the inspection of...there were a whole bunch of dams – small earthen dams – that were being built up on the Yuba and Bear rivers in California and they needed a replacement to inspect the construction of those dams, but the state wasn't building them. They were being built by private interests. And that sounded terrific to me. And I said I'll be back, I said I would like to have one week after graduation to go down to Southern California to introduce our new son who was born two or three months before I graduated to his grandparents. And they said fine.

Well, when I returned a week later with all my fishing gear and all in proper order, they said well we decided we couldn't wait. Well, I'm sorry when I got back to the university one of my good friends, Gordon Douglas, says how'd it go and I told him all about it and he said gee that sounds great. He says I'm going to go up and see if I can get a job. Well, to shorten the story, they gave him that job and they sent me right back to the university to work for one of the professors there on the development of part of the California state water plan. We had given up our apartment in the housing project in Richmond and had a dickens of a time then finding a place to stay. When the professor got recalled by the Navy to go to Korea during the Korean War, I worked for him at the most for about three months, when the job, he had to leave, and the job was transferred to Sacramento. So I helped in my career with the department, I started off working on the water

requirements present and future for the San Francisco Bay area. This was followed by a couple of years working on investigating the practicability of a bunch of barriers that had been recommended by somebody called and his last name was Reber the so called Reber Plan, and there was Weber Plan, and there was a whole bunch of plans to fill in most of San Francisco Bay to get additional high priced lands, high valued lands. Then I, well about that time, in 1956, it was 1951 when I went to work for the department, in 1956 in addition to being in charge of what they called "the coordinated state of planning," which was really the start of adding the elements of time and economics to the state water plan. The state water plan was developed on the basis of developing everything and without irrespective of what it cost and a timescale. In other words, over time the cheapest things first. And to meet whatever demands were projected for on time.

Q: Your first job out of college then was...

A: Was what is now the Department of Water Resources in California.

Q: What was your first title there?

A: My first title there was junior civil engineer. That's the first level when you have a college degree. There's some levels underneath that, but that was the first level and then there's a whole string of them. And I think assistant and associate level who had to be registered and the senior engineer was the next higher stage. And I think that's where it was, I think it was probably eight senior supervisors. And you had to spend at least two years at each of these levels. And I went up just as fast, in two years I went up.

Q: This was all in Sacramento?

A: This was all in Sacramento. Well, at that time they had an office in Los Angeles, too, which was a much smaller office. But everybody else was in Sacramento. In 1956, mid '56, I was given in addition to my planning activities, I was given the task

of becoming the department's expert on Colorado River matters. The state, there was a separate organization (not part of the department), a state government organization in Southern California called The Colorado River Board of California that had a commission that was ran by or formed by representatives of each of the agencies, agricultural and municipal agencies, that received water or had water rights in the Colorado River. And it was funded, not popularly known although it couldn't be secret, it was funded 50% by those agencies and 50% by the state, but it still had the muscle of being a state agency.

They were the agency then when Arizona sued California too. When Congress refused to authorize the Central Arizona Project until Arizona could demonstrate that they had water rights to the Colorado, and of course Southern California opposed them of any claim that Arizona made to water to what they weren't already using out of the river, along the river for agriculture. They opposed it because that water, or most of that water at least, would have to come out of what California was taking out of the river even though it was far in excess of what California's rights to the Colorado River water were under the various legislative pieces that are popularly called "The Law of the River" on the Colorado.

And the Congress in effect forced Arizona then to sue California in the Supreme Court of the United States in the so-called "Arizona vs. California." And my task then, as a Northern Californian, the Attorney General's office and the Colorado River Board of California were providing the staff to prepare and present California's case. The department decided they needed somebody to become an expert on the Colorado and to go down and help them prepare in that case. So that became my job, and that was probably the most fortunate thing that ever happened to me in my career because the Colorado River has, from the time white man first came from the West, has become the most contentious body of water in the country, maybe in the world. And there's something going on all the time.

Q: Did you know anything about the Colorado River at that point? When they asked you to become the expert?

A: Anything besides knowing it was over there? No. They gave me a couple of weeks before I went down there to get mixed up with the lawyers and in fact they had hired Mike Ely who had been an Assistant Secretary of the Interior, a brilliant attorney and debater, and completely familiar with the Supreme Court Justices, they had hired him to lead the case for California. I was sent down there to help them prepare their case.

Q: And this was the suit that led...

A: This was the suit that Arizona needed to demonstrate to the Congress that they would have the water supply to make the Central Arizona Project viable. So California's interests had successfully obstructed any previous efforts from Arizona to do that. I didn't know that at the time. I went through, as an engineer, and read "The Law of the River" and I had made water supply studies before. Anyway, my job really for them was to make studies of the probable water supply that would be average annual water supply that would be available in the Colorado River for division between the three lower basin states: Nevada, California, and Arizona. As the upper basin continued to develop its entitlement to waters of the Colorado River, none of these states under the Colorado River Compact or any other pieces of legislation that came along after that, have a right to withhold water, withhold use of any water that they can't use that they are entitled to but cannot use. They haven't developed to the point where they can use it. So California who maintained that they had a right of 4.4 million acre-feet (AF) were actually using and that wasn't something that they were guaranteed to have once the upper basin put all their water to use. They got out of the first 7 ½ million AF that were available in the lower basin, California would get 4.4 million AF and Arizona 2.8 million AF a year.

