



AGRI-BUSINESS COUNCIL OF ARIZONA, INC.

Arizona's Reclamation Representative to the National Water Resources Association

UPCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Place
May 9, 2008	ABC Annual Business Meeting	Heard Museum, Phoenix, Arizona
June 20, 2008	Executive Committee Meeting	Phoenix, Arizona
June 20-21, 2008	AMC Summer Plenary Session	Phoenix, Arizona
July 28-30, 2008	Western Water Seminar	Stevenson, Washington
October 31, 2008	H ₂ Open Golf Tournament	Casa Grande, Arizona

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

First Quarter 2008

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First off, I am excited to mention that the Agri-Business Council of Arizona (ABC) turned 30 years old on February 2, 2008. We have conducted a number of interviews with organizing members as we work to compile a history of ABC. If you have tidbits of past history that you would like to share, please contact Heidi Burnham at our office.

I am also excited to announce that we will have an opportunity to celebrate the past and future of the ABC at our upcoming Annual Business meeting on May 9th at the Heard Museum. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for this great event!

We of course started off this year with the kickoff of the state legislature in January. The state's poor financial condition is taking a burdensome toll on numerous state agencies and most notably the Department of Agriculture. The Agriculture Lobby is working hard to keep the pain to a minimum. We are also dealing with Immigration, Railroad Site Review legislation, Structural Pest Commission changes, Energy bill provisions and Navigable Stream Adjudication Commission continuation, just to name a few issues.

In addition, we have taken a number of journeys to Sonora, Mexico as we work to assist Sonoran officials to create a "shadow organization" of ABC and share ideas about water use and efficiency in Arizona and Sonora. We presented our proposals in February and now look forward to the progress our colleagues are making as they fashion their own organization. I recently traveled to Hermosillo with AMC Water Committee Chairman Herb Guenther and Co-Chairman Dave Roberts, Committee members and others to discuss Arizona water issues with our Sonoran counterparts in early March. Our own Executive Committee member, John Hetrick serves on the Water Committee.

This quarter, we also received approval and funding to work with the Arizona Water Institute and researchers from the University of Arizona and Arizona State University to conduct "Listening Sessions" throughout the state. The goal is to bring growers and spouses together to talk about the current state of agriculture and also come up with future agriculture scenarios we may anticipate in the future. We start our sessions in Yuma on April 7th. Stay tuned for a Listening Session near you.

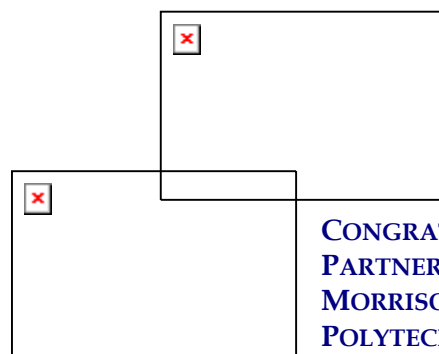
We participated in the annual Ag. Legislative Luncheon at the State Capitol on March 4th. It was very well attended by our Legislators. Major kudos to staff at the Arizona Cotton Growers Association, Arizona Nursery Association, Yuma Fresh Vegetable Association and others who made the event such a great success. We are always grateful to be able to participate in this important event each year.

This next quarter, a number of us will be traveling to Washington, DC to meet with our Arizona Congressional Delegation to discuss issues affecting water and agriculture. I also look forward to our Annual Meeting in May and the Arizona-Mexico Commission Plenary Session in Phoenix, June 20-21. I hope that your year is progressing nicely, is fruitful and eventful, and I look forward to the association with you throughout the year!

Chris Udall
Executive Director

Serving Arizona from ditch bank to dinner plate for 30 years.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO ABC AND SRP FOR RECEIVING THE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AWARD PRESENTED BY DR. PAUL PATTERSON, DEAN OF THE MORRISON SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND AGRI-BUSINESS, ASU POLYTECHNIC CAMPUS ON MARCH 27, 2008!

