

CHILEAN DELEGATION WATER TOUR



PICTURE AT WELLTON-MOHAWK IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE DISTRICT
PROVIDED BY: GEORGE CAIRO

AGRI-BUSINESS COUNCIL OF ARIZONA
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THANKS TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE H2OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT THIS YEAR. TO VIEW MORE PICTURES, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.AGRIBUSINESSARIZONA.ORG.



AGRI-BUSINESS COUNCIL OF ARIZONA, INC.

Arizona's Reclamation Representative to the National Water Resources Association
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

These past few months have seen activity on the legislative front which will be summarized elsewhere in this newsletter. But very important to water users statewide is the situation at the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR).

As we all know, Governor Brewer has requested state agencies to provide a budget indicating a 15% reduction in their 2010 budget which, if implemented in January 2010, would be an effective reduction of 30%. In addition, the Governor has asked ADWR to look at ways to become self-funded. On December 4, ADWR conducted a briefing for stakeholders on alternatives leading to 100% self-funding.

Without self-funding ADWR faces severe reduction in personnel, perhaps as many as 85 positions. This event would severely constrain ADWR's activities; they do not believe it is a viable option and, therefore, are looking seriously at self-funding.

Some options include increasing user fees on groundwater and surface water management and dam safety permits. Further options include full self-funding with water use fees (statewide), increase in groundwater withdrawal fees, adjudication fees, and fees on the sale of Hoover and Parker-Davis power. ADWR is reviewing which options are viable. All options do not need to be accepted because the resulting fees collected would substantially exceed ADWR's budget requirements.

The meeting on December 4th was to lay out the different ideas developed within ADWR, some of which are similar to those implemented by ADEQ some time ago. A second stakeholder meeting will be held in early January. ABC has copies of the power-point presentation by ADWR at the December 4th meeting if anyone wants a copy. ADWR is inviting comments between now and the second stakeholder meeting in January.

We will continue to monitor the activities relating to ADWR's budget. A very Happy Holidays to you all and a productive and successful New Year.

Bill Plummer
President

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

I was recently thumbing through my 2009 wall calendar, traipsing down memory lane, reminding myself of all that the Agri-Business Council (ABC) has been involved in this year. I was amazed at how busy this year has been!

We started out the year with an interesting session at the State Legislature, followed by numerous follow up sessions to try to address the state's budget shortfall. Our state faces some very tough years and decisions ahead before we see a rebound from the current fiscal crisis we find ourselves in the middle of. Hopefully, the agriculture sector will be able to meet the challenges and opportunities of this next decade.

Some of the highlights of this year were the four National Water Resources Association (NWRA) conferences held in Arizona, Washington D.C., New Mexico and Texas. Information shared was very informative and critical to our membership. Issues such as the Clean Water Restoration Act, climate change/cap and trade legislation, energy legislation, EPA rulemaking impacts to operations of the Central Arizona Project, Colorado River water quality legislation, and Hoover power reallocation are just a few major topics of priority for ABC. I was able to participate on a panel titled the "State of the States" during the conference in Texas in November. A major thanks to those members who helped provide me with some great input for that presentation!

Back in April, Dr. George Seperich and I participated in a well attended workshop held at the Technological Institute of Sonora (ITSON) in Ciudad, Obregon to continue the formation of the Agri-

Fourth Quarter 2009

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Business Council of Sonora. Of the large group in attendance, 14 well respected individuals were chosen from their peers to begin the organization. I'm pleased to report that things are moving along nicely.

We had a great Annual meeting in May at the Phoenix Zoo. A few members mentioned that it was the best meeting they had attended. Well deserved Executive Committee members Jim Henness and Reid Teeple received "Lifetime Recognition" awards for their longtime commitment and contributions to ABC. We also presented retiring CAP general manager, Sid Wilson with our annual "Water Buffalo" award. We had a great lineup of speakers. We look forward to another great Annual meeting in May, 2010 and are already busy preparing. If you have any ideas or input, please let us know.

Other events this year included moderating the Valley Forward Luncheon in Scottsdale in June. It was nice to get acquainted with the organic farming sector in Arizona; it is certainly a growing niche market for a number of growers, restaurants and produce retailers in the state.

I attended the Irrigation Association (a group focused primarily on grass and turf irrigation application) meeting this summer in Utah and was able to accomplish some important networking and meet a great group of people interested in protecting water for agriculture. They are interested in getting more involved in irrigated agriculture.

In September, I traveled to Washington, D.C. with members of the Family Farm Alliance to discuss climate change legislation concerns with our U.S. Senators and staff. It was a successful few days making the rounds educating members about the importance and need for agriculture to be included in the Adaptation section of the bill. Currently, the bill focuses its attention on natural resources (fish and wildlife) and foreign agriculture but nothing to help American agriculture adapt to perceived climate change. Our mission was to not support climate change legislation but to indicate that if it was going somewhere, we wanted agriculture at the table and our interests addressed.