Q: Tell me a little background. Who was the governor of California at that time?

A: The governor was Pat Brown. He's the governor who seized the moment. And by that, I'm referring to the fact that California had an enormous flood that originated in the Sacramento Valley and primarily on the Feather River. Governor Brown and the department then proposed the development of the state water project which would take water from Northern California all the way to San Diego to the bay area and dropping it off all the way down to San Diego. And in '56 got the people of the State of California to approve an enormous, I don't remember the amount, an enormous bond issue to finance this project.

Q: Did California really think at that time that they needed all that Colorado River water?

A: They were using it. They were using it. Part of the problem, Pam, is that the early rights on the Colorado River, the early rights in California belonged to the agriculture districts in the Imperial, Coachella, and Palo Verde valleys. They had rights within that 4.4 million. They had rights to all but 550,000 AF and that 550,000 AF went to the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. But they were using, well they had the capacity in the facility that they built to divert a lot of surplus water, the water that others weren't using. You couldn't deny them the right to use what you weren't using, see. But that sets it up so that they, then here is California, at this position in time when the fight was going on, California had 47 or 48 Congressman and representatives, you see. And Arizona had two. That's not a fair fight. You can't get anything through the House of Representatives when you got that kind of a situation. You can't get through against the wishes of the people who have that kind of influence.

Q: Was California, were they seriously worried about little Arizona? Did they think Arizona was a pest? Or were they seriously concerned, like you say, they had all the political power?

A: See, they didn't have the power to keep them out of the court and Arizona went to court. And the court ruled in favor of Arizona. I had the privilege, you're not

supposed to be able to sit before, I don't know whether they call it the bar or anyway, in the Supreme Court of the United States, the justices sit behind a great big desk thing and a podium. And the attorneys presenting the case sit down in sort of a well and there's a railing that runs across there and only the attorneys who have been issued a license to practice before the court are supposed to be in front of that railing. Well, because I had prepared some of this testimony Mike Ely wanted me sitting down there with him. He made all of the presentations, entire presentations, for California. And he wanted me there so he could question me if necessary. It didn't happen.

Q: You were his back up kind of.

A: I was one of the people, there was a few people there backing him up and I was one of those back up people.

Q: Do you remember who was representing Arizona?

A: Mark Wilmer was representing Arizona. And as I sat there and listened to the questions that the judges asked and the presentations that Ely made and the presentations that Mark Wilmer made, it became pretty obvious to me that California didn't have a case, that clearly Arizona was right. And the only reason that they had to come here and sue was it...was that 47 to 2 thing. It was political muscle that was keeping them from getting what was rightfully theirs. When the court handed down its decision in favor of Arizona, Governor Pat Brown said California is not going to attempt to win by obstruction what we lost in court. And you could hear the water people, in Sacramento, you could hear them almost saying, "Oh yeah?" They just doubled their efforts to obstruct. When the decision came down then as I indicated, Pat made it clear what his position was and he talked to Senator Hayden. He asked me to go back, or asked the department to send me back, to work with Senator Hayden and his staff and his people to write the legislation. Well, it turns out that one of the bright moves that Pat Brown made was that when he became governor, he brought a man with him named V.

Abbott Goldberg. And Abbott had his law degree from Harvard. He was a brilliant, witty man, a marvelous writer. While he worked for Pat, Pat was Attorney General of the State of California before he became governor, and Abbott was one of his principle assistants. He had, when he became governor, he appointed Abbott as Chief Deputy of Department of Water Resources and when I got this assignment to go back to work with Hayden, Abbott called me in and asked me if you'd like me to go with you. And I said, you bet. I didn't know Abbott very well at that point in time, but Abbott and I spent (anybody would tell you) more time in Washington DC, in hotels in Washington DC, than either of us was able to spend with our families for several years.

Q: What years were those?

A: They were starting in '63. In fact, Abbott and I arrived in Washington D.C. just a day or two after the Kennedy assassination. And Senator Hayden had become Vice President and Lyndon Johnson had become President. What Senator Hayden did, he inherited, then, the vice president's huge suite of offices in the new Senate Building and a nice small office in the Capitol Building itself. And he turned those over to Abbott and I to work with the Arizona contingent. And the Arizona contingent were Les Alexander and Frank Scussel from SRP (Salt River Project), and Roger Ernst from APS, and Ted Riggins from SRP, and I think I'm not sure but I think maybe also Ozell Trask from the firm that provided Ted Riggins, the same firm that Ted was in, was there part of the time.

Anyway, Abbott and his previous work on handling all the state's cases that arose out of the construction and operation of the Central Valley Project in California, huge Reclamation project in California, arising from that he had gotten to know Eddie Weinberg. Who by this time, by the time Abbott and I made our first visit together to Washington D.C., had become the Solicitor of the Department of Interior. Anyway, Abbott, Eddie and I met in the Vice President's office and hammered out this legislation, brought the Arizona people in to review it and brought the Arizona contingent in to review it and made whatever changes were

necessary or negotiated and then ran it past all the members of the Arizona delegation and got input from the staff people like Ed Davis and Roy Elson on Senator Hayden's staff.

