

## Interview with Leonard Trujillo

Intro: My name is still Bonnie Leverton. It's still Friday, July 28, 2006, and if we can start over again with you introducing yourself.

A. My name is Leonard Trujillo. I live in 7127 Highway 64, Bloomfield, New Mexico. I'm a life long resident of San Juan County. Born and raised in New Mexico. I was born about three miles below Navajo Dam and been here all of my life. I worked at Navajo Dam for five years for Morris, Kaiser, & Knudson building the Navajo Dam and then I began working for the Bureau of Reclamation June 29, 1963. I worked there until they finished the project. They moved to California and they wanted me to go with them but I decided to stay there. I went to the Bureau asked if they needed anyone to help. They told me I could put in an application and began working there as a laborer in June 29, 1963, and I worked my way from there to Reservoir Superintendent for the last twenty years and retired in '94. So like I say, I've been here a long time.

Q. You went along way at that dam.

A. All my life, I worked at Navajo Dam.

Q. Tell me about your younger years when you were growing up.

A. I was born at a farm like I said below Navajo Dam. I went to school at Bloomfield schools. I married here and raised our three sons. I worked for the Bureau of Reclamation and my wife retired from the Bloomfield schools. Where incidentally, I was a school board member there for eighteen years. I was active in the community. Active in the education of my children. I was state president for two

years in Santa Fe and throughout with the New Mexico School Board Association. So I've been involved in a lot of things.

Q. When you were growing up, you were there before the dam. What was the land like before the dam?

A. Well, it was a real nice community where Navajo Dam is at, below it. It was called Los Martinez and there were probably twenty families. There was a little country school there that had from the first grade to the eighth grade about fifteen students. We all got along real well. Played baseball there and the teacher lived in the little one room school house. It was run by the county at the time. And then the government bought out all of the lands and moved the people out and they started tearing down buildings and taking the material up to Navajo Dam to build the dam. Worked day and night and at that time, 1959, I got a job with the people there and they said well, we can just give you your diploma or you can wait to graduate. I was already intending on getting married and I said no. I need a job. I'll take my diploma and go to work. So I did that.

Q. On the farm and everything else, you knew how important water was to farming and stuff like that. Did you have an idea of what the water issues were going on?

A. Absolutely. We had a diversion dam that began. As a matter of fact, I have some pictures. It's right below Navajo Dam, where the center of the dam is there was a diversion dam that every year after the spring run off, we would have to go up there and put up cedar trees and rocks and build up the little diversion dam. And that little canal ran probably down four miles on down there. All of the men would get together at certain times in the spring and work on the ditch and that's how we got our irrigation.

Q. It's kind of ironic that you ended up controlling the whole dam.

A. Right.

Q. Was that Acequias?

A. Yes, that was Acequias.

Q. And mayordomo?

A. Absolutely. Somebody was in charge and we would go out there and work. My grandparents owned the farm and my uncle who raised me there, my parents actually moved to Utah. He worked in the mines in Price, Utah. But I enjoyed staying there at the farm and helping with it. We used to raise a lot of chili, vegetables, had a good orchid, and raised peaches, apples, the best apples in the world. And grandpa was telling us what to do so I loved it. I loved the farm, still farming.

Q. Did you ever go through any drought years as a kid?

A. Well no, not so much, drought years were later on. We had some pretty good snows in there. As a matter of fact, the big snow of '63 I believe. We got about two feet of snow. I was already working for Morris, Kaiser & Knudson and we got a big snow. Back then, as a matter of fact, the river used to freeze at one time you know. A lot of people don't realize that before Navajo Dam, the water would be cold just like it was up in Colorado. In those shady spots, you could walk across the river, okay. And we would have floods, now me being familiar

with water, there are records where that river ran at twenty thousand cfs and it was bank to bank in early spring. But also a lot of people don't realize that in the later part of August or September, you could walk across it just over the on rocks. So it would get down to nothing, less, less than the two hundred that they're thinking of. Just like the Animas-La Plata River, it would get real low, real high, and real low.

Q. What were you planning to be? Were you just always going to be a farmer?

A. I guess I'm just going through life. I never planned on it. I just hit me right and I enjoyed it and I'm happy with my life. I have my own place and I bought it then and had a good job and have my good retirement. I'm happy with life.

Q. Did you ever go to college at all?

A. No. I went directly to working there and I was superintendent the last years. It was the best job in the world. Since I knew it, I did I think a good job.

Q. Tell me a little bit about when you were doing the labor stuff. You said you just had a shovel.

A. Yes. Since I worked for different parts of it, I remember one of my first jobs was spading up the lawn there around the superintendent's house. I had to bring my own tools, drill, and hammers and stuff like that. I was the only one there for six months and then they hired another person to help me. There was a lot of different things that needed to be done. What happens with a large project like that is after they finish, there are still small stuff that the contractor didn't do or the superintendent or whoever is in charge decided that he wanted to do.

Another one of the first jobs I remember, there's a lot to do at Navajo Dam that people don't understand. There are tunnels all around through there up to the main gates and there's a walkway that had a ventilation pipe. In fact, I helped install the ventilation pipe. And we built it too low to the walkway; you'd bump your head on it. So we just put some ribbons on it and later on one of the first things I did was take that ventilation pipe and raise it up where you wouldn't hit your head on it. Little did I know that it was job security? I put it on and then got paid to take it off.

