

AGRI-BUSINESS COUNCIL OF ARIZONA, INC.

Arizona's Reclamation Representative to the National Water Resources Association
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ABC SONORA



TOUR OF TESSERA SOLAR PLANT IN MARICOPA WITH ABC SONORA



MEETING AT CENTRAL ARIZONA PROJECT WITH ABC SONORA

AGRI-BUSINESS COUNCIL OF ARIZONA
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

First Quarter 2010

Inside this Issue:

**President's
Message**

**Executive
Director's Report**

**Arizona
Agricultural
Education/Future
Farmers of
America**

**What's New at
Heritage Center at
Lakin Farm**

**Nearly \$21
Million Available
for Conservation,
Improvement of
Agricultural
Water**

New Members

Upcoming Events

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In the last quarter's newsletter I described the plight of the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) resulting from the State's budget problems. This is a continuing issue. As reported earlier, ADWR was evaluating various alternative fees and assessments and conducting stakeholder meetings to receive input. Several bills were introduced in the legislature and hearings were held. Presently only one bill is on the table, SB 1359 and its passage is likely to occur before you receive this newsletter. SB 1359 provides for the establishment of a Water Resources Fund which consists of fees collected by ADWR which would normally be deposited directly into the General Fund. In addition, ADWR is proposing a fee structure for services provided to the public based on either hours worked or a flat fee depending on the statutory requirements. All these revenues would be deposited in the new Fund. In the meantime ADWR is undergoing substantial reductions in its workforce until money is available from the Fund. ADWR needs our support in resolving these difficult times. It is unfortunate to be losing such an experienced work force, creating a "brain drain that will be hard to replace". We will keep you informed.

This subject and others will be topics of discussion at our upcoming Annual Meeting on May 21st. We hope you will join us. Please feel free to contact the office or go to the website for registration information: www.agribusinessarizona.org.

Now, for the good news...our friends from the state of Sonora have successfully established the Agribusiness Council of Sonora through the assistance of our esteemed treasurer, Dr. George Seperich, who has been working with water leaders in Ciudad Obregon and Hermosillo for several years. On March 18 and 19, several representatives from ABC Sonora attended our Executive Committee meeting at Hank's Lodge, just downstream of New Waddell Dam. They wanted to see how we conducted our meetings, the type of issues discussed and the interaction of our committee members during the meeting. They asked many questions and were appreciative of our hospitality. They also visited several facilities in the area which are described later in this newsletter.

Hope to see you at our May 21st Annual Meeting!

Bill Plummer
President

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

As the first quarter newsletter preparation begins, it typically occurs when Agri-Business Council (ABC) members are attending the National Water Resources Association (NWRA) spring conference in Washington, D.C. I thought I would fill you in.

We had great representation from members of the ABC Executive Committee, visiting with members of the Arizona Congressional Delegation and a number of Committee staff the week of March 22. Priority issues of concern included the Navajo Generating Station, the Yuma Desalt Plant operations, Aging Infrastructure, the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Water Transfer Rule, the Clean Water Restoration Act, and others. Many of the points we provided were well received, especially right after the marathon Health Care debate and vote that took place the day before. As part of the discussion, we thanked those members of the delegation who had earlier signed on as co-sponsors to Senate Joint Resolution 26 and House Joint Resolutions 66, 76 and 77, which, in effect, nullify efforts by the EPA to regulate greenhouse gases under their "endangerment" finding. The Resolutions signed by our elected officials indicate that such authority rests with the legislative branch rather than by agency rule making. We were grateful to find support for many of our issues on both sides of the isle.

On March 18-19, we hosted a number of our colleagues from the state of Sonora who are actively participating in the establishment of the Agribusiness Council of Sonora or Consejo de Agronegocios de Sonora (CAS). We welcomed producers, water managers and University officials from the Technological

Institute of Sonora (ITSON) for two days of informational tours and our Executive Committee meeting. A special thank you is in order for all who assisted in organizing the visits. We spent Thursday introducing colleagues to the Department of Agriculture, Director and staff followed by a visit to the United Dairymen of Arizona's processing facility in Tempe. They provided a quick, informational tour and background of their facility and some tasty jalapeno cheese curds to tie us over. Later, lunch was served at Central Arizona Project followed by a well received presentation of their operations. We ended the day touring the impressive, Tessera Solar facility in the west valley. On Friday, our colleagues joined the ABC Executive Committee at Hank's Lodge. We had a great exchange and provided them with some valuable experiences and ideas to take back with them. We ended the business day with a tour of the pumping plant at New Waddell Dam.

Once again, we want to thank those who helped prepare the visits. Our friends from Sonora were very impressed with the things they both saw and heard. We were equally impressed with their interest and professionalism and command of the issues. We look forward to their next visit.

Until our next newsletter, we want to thank you, our members for your support. As always, feel free to contact us with issues of concern. The door is wide open and we're ready to assist.