Q: Who was the Arizona delegation at that time? Do you remember?

A: The Congress was...well, Senator Hayden and Senator Fannin, John Rhodes, Mo Udall and Steiger. I forget what Steiger's first name was.

Q: Sam.

A: Sam Steiger, thank you. Ran it by all of them and then Hayden introduced it. We, then the other part of Abbott's and my job was to try to get, to lobby for help from California Senators and Congressman. Well, we couldn't even get past the secretary in Tom Kuchel's office. I'm sure that Mike Ely talked to him. I'm sure Southern California people talked to him. He just totally ignored us. And we, the only one that I could recall that seemed to have any great sympathy for what we're trying to do was Bizz Johnson. He was a prominent Congressman from Roseville, up near Sacramento. And he was trying to get the Folsom South canal through. He could be just as sympathetic as he wanted to be but he wasn't going to stick his neck out and irate those other 46 Congressmen. Because you know, every one of them has got something they wanted to get through for their constituents. And so Southern California had enough muscle that it made them all nervous that if they supported Governor Brown on this, that they weren't able to get going what they wanted through the legislation. Well, it was not a fruitful occupation. And we, when we got back to Sacramento...in fact, I guess we probably called back to Sacramento. Well, the water committees demanded we come and testify and then they gave us hell and actually accused us of working for Arizona against California's interests, see. They asked or demanded that Governor Brown fire Abbott. Well, see, Abbott was, as I said, an appointee of the governor's and so it would've been easy if the governor had been weak-kneed to take Abbott out. But for me, I was still in civil service as a senior or supervising

engineer. I'm still protected by civil service and it's pretty hard, you know, if you're doing what your boss has told you to do, then it's pretty hard to get rid of you so they didn't come down nearly as hard on me. You know, I didn't like it but I didn't lose any sleep over it either, because by then I knew, I think, Pat Brown well enough to know that he was not going to cave in on this. Well, unfortunately, I suspected that his position, I don't know it of course, but I suspect that his position on the Central Arizona Project legislation may have been one of the key reasons that he lost the next election. He served eight years. At that time he could go for another four and he was going for another four. He had just done a tremendous job for California, not only in water--nobody else had done anything like this--but also in education and many other things. He was a very active guy and he had just done a great job. Reagan won, I think, and that may have been one of the reasons, but Pat was not a flashy guy, even if he had supported southern California he may have lost. I have no way of knowing.

Q: How did it change things when Reagan became governor?

A: Well good question. To Reagan's credit, here he came from Southern California, really elected by Southern California, and he took the same position that the governor had taken. We're going to assist, not oppose, and he sent me right back to go back and negotiate some more. Fortunately, about that time, Mo Udall, no I'm sorry, not Mo but Stewart Udall published the Pacific Southwest Water Plan and I had a quite a lot a bit to do with that. He published the Pacific Southwest Water Plan tying the Central Arizona Project into a regional water program that would deliver water to California's interests and Nevada's interests in addition to Arizona's and so on.

Q: And that was his role as Secretary of Interior?

A: That was his role as Secretary of Interior; he put that out. And I prepared California's comments on that plan and suggestions on that plan for the governor to send back to Stewart. There were a couple things in this that made it easier for

Arizona's delegation to reach an accommodation with California. And that was the fact that it was tied into this regional plan that would bring water to, and the legislation, and it would bring water, additional water, to the Colorado River and one and a half million acre-feet of it to the Mexico Treaty burden, so-called Mexico Treaty burden. What the United States had committed to Mexico, none of this water originated in Mexico and it was just a gift, an international comity gift to Mexico. It was recognized in the treaty that this was a U.S. responsibility. So we, in effect, in this legislation, we said okay pony it up, you know. If we got it then we didn't have any problem, see. Well, we still had not gotten it. But anyway, that gave the...you know, California had never given up its...in spite of the fact that after Reagan took over, they still willfully misinterpreted the law contrary to what the court had said and claimed that they had a priority over, their 4.4 had a priority in a case of shortage over Arizona's 2.8. Well, tying these things all together then made it a lot easier for Congressman Rhodes and Mo Udall to agree and to give them their priority as long as we were going to get the Mexican Treaty right out there, there wasn't a problem. So...

Q: Why did it take so long after the Supreme Court ruled to get Congress, it seemed you went back and forth, back and forth, back and forth, before Congress absolutely finally...

A: Just the fact that neither side was willing to cave in. You know, you'd have to come up with a whole new plan and you don't do that overnight and then you had to sell it, and you had to reach agreement on it. Incidentally, part of the final agreement was that the California water interests would appear before Congress each year and support the appropriations for the Central Arizona Project. And to the best of my knowledge, at least Metropolitan Water District has at least up until the time I left Arizona, Metropolitan Water District had been there every year to do that.

Q: Support them financially?

A: To support the financial part of it.

Q: So tell me about what it was like when it finally did pass, what was that 1968?

A: It passed in '68, yes right.

Q: Was California disappointed or...?

A: No, no, no, see they had agreed. So it went just like that. The dam broke and boom it went right through, see. Because Arizona had agreed to the priority, California would eventually lose, the Metropolitan Water District would eventually lose 662,000 AF that they were using or had claimed a right to over and beyond the 4.4, but they would still keep their 550,000 within the 4.4. If they didn't have that priority, the Metropolitan Water District aqueduct could've, in dry years, dried up. And I mean that's why they were refusing to admit to that's what the correct legal interpretation of the "Law of the River" was.