Also in September, a number of ABC members attended the Colorado River Project Symposium in Santa Fe, NM. The conference covered a number of topics including the history of river exploration and development, western population growth, climate change, water and energy interdependency, and water augmentation, to name a few. It was a first for me to attend this Symposium at the historic Bishop Lodge where the 1922 Colorado River Compact was negotiated.

To wrap up the year was the annual Colorado River Water User's Association conference in Las Vegas which is always well attended and a lot of information is exchanged related to the management of the river in the 7 Basin States. In particular, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced a new periodic flooding program for water releases from Glen Canyon Dam. We can expect the program outline in the near future.

Among all of these critical regional and national meetings was a host of local meetings with the various ABC Committees, panel discussions exchanging views about the future of agriculture in Arizona, meetings to discuss upcoming water legislation in the state legislature, Arizona Water Banking Authority meetings, Natural Resource Conservation Service, state technical committee meetings to discuss Farm Bill implementation, Water Resources Research Center (WRRC) meetings, Groundwater Users Advisory Council meetings (GUAC) and others. In short, it has been a very busy and productive year.

We appreciate your membership and support which allows us to fight the battles each day at the local, state and national level.

May you all have a very Merry Christmas and optimistic New Year!

Chris Udall
Executive Director

CHILEAN DELEGATION WATER TOUR

Provided by: George Cairo

Mesa, Arizona – GEORGE CAIRO ENGINEERING, INC. (GCE) was host to a delegation of irrigation and government water resource professionals from the country of Chile throughout November 28 – December 12, 2009. GCE coordinated a technical water resources tour and provided interpretation services for the Chilean delegation during an extensive tour of water entities, water delivery and hydropower generation systems and infrastructure throughout southern Arizona and California. Delegates included representatives of the Chilean government (similar to the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation), irrigation districts, local farmers and corporate officials.

GCE led the delegation through an extensive tour and site visits of irrigation delivery and hydropower generation systems in southern Arizona which included Salt River Project (SRP), Maricopa Water District (MWD), Buckeye Water Conservation and Drainage District (BWCDD), Pima-Maricopa Irrigation Project (P-MIP), Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation and Drainage District, Yuma County Water Users Association (YCWUA), Central Arizona Irrigation and Drainage District (CAIDD), and Maricopa-

The committee replaced the bill's text with a compromise crafted by Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) that included language to protect existing exemptions for some agricultural operations, but the measure still failed to draw a Republican vote. Sen. Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) promptly placed a "hold" on the bill, setting up a fight over the measure on the Senate floor.

Many Democrats say the bill would restore the original intent of the 1972 law to regulate all of the country's waters, including non-navigable wetlands, after two Supreme Court cases this decade limited the scope of the measure.

But many Republicans say the bill would broaden the intended scope of the CWA and lead to burdensome regulations on farmers, development and other industry stakeholders.

Democrats may struggle to close their own ranks on the issue, as some farm-state representatives already have stated their opposition (E&E Daily, July 23).

"How did this happen in the Senate?" asked Rep. Debbie Halvorson (D-Ill.) in July, after farm groups portrayed the bill as reaching every ditch, pond and puddle in the country, regardless of whether they are connected to larger water bodies. "Is it not talked to in the Senate like it is to us?"

H₂OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT

Each year, ABC hosts an annual Golf Tournament. This tournament is one of two major fund-raisers the Agri-Business Council holds each year in which the proceeds benefit the entire agriculture community in the State of Arizona.

This year's tournament was held on October 31, 2009 at 9:00am at the Francisco Grande Golf Course in Casa Grande, Arizona. We want to thank all our sponsors, donors, and golfers that made the tournament a huge success. Our sponsors included: Central Arizona Project, the Central Arizona Project Association, Aero-Mexico, ASU-Morrison School of Management and Agribusiness, USDA/APHIS, Wildlife Services, Western Growers, and Pitsch Insurance. Thank you so much!

Considering the current economic conditions, we fared well with 80 golfers playing in the tournament. Congratulations to all of our winners and thank you again to all who participated and made this such a fantastic event.

Some of our tournament winners were:

1st Place – Central Arizona Project Team: Phil Cook, Doug Crosby, Tim Gorey, Marie Pearthree
2nd Place – Yuma County Water Users' Association Team: Johnny Martinez, Paul Melohusky, Billy Morgan, Alex Smith
3rd Place – Salt River Project Team: Paul Cherrington, Bruce Hallin, Ray Hedrick, Bob Roessel

To see more pictures, please visit our website at www.agribusinessarizona.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
JANUARY 14-15	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING	YUMA
FEBRUARY 19	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING	TBD
FEBRUARY 27	ARIZONA FARMING & RANCHING HALL OF FAME DINNER FOR MORE INFO CALL 623-695-9614	TBD
MARCH 19	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING	PEORIA
MARCH 22-24	NWRA FEDERAL WATER SEMINAR	WASHINGTON D.C.