Chris Udall
Executive Director

ARIZONA AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION/FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA

Provided by: Bobbie Bolt

The Arizona Agricultural Education/FFA Foundation is dedicated to providing expanded educational opportunities to high school agricultural education programs and the FFA in Arizona. Through the help of our sponsors we are able to provide funding for FFA member scholarships, leadership development programs such as State FFA Camp and Chapter Officer Leadership Training programs, as well as career development events such as the State FFA Agronomy and Agricultural Business Management competitions, to name a few.

We would like to thank the Agribusiness Council of Arizona for their contribution to our efforts. We are deep into our 2010 Contribution cycle which will fund events for the coming 2010-11 school year and would also like to thank all of our sponsors that have renewed their commitment to the Foundation and Arizona FFA for this coming year. Without our generous sponsors we would be unable to provide many of the programs that make Arizona FFA a premier student organization.

We will be holding the First Annual Blue Jackets Golden Opportunities Benefit Dinner in conjunction with the Arizona State FFA Leadership Conference, June 11th in Tucson at the University Park Marriott. We hope to have the largest gathering of past FFA members and agribusinessmen present at this important event. We will be honoring our sponsors and the Arizona FFA Agriculturalist of the year in addition to raising funds for the many Arizona FFA programs. Please join us in Celebrating the past, present, and future of the Arizona FFA. For tickets and information please contact us at 602-705-9211 or email foundation@azffa.org

WHAT'S NEW AT HERITAGE CENTER AT LAKIN FARM

Provided by: Carole De Cosmo

What's in a name? We feel a lot -- so we've changed ours to something we feel is more in keeping with our mission: preservation of the agricultural traditions of Arizona. The general public is sadly lacking in knowledge about what agriculture is and what it means to them as well as to the county as a whole. Through educational programs for all visitors, children and adults, we want to get them excited about the magic of seeing the land bring forth an array of fruits, vegetables and flowers.

The board felt that Heritage Center at Lakin Farm did not describe what we propose to do. After much research and debate we choose (and added a new logo):

Arizona's Farm & Ranch Experience
Heritage Center at Lakin Farm
Preserving the Legacy



We believe that says it all – Farm – Ranch – Heritage – Legacy. We hope that you do too.

The past three years have been busy and successful. We have held three Arizona Farming and Ranching Hall of Fame Dinners, inducting 27 honorees. The Business Plan has been completed, and now the Capital Campaign begins.

The construction cost to build the Center will be \$20,000,000. The goal is to have a portion of the center open in 2012 – Arizona's Centennial. Chuck Lakin and his family were the first to offer support with the donation of 40 acres of land on Dysart Road in Avondale with a conservative value of \$1.4 million dollars. The second was a \$7,168 donation from a local foundation that has been disbanded.

Now we invite you to become involved. In May we will be offering a Founders Membership program. As with any large project there are many opportunities for sponsorships, building naming, etc. To discuss these opportunities you may reach me at 623-695-9614 or on my email at codeco2@aol.com.

NEARLY \$21 MILLION AVAILABLE FOR CONSERVATION, IMPROVEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL WATER

Provided by: George Couch, NRCS

Approximately \$20.7 million is available nationally for new project proposals under the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP). AWEP is a voluntary conservation program under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The program provides financial and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers to assist them in applying agricultural water enhancement activities that conserve ground and surface water and improve water quality on agricultural lands.

AWEP projects are implemented by the Natural Resources Conservation Service entering into partnership agreements with eligible entities. NRCS works with these partners to help landowners plan and implement conservation practices in project areas established through the agreements.

The following partnership entities are eligible to submit proposals for funding: federally recognized Indian Tribes, States, units of local government, agricultural associations, and other groups of producers--such as irrigation associations, agricultural land trusts, or other nongovernmental organizations--that have experience working with agricultural producers. When an AWEP project area has been approved and announced, individual producers may apply for program benefits through their local NRCS office.

Types of water enhancement activities intended with this request for proposal are: water quality or water conservation plan development; water conservation restoration or enhancement projects; water quality or quantity restoration or enhancement projects; irrigation system improvement and irrigation efficiency enhancements; activities designed to mitigate the effects of drought; and related activities determined to help achieve water quality or water conservation benefits on agricultural land.

Deadline for partner organizations to submit a proposal is 3:00 May 17, 2010. The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill) established AWEP. To view the full request for proposal, for additional AWEP information, or to apply visit: www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/AWEP/.

For additional information about NRCS and conservation programs that may be available for you, visit: www.nrcs.usda.gov, or visit the nearest USDA Service Center in your area. 2010 represents the 75th year of NRCS helping people help the land. Since its inception in 1935, the NRCS conservation delivery system has advanced a unique partnership with state and local governments and private landowners delivering conservation based on specific, local conservation needs, while accommodating state and national interests.

NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome Henry Evans, Bobbie Bolt, and Z Tags as our newest members of the Agri-Business Council of Arizona. We are thrilled to have them join us and thank them for helping to make ABC the exceptional organization that it is!

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
MAY 21	ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING	PHOENIX ZOO
JUNE 3-4	ARIZONA MEXICO COMMISSION PLENARY SESSION	WIGWAM RESORT, LITCHFIELD PARK
JUNE 18	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING	TBD