Q: Where was Nevada and Colorado and Mexico in all of this?

A: Well, they were there. They wanted to know, be sure that nothing was taken out of their entitlements. Nevada in the compact, Nevada only received 300,000 AF entitlement and they were using it as this battle was going on. They were using about half of it, this was almost all in the Las Vegas area.

Q: Didn't the Congressman from Colorado, Aspinall, didn't he...?

A: Aspinall, well, Aspinall wanted some projects and they got tacked. Just like any other piece of federal legislation or even state legislation all kinds of other things can get tacked on. And there were projects tacked on in each of the upper basin states and they had to be completed by the same time as the Central Arizona Project. I don't think any of them have been. They got President, later on when President, within a month or two after President, I guess a month after President

Carter took office that he cancelled the funding for the Central Arizona Project and knocked out a whole bunch of other water projects in the country and he knocked out all of those dams in the upper basin. And of course, Aspinall wasn't around there to put them back.

Q: Aspinall was pretty powerful back then?

A: Oh you bet he was, you bet he was, he sure was.

Q: When was it that you first considered even coming to Arizona?

A: Well, almost right away. It was less than two months after the project, Central Arizona Project, was authorized that Rich Johnson, who was Executive Director of the Arizona Interstate Stream Commission at that point, called me to see if I knew anybody who that would be interested in being the state water engineer and the Executive Director of the Interstate Stream Commission. Apparently the previous state water engineer had been fired. I said yeah, how about me. And he said you're kidding. He says we only got three professionals over here and you got 600 planners there in the department of planning. And I said yes, but that's part of the problem. I'm getting awfully tired of editing reports, budgetary matters, personnel matters, and all this sort of thing, etc., etc., etc. And I've come to the realization that the problems of the Colorado River, my assignment to become the director, the expert on the Colorado River, has brought me all the spice and the excitement that is otherwise missing in this job. I would really like to be around for the rest of the CAP story and help bring it home. I don't see that, I don't see that being any part of my, of my experience in the future and I really don't want that to happen. I've got one son in college, another one going into college next year, and my daughter the year after that. I said I can't afford to step backward financially but if you could match, if Arizona can match my salary and benefits, I'd like to be your man. Gee, a few days later he called up and he says George Leonard, the chairman of the Interstate Stream Commission would like to meet with you as would Stan Turley and Ray Goetze who were the chairman of the

House and Senate water committees would like to interview you and will see where we go from there. And incidentally, he says your salary requirements have been passed, ok'd by the governor. We felt we had to take it to him because you were going to be making more then he makes. I gulped.

Anyway, a few days more after that I'm on an airplane. I go over there, I meet with George Leonard and he said well if you passed the inspection of the interview with Turley and Goetze, we'd love to have you. I had a nice meeting with both of the legislators and when it was over, they said we'd like to have you come. Stan asked me, he says what are you going to do with the time that you have, you know, this all went real fast, what are you going to do with the time that you have before you have to catch your plane back to Sacramento. Well, I need to get a taxi or a bus out to ASU because my son's going, my oldest son is going to come here with me. I don't want to pull my other two kids out of school until summer. And we need to sell the house and all that. I had agreed to report on February 1 so I need to get my oldest son enrolled at ASU. He reached in his pocket and handed me his car keys and told me where it was parked. After my experience with the legislature in Washington and the legislature in Sacramento, that was my first real experience with them was having them chew me out about working for somebody else. Anyway, I was overwhelmed. You know, I certainly didn't expect the first contact that somebody would do that. I borrowed his car, went out there and enrolled my son, and took it back. And he had told me where to leave the keys and I parked it in his space at the bank and went and got the bus to the airport. You know, Stan...I it didn't take long to realize that Stan is like that with everybody. He's just a marvelous, marvelous man. My relationship with him just got better, and better, and better. And I'm convinced I would have accomplished very little in Arizona without Stan having been there to help me and advise me. He's just a tower of strength.

Q: Do you mind me asking what the salary was when you came over here?

A: My recollection is that they paid me I think it was \$27,000 a year, can you believe. The junior engineers make more than that now. Of course, it bought a whole lot more than it does now but even so.

Unidentified Man:

I bought a house in Scottsdale in 1971, 2100 square feet, for \$28,000 and the payment was \$121 per month.

A: Yes, I've been there, done that too.

Q: That was February 1969?

A: That was February 1969, February 1, 1969, I showed up and Rich was right. There were three professionals, two secretaries, and a part-time librarian. What he hadn't told me was that there were two real gems in that staff. There was Tom Clark who had worked; Tom was a bronco buster and a dirt bike rider with a bad back. And I don't even think he was there. I think he was home in bed the day that I appeared to go to work. I didn't have to know Tom very long to know how, what a great employee I had inherited in him, his background in agricultural economics and his unflappable demeanor. We just meshed, I thought, very well together. And I had just complete confidence in him. You know, I was still out running around and being the lightning rod and taking all the licks and that. And I left Tom there to run the organization. And of course, there wasn't much to run at that point but I was able to get the legislature to support, with the governor's support to support some modest increase in staff to start to undertake the creation of a state water plan and fortunately we finished that in time to effectively use it.