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ORGANIZATIONAL TRIP TO HERMOSILLO, MEXICO

By N.W. Bill Plummer
Water Consultant

The Agri-Business Council of Arizona (ABC) has been involved in a series of meetings with Mexican agricultural interests in the State of Sonora, Mexico. During meetings on February 19-21, 2008, ABC Executive Director Chris Udall, Treasurer Dr. George Seperich and Executive Committee members Mike Proctor, John Hetrick and Bill Plummer, along with Brett Cameron from the Arizona Department of Agriculture traveled to Hermosillo, Sonora, for additional meetings with Sonoran officials. After a welcome meeting the evening of February 19th by the Secretary of Agriculture (Sonora) Sr. Alejandro Elias Callas G., more informal discussions with Mexican representatives were held on the morning of February 20. Among the more active and involved discussants was the president of the Technological Institute of Sonora or the Instituto de Tecnológico De Sonora (ITSON) and his contingent. Later in the day, a number of briefings were conducted by both the ABC representatives and the Sonoran officials led by Undersecretary Marco Antonio Camou L. The Mexican briefing included some history of agriculture and irrigation in the State of Sonora, but specifically a description of Sonora's proposed new organization, El Consejo de Agronegocios de Sonora, designed to be comparable with ABC. Approximately 20 representatives of the Government of Sonora, ITSON, irrigation districts and farmers attended the briefing with a high degree of enthusiasm. We look forward to the next Arizona-Mexico Commission (AMC) meeting (to be held in Phoenix June 20-21) to witness the progress in forming the shadow Agri-Business Council or Consejo in Sonora. Both Governors Napolitano and Bours signed off on this formation as an "action item" at the Arizona-Mexico Commission meeting held last fall in Ciudad Obregon, Sonora. We anticipate that the Consejo in Sonora will be organized before the June AMC Plenary session in Phoenix.

MANAGING FOR EXCELLENCE

Provided by Dan DuBray
U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation

The Bureau of Reclamation's *Managing for Excellence* initiative has concluded, marking a new beginning for the agency.

Managing for Excellence provided the opportunity for Reclamation to evaluate and strengthen its mission through collaboration with partners and stakeholders to effectively meet water and power resource challenges in the Western United States.

This widespread initiative provided insight into Reclamation's challenges and opportunities, made recommendations for improvement and developed detailed implementation plans to ensure Reclamation could continue to meet its goals during the 21st century.

"Managing for Excellence marks an important evolution in the history of Reclamation," said Commissioner Bob Johnson. "We are pleased to see the culmination of months of hard work through the successful completion of this important initiative. We are now implementing the recommendations that will continue to allow us to be more accountable to our customers and stakeholders, while increasing the efficiency and transparency of our work."

As part of the initiative, Reclamation has facilitated communication with its customers, stakeholders and partners to gain a better understanding of their expectations and concerns. The development of effective collaborative relationships with customers and other stakeholders continues to be a critical component of Reclamation becoming more efficient, transparent and accountable.

The final public meeting of *Managing for Excellence* was held on Feb. 29, 2008 in Las Vegas, Nev., following the annual conference of the Family Farm Alliance. As one of Reclamation's largest stakeholders, The Family Farm Alliance has taken an active role in the *Managing for Excellence* process and has participated in all Reclamation public workshops since 2006.

Full completion of the 52 of over 100 *Managing for Excellence* implementation items is anticipated by December 2008.

To learn more about *Managing for Excellence* and its goal of achieving improved "Efficiency, Transparency and Accountability" for the agency with its stakeholders and the public, please visit www.usbr.gov/eta.

RAILROAD LEGISLATION

By N.W. Bill Plummer
Water Consultant

Last year, House Bill 2020 was introduced in the state legislature to require that Railroads allow the Arizona Corporation Commission to review proposed rail lines in Arizona. HB 2020 won super-majority support in both the House and the Senate but was vetoed by the governor. This year, in early January, the lobbyists for the bill and others met with the Governor's staff to discuss concerns they had with last year's bill. In mid-January HB 2156 was introduced and assigned to the Counties, Municipalities and Military Affairs Committee (CMMA). The introduced version was very similar to last year's bill.

On January 29th the CMMA Committee heard HB 2156. The committee requested that both sides begin discussions to reach some common ground. Several negotiations with the Railroad's representatives and state agencies (Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and the State Land Department) resulted in an amendment to HB 2156 reassigning oversight from the Corporation Commission to ADOT. The bill passed through the various committees and on March 24, the bill was voted on in the House and passed 42-15, with three not voting. The amendment would require the railroad to provide certain data for review by ADOT before any eminent domain land acquisition could begin. The bill then moved to the Senate where, on April 1, the Senate Transportation Committee passed the bill 4-0 with one absent. The bill now continues through the Senate where support for passage will be required. The status quo would threaten the operations of irrigation districts wherever a rail line would cross irrigation facilities and would also threaten prime agricultural lands all of which necessitates public review and input.

ANNUAL MEETING

Each year, the Agri-Business Council hosts an Annual Business Meeting. This meeting is one of two major events ABC holds each fiscal year to benefit the entire agriculture community in the State of Arizona. This year's Meeting will be held on Friday, May 9, 2008 at 8:30am at the Heard Museum in Phoenix, Arizona. If you have not yet received an invitation to the meeting, please feel free to contact Heidi Burnham at 480-558-5301 to register. We look forward to seeing you there!

NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome Provost and Pritchard Engineering Group and Sandy Creighton as the 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!

CAREER OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE

We will soon be saying good bye to our Executive Assistant at the end of August who is leaving to spend more time with family. If you know of anyone that may be interested in this full time position, please contact Chris Udall at 480-558-5301 or fax a resume to 480-558-4170.