Q: I didn't get a chance to ask, if we could go back, I wanted to know what the reaction was in California when you came back over here and told them you were leaving and going to go to work in Arizona.

A: Oh boy, well I, you know, I didn't...this was...alright when I came back from coming over here and got...I got a real nice send off. Now how many of those, the people that appeared for this big luncheon were there just to make sure I left, I don't know. But I did get, I don't know that, or at least it was reported to me by somebody that I have a lot of confidence in that Mike Ely, who was the attorney for Southern California interests and Washington attorney for the Southern California interests was really upset. He thought that I was a traitor to have gone over there.

Q: And what about the people in Arizona? Were there some people there that wondered if you were coming over as a spy?

A: Yes there were, there were, there were. I was...in fact, I was only there, I was there a very short time when the rumors started spreading through the legislature that I was there as a spy. And then about the same time, there was a whole lot of grumbling about what I was getting paid. And I thought, "Oh my God, what have I done, I gave up my safe, my safe civil service position and came over here full of confidence and they're liable to give me a one way ticket back." And the job's gone, I've burnt my bridges. But it, I'm sure that Jack Williams, Governor Williams and Stan Turley were the ones that scratched that and it never came up again.

Q: Tell me a little bit about Jack Williams?

A: Jack Williams was a very nice man, an extremely easy man for me to work with because he had great confidence in me and certainly listened to me. The advice he gave me was to tell him what I wanted him to do and because he knew I knew more about water and the Central Arizona Project then he did in spite of the fact that he was an extremely strong supporter of the project. He...I...one of the concerns that I have is that I ended up years after he had left the position of governor of having to take an action that this, that made him, that very much disappointed him. And that was the recommendation to Governor Babbitt and to the people of Arizona that we should, in fact we had to abandon Orme Dam as a

feature of the Central Arizona Project. That didn't mean that we had to abandon flood control for the Salt River Valley, we couldn't do that. We...and you know, and it was a logical addition to the Central Arizona Project, but it really had almost nothing to do with the water supply of the Central Arizona Project. And that was far more critical. The President had come down on that, he would in reauthorizing the expenditures for the Central Arizona, building the Central Arizona Project, he demanded that Orme Dam be stricken from the project. The Fort McDowell Indians had repeatedly denied any offer and any interests in seeing that dam built there. You know, I think it could've been done in a fashion that would have enhanced the economy of the reservation. Certainly additional lands could've been added to take the place of those that were flooded. But they weren't interested. It was their homeland and they didn't want to be somewhere else and they didn't want to have their forbearers buried under hundreds of feet of water. They had a position that I thought, I thought would never be able to overcome and certainly as long as we couldn't really afford to wait until the other, almost four years until President Carter left office to get, to get the Central Arizona Project funding authorized that we had to give it up. So I made that announcement and I think people, a lot of people were looking for me to take the lead and I was willing to do it. And I know that Jack and Stan Turley were disappointed, neither one of them ever said anything to me about it. I hope that I, I certainly hoped that I in light of all that Stan Turley did for me; I hoped that I advised him in advance. I can't be sure I did in this late stage, but I sure hope I did.

Q: Babbitt was with you on that wasn't he?

A: Yes he was. You bet he was. He didn't talk me into doing it for him, but he didn't try to stop me in doing it. And I'm sure he was glad that I did it and he didn't.

Q: Let's back up a little bit, there's a few things that some people told me I should be asking you about, you came over in 1969. What was your title at that point?

A: My title, here or there?

Q: Your new title in Arizona?

A: My title in Arizona was State Water Engineer and Executive Director of the Arizona Interstate Stream Commission, which a few years later became the Arizona Water Commission and I still, I had still the State Water Engineer plus that. And then, then became finally the Director of the Department of Water Resources in 1980.

Q: So there was a lot of change going on in Arizona in the water field?

A: Yes, oh boy was there, was there ever. I think that I was responsible for generating quite a bit of it. Not solely responsible for it, but I took the lead on it. The state water plan that we developed in the first few years that I was in Arizona that showed how badly overdrawn we were on our groundwater basins. And the fact that we were using water twice as fast as it was being replenished. And in some places like the Tucson area, five times as fast and they were relying totally on groundwater basins and the water levels were dropping and dropping. It was a matter of time when it would be prohibitively expensive to pump even if there was still water there.

So the cities, I don't know whether to protect themselves from Wes Steiner or what you know, they started paying attention to their future needs and they hired Tucson and City of Phoenix was first to hire Bill Chase to become their water expert. They, the City of Tucson, fought the idea of buying into the Central Arizona Project having entering into contract for the water supply from the project. Mayor Murphy, the only one, seemed like the only city person, that I got support from. Of course, Bill Wheeler was there with me just like this and so was Professor Quentin Mees from the university. They backed me one hundred percent but it wasn't until right before the contracts had to be signed that the City of Tucson finally they totally flopped. And they were upset that they didn't get as much water as they thought they ought to get. Well, they had some change I think in staff that preceded that. They were the biggest M&I municipal and industrial winner in the whole thing. Right from the start, we knew it had to be that way. We had the

responsibility for allocating this important resource that was going to determine the future of a lot of central Arizona, or at least we thought it was. I don't know now. It's going to do alright but it's not quite the way we envisioned because the project it appears, and I'm not really up to date on it, but I know that even before I left we were still having problems getting Interior to pin down what the Indian allocation was. And I understand that it keeps climbing and so that it's going to be perhaps more Indian projects than anything else. You know, as I kept hammering away when I was there, the last thing that Arizona needs is new agriculture, more agriculture even if it's on Indian reservations.

Q: I know one of the issues that somebody said I should ask you about was SAWRSA? The Southern Arizona Water Rights Settlement Act with the Papago Tribe that in 1975 I guess it extended CAP down to the San Xavier Reservation, do you remember? Was that one of the first big Indian issues that came?

A: I don't...you know my recollections of that suit are vague.

Q: Well, they said that you and Babbitt were quite opposed to that, you were opposed to selling, the Indians be able to sell or lease their water off reservations?

A: Oh yes, yes.

Q: Explain that to me.

A: Well, in the allocation process, if the Indians are able, if the Secretary gives the Indians in their allocations the right to move their water off reservation to sell it off reservation or move it off reservations, then the magnitude of the Indian allocation becomes unlimited. If you, if they have to use it on the reservations it will have a relatively minor impact on what is available for the rest of Arizona's economy. I'm not anti-Indian. I just think that they ought to be treated very much the same way as everybody else. You don't give them 100,000 AF per Indian and a non-Indian a tenth of an acre-foot. That's sort of the direction this whole thing was going and

I'm not so anxious to know where it is today really. I'd like to think that the Central Arizona Project is really going to accomplish what I thought it was going to accomplish. And I'd kind of like to die before I get this disabused of that idea.

Q: What was your relationship with Floyd Dominy? There was some settlements that the Department of Interior made that, I think he didn't agree with the one that Indians too?

A: Well, I don't think, I don't think I ever had any disagreements with Dominy over water matters. He was out of this picture a long time ago. I survived him long after he was back on his little farm. I don't know what that, what that might have had to do with. Babbitt and I filed a suit against Secretary Andrus over his contracts, his allocations and the contracts that he entered into with the Indians for the very reasons that I discussed, stated earlier. That, it just, they just weren't fair. There's no way that the Indian tribes could have used anywhere near the amount of water that has been allocated to them.

Q: One of the Indian leaders, the Gila River Indian Community, told me that the water rights are going to be more valuable than casinos for them.

A: My position will change, will change completely after the allocations were made. Here I don't think they ought to be based upon being able to sell them. The allocations ought to be based upon what they will really use on the reservations. Then after that, as the allocation has been made on that basis, then I would completely change my position and say okay now if you can make more money by selling this, this water to the City of Tucson or the City of Phoenix or so forth, more power. I'd like to see that. I don't want to see the Indians using water, or anybody, using CAP water on a permanent basis. In other words, other than an interim basis while its being absorbed in Arizona. I don't want to see anybody do that, use it, by bringing in new agriculture. Arizona cannot afford to use the amount of agriculture they already have. And as the cities grow on existing agricultural land they use less water than the agriculture did and that's a step

forward water-wise. It may be completely and maybe a step backward in other respects. There is enough water; there will be enough to support something like ten million people. I forgot what the number was but I've said it over and over and over again in Arizona that there is a lot of water, enough water to support an enormous population in Arizona if you don't have agriculture. I sure hope that Arizona doesn't opt for that approach though. I wouldn't want to live there with all cities, all municipal and industrial. I think agriculture adds to the picture. They are, you know, even if you did away with it, if you tore up all the municipal and industrial that's there now, agriculture would still be, you'd still have to reduce agriculture eventually. It would reduce itself you know. By not being able to pay the cost of lifting the water out of the ground, that it'd drop so far.

Q: Tell me again about "Plan 6" and how that whole thing came about that you had to change your plans?

A: Well that came about as a result of President Carter's striking the funding for the Central Arizona Project and then after a strenuous campaign by a bunch of us, he backed off and took the position that he was willing to re-commence, renew funding of the CAP and get it done as fast as he, as we could, all of it except the Orme Dam and the Charleston Dam and the Hooker Dam. The two that, the two dams that New Mexico wanted. So that's what prompted the development, the formation of a study group to come up with the alternatives to providing any storage, interim storage needs that there were for the water coming in from the Colorado and that's relatively small and the flood control that the Salt River Valley needs desperately. So that's what, there were, as I remember, six plans. And Plan 6 was the one that most people thought was the best answer. Oh, I guess there were seven. "Plan 7" was don't do anything you know, that's what that was about.

Q: Who were the key people that worked with you in coming up with those plants and making that decision?

A: Well, I don't really remember.

Q: Were the people at SRP involved with that?

A: Well, SRP has to be involved in it because of, it involved enlarging and strengthening some of, and/or strengthening some of their dams. And Turley, not Stan, but Keith Turley of APS my recollection was he wanted to go back to Orme. And well you know there was some power, there was going to be some power generated at Orme that, you know, I'm sure APS hoped to get, I know they thought they would get a substantial piece of it.

Q: What about the New Waddell Dam? How did that come up as an alternative?

A: That was part of it for flood control that was part of it.

Q: How was Babbitt involved with all this? He was Attorney General at that point?

A: No, he was the governor. When Orme Dam got bollixed, he was governor.

Q: So it wasn't just Carter, when Carter first came in...

A: And this came in after that see.

Q: So he was governor by the time the decisions were made.

A: Yes, yes, yes, yes.

Q: In 1980?

A: I got it on my tablet.

Q: You were often called a "water czar." How did you get that title?

A: Well, nobody really called me that until, it might have...it appeared a few times in prior to the...in newspapers prior to the time that the Groundwater Management Act passed in 1980. But that, that everybody started calling me the "water czar" after that act passed because they gave the director so much power over where development could take place and how much water you could use and all this stuff you know. It came out somewhat before that because of the ability to, once the dam safety function had been transferred from highways to the Department of Water Resources, the director then had the authority and duty to breach dams, private property dams, that were dangerous, that were endangering the safety of people downstream. Even if the owner didn't do it, you know, if he said it has to be breached and the owner wouldn't do it, then the director could hire an outfit to breach it and send the owners a bill. So you know these are authorities that other states had. That was nobody else had the groundwater management. We jumped ahead of everybody on the groundwater management aspect.

Q: Looking back at your career in Arizona, what part of it are your proudest of?

A: Well, I'm proud of the fact that I was able to get, convince a lot of people in Arizona that they needed to start making decisions on what, how they wanted to use the water that was available to them, how they wanted to develop their water instead of letting the federal agencies make all their decisions. I was proud of having forced the, of having advanced and forced the inclusion within the CAWCD contract for CAP water. The provision that in the event of shortage of water supply that agriculture would have to take all of the shortage before the deliveries to the municipal and industrial had to share in that shortage, in other words, 100% priority to municipal and industrial users. And that I was able to sell that because we had developed this state water plan that showed that we couldn't afford to use any of that water permanently. Well, also the condition in the contract that you couldn't use the water to bring in new land into irrigation. Most of these things to at least stop the increase or deter seriously the increase in agriculture and start the process marching the other direction.

Q: Were there any surprises for you when you came over to Arizona? Were things differently then you thought?

A: Well, you know, I didn't, when I came over I thought I was going to be mainly involved in developing a state water plan and assisting in getting the Central Arizona Project built. I didn't really envision getting involved in dam safety and in water rights, the whole panoply of water issues. I think it was, that it was a wise decision by the legislature to move these functions and boy was the highway department glad to get rid of the dam safety function. You know, they weren't getting any money from the legislature for the program. They had, there was a supervising engineer there who I think his specialty was bridges but he, you know, he was a designer, a bridge designer I think. But he had the responsibility for this and boy, you know, Arizona had quite a few dams that were in pretty bad shape. We had to breach one dam, and force another one to empty a whole lot of water and repair the dam before it failed. In fact, I was, we were in court. We had been taken to court by the little irrigation district up in Snowflake area or Show Low area, pardon me. And this is a dam, an irrigation district dam, an earthen dam, that had a railroad running across the top of it. A lumber company railroad running across the top of it. And anyway, our inspections detected that there was some serious leakage coming out of this thing downstream and we ordered them to release a lot of water they resisted and took us to court. And while we were in the courthouse, this lawsuit, this case was proceeding. I can't remember, I had already testified. I can't remember who it was that was testifying. It was one of my people, but it may have even been me that was testifying when somebody came in and whispered in the ear of the attorney for the plaintiff that was asking the, interrogating the witness, he whispered in this attorney's ear that the train that was crossing the top had fallen into a huge hole in the dam.

Q: So dam safety is pretty important.

A: Yes, you bet.

Q: Sounds like you spent a lot of your time with political things. Did you expect that when you came over that you'd be so involved in politics?

A: Well, you know, water is so important and so valuable that, that it generates a lot of fights. I mean, nobody is going to give up their water. It, I don't think I ever really, really thought about it. I got involved in a whole lot of things that I, I have to admit, that I got involved in a lot of things that I wasn't expecting. I didn't realize when I went over there that Arizona, water-wise, was way behind California. And I knew a lot of things that I should try to do to bring them, to bring them up to speed. You know, I planned to try and do those things and you don't do things like that without engendering controversy and certainly I did a lot of that. But I, you know, as I was preparing my notes the other day, it occurred to me that the flak that I ran into in California probably thickened my skin and stiffened my backbone and prepared me for the controversies that I was going to engender in Arizona. I'm sure that it did because it didn't deter me. You know, I didn't want people to not like me. You know, I'm not that kind of a person. I didn't like it to disturb and upset people. But you know, I was hired and I was being paid to lead so I tried to lead. And I have, I've always recognized I think that a person's integrity is his most valuable asset. And I have always told the truth and a lot of times you know if somebody asked me a question and I knew the answer to it even though I knew it was going to hurt like hell, I told them. And it got me into a lot of trouble but it also, I think, people by the time I left they were probably tired of me but they at least they recognized that I had been trying to do what I really believed was right.

Q: You didn't mention a couple of key people; did you have any stories about you working with Barry Goldwater?

A: Barry, I didn't get very much involved with Barry because Barry was...he was supportive, but he always seemed to be so busy on other things, you know. He left, he left much of this to John Rhodes and Mo Udall to carry the ball.

Q: What was your relationship with those two?

A: It was great. It was great. They were two...Arizona couldn't of had two more effective Congressmen than those two guys at that point in time, you know, different problems maybe different people but they were terrific.

Q: What about Raul Castro?

A: Raul was the only governor that I had, I think seven or eight governors that I worked for either California or Arizona. Raul was the one who, to me, seemed least inclined to take my advice. That he, his own advice to himself was the best advice he was gonna get, you know. Now see, that was not the experience I had with Jack Williams at all. Jack said I know you know more about this than I do, so you tell me what ought to be done. He says and if I can, I'll support you on it. When I got to Governor Babbitt, Babbitt is such a...Babbitt's background was, you know, he was a geologist before he became an attorney. He had both of these things. He knew, he was a quick study in the water field. And he, he because he was a whole lot smarter politically than I was and he was probably smarter every way than I was, but at least I knew he knew more about what was possible politically than I did, just like I knew that Stan Turley did too, see. So I got...Bruce was able to really help me get a lot of these things done near the end of my career there. He, I would rate Bruce as being the governor that, that contributed the most to any success that I might have had there. He...there wouldn't be any groundwater management program in Arizona if Bruce hadn't gotten that group together and just hammered and hammered and hammered and hammered away at it. It wouldn't have happen. And...So I felt by the time I left that, you know, when I went over there after I'd been there awhile, I recall telling some of my friends or some of the people that I had a lot of confidence in there, you know, Arizona is at least 50 years behind California in this water program. And it can't afford to be that far behind. And I'm convinced that when I left, in some respects at least we were ahead of California. California hasn't been able to manage its groundwater overdrafts, you know. And part of that reason is that they got all this extra water up on the north coast is flowing out to the ocean. But there aren't very many people over there today that believe that they'll ever be able to

tap that because of the environmental movement and all. And when I owned, when Odanah and I owned property on the Smith River, beautiful uncontrollable clear, crystal clear stream on the, emptying into the ocean just south of the Oregon border; when we owned that property, and owned it out to the middle of the river people would have had a hell of a time convincing me that that water ought to be diverted and taken somewhere else.

Q: You know, some of the CAP water is now being pumped down to recharge the groundwater.

A: Yes, yes, I know.

Q: Was that part of your doing or plans?

A: Well, it would've been. Yes, you know, I told them that I thought that that's what they ought to be doing. And certainly, I would've, I was really happy to see that they went right ahead and did that, sure. Anyway, you can decrease the overdraft as, you can get to do...and instead of letting that go to California, see.

Q: What sort of advice do you have for the people that are operating the CAP lately?

A: Do it well. Well, I didn't ever get to know Sid Wilson very well. But what I did see of him and hear that what he was doing, I was impressed and I got to believe that he is a strong administrator and a good man for the job. The number two guy in that outfit, I've known for a long time. He had to be a tower of strength to Tom when Tom had the job. And I'm sure he is to Sid now. He's a very good man.

Q: Who?

A: Well, I'm having trouble coming up with his name. See that's one of the reasons, that I, one of the reasons why I went through a lot of these clippings was to come up with all, I've never been really good with names.

Q: Have you kept up with the Department of Water Resources?

A: No.

Q: Herb Guenther, is now the director.

A: Yes, I knew that.

Q: Did you know Herb Guenther?

A: Just barely. No, when I...the experience I had in California was that it just seemed to be an unspoken rule that when you left the job, you didn't criticize the guy that comes along behind you. And so when I got over to Arizona and the guy that got booted out started the rumor that I was a spy, I thought boy when I leave this job I'm not going to say a thing about anybody that comes along, adverse thing about anybody that comes along or try to second guess anybody that comes along behind me. And I'll be willing to betcha that Tom Clark is not second guessing Sid.

Q: Anything you would've done differently looking back?

A: I think I would have tried to create a few less controversies.

Q: I'm sure you didn't intentionally create any.

A: No, I didn't intentionally create any. I knew that I was going to on some of them. You just couldn't help but do it.

Q: Water is a pretty controversial issue.

A: Boy it sure is. But you know it would be pretty boring stuff if it wasn't.

Q: Is that why you choose to go in it?

A: That's why, well no, it wasn't why. It was...I have never, I've never had any second doubts about having made the shift other than that momentary one you know when I thought, my god, the legislature is gonna cut my pay in half and they're all gonna think I'm a spy. I didn't really have second thoughts on that. I've been . . . I was...I wouldn't of gone back and done my career any different way if I could have you know. It's so much a matter of luck, of being some place at the right time, see. If I hadn't been assigned...if I had gotten back in time and gotten the job up in the foothills on the Yuba and Bear Rivers inspecting the construction of dams, I would've probably, like the guy, my friend, who did get that job. He stayed in dam safety work. And I probably would've done the same thing. And I would've had near the (1:01 tape skipped) and satisfaction that I had from the career in...you know, they could've assigned the responsibility for becoming the department's expert on the Colorado River to somebody else, you know. I don't know what I'd been doing.

Q: You didn't think at the time, thought that...

A: And Rich Johnson could've found somebody else, you know.

Q: You could of suggested someone else.

A: Yeah, I could of suggested someone else. I'm sure glad I didn't. The people of Arizona were wonderful to me really, an opportunity of a lifetime.

----- End of Interview -----