Q. How long did it take to build the dam?

A. Five years, 1958 until '63.

Q. Did they divert the river somehow?

A. Well, the way they did that is that they built half of the dam and compacted it all and then built the other one and while they were doing that they were drilling the tunnel through the embankment, okay. And then they diverted, put a coffer dam in front of it, and then diverted it back through the tunnel. There's two tunnels actually. There's a small tunnel which we called, a four by four, and then the large tunnel which is where the water comes out now. So they would do one or the other while they were making the releases and then go up with the fill all the way to the top.

Q. Why did they put the dam right there? Why the Navajo Dam?

A. Well for several reasons if you are familiar with the area, it makes a bend in there therefore the force of the water . . . which a lot of people don't realize, when you

build a dam, you don't want the force of the water to hit the middle of the embankment which is the weakest spot. The way it was designed is that it made the bend in the natural weight of the dam, the water currents and all would hit the mountainside and not the dam itself. So there was a better location for it; however, when they built the dam, they put what they called a core wall which is a concrete wall down on the abutments and pumped concrete in it. Later on, they found out that they didn't go far enough because we started having, after they started impounding water, we started having a lot of seepage. This seepage was not directly where the dam meets the abutment. It's not right there. The water would go way back in there, maybe a hundred, two hundred yards and then come back down on the outside. There was potential for erosion there. So they paid a French company that had a special machine that would put a block of walls straight between the abutment and the dam itself. They worked there I think over a year.

Q. Was that the same French company that you were talking about . . .

A. Yes that is the French company. They didn't speak any English. The only company in the world that had done one job for the government someplace. It was interesting to watch them actually. They would take this machine, it was three feet wide by ten feet wide and it had these rollers. And these rollers would drill down in there and they'd pump water in it and they had a suction pump that would turn it into slurry then it would pump the water up. I mean the material up to the outside and then dispose of it and when they got down to the desired elevation, and then they would pump concrete. Real soft concrete back down into that same area so as the machine was drilling down, it was taking the material out. And when they started back up, they had a way of pumping water, concrete, down on the bottom and they began in columns. And they would make a column all the way to the top. Well, then they would miss a ten foot piece and then do another column. And then they would come back and get in between.

In the meantime, they would drill through two feet of that other column on both sides of the ten foot column and so they kind of made a little checkered thing all the way to the top.

As I was mentioning to you, when they were going to the diagram of where they showed you. It was going to be where, during construction of the dam when we were drilling to do the core drilling, since it was so poor and had a lot of crevices when you're drilling with a machine, you're drilling with air. You're lose air; therefore, you stick the machine. You stick the drill. So nothing else you can do but leave that hole and begin with another one. And there's a technique that once you start, and I learned that the hard way, you run your machine full blast with all of the air so that your chips or your sand comes back over the top. You don't tally at all, for no reason at all. Drill your hole and come back out and then you've got your hole. Then they pour concrete in it. So they made a wall with concrete but they didn't go far enough. So that's the reason why they had to redo it. In the meantime, they drilled through all of this stuff and I told them they could not drill through that inch and a half steel. They said that they could. I said I don't believe so. They found out they didn't. They wanted additional money to redesign. They were drilling with diamond bits and they had the bits where they were in a place like this and the steel was so hard, it just kept breaking the bits. So they wanted four million dollars to change the design, just exactly what I said they should have done to begin with. But there were additional costs, another four million dollars and the government said just pay them and throw it away, government money.

Q. Well aside from that, was it impressive watching the dam go up for you?

A. Yes. I worked very hard at it and since I lived close by it, I used to work all I could, all the over time I possibly could.

Q. You actually watched it develop and become a real dam.

A. Yes. Then I got to work taking care of it all through years during the initial filling of it. A lot of people don't realize that when the spring run off comes, we just couldn't afford to . . . you don't put the strain and the stress that a bunch of water will hit a bank that has not had time to settle. So there's a recommendation of a maximum of one foot that you can put on it. And so we would have to make larger releases and let a lot of the water go through while we were building it, filling it up, the initial filling.

Q. How long did it take to fill?

A. It took several years. You just caught the spring run off and it all depends on how much you could catch because you had to leave a lot of the water to go down. Not so much that you needed the water downstream, but that you wanted to regulate how fast the reservoir was rising.

Q. What kind of problems did you encounter when you were building the dam?  
Were there any big problems you had to overcome?

A. Well mostly weather. In the winter time, you couldn't compact. You had different parts of it, there are different zones. A lot of people don't realize that in the core of the dam, there's what they call a "Zone One" material which is your hard packed which is your clays and sands mixture. And so therefore, you run a lot of sheep's foot and compacting material right down the center of it. And then another layer to each side, a different kind of material a lot of rock and what not. And then rock and gravel on the outside and then they put riprap on the top part where the wave action. That material they bought it from Dulce, New Mexico, it's

a hard granite type of rock. And then, you see a lot of people don't realize, but every ten feet of that whole dam there are instruments put up there. And these instruments are little plastic instruments that have got these little tips that feel the weight of the water ahead of it. You can tell whether the water is coming into the embankment a long time before it gets there. And every ten feet in elevation and every twenty feet all the way across the dam, these little feelers are there. And now they're all on the computer. Back then, we had to read them. You could read them in feet, water pressure on it. So you always had an understanding of what the water is doing. The four hundred feet that's on the top side, you can understand that it has not gotten soak in up in the dam hardly any at all.

Q. Was the dam put there, was it building a reservoir or was it flood control, or why was the dam built?

A. It was basically flood control and also to store water for the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project. That was the main reason for building it. They were simultaneously working on both of them at the same time.

Q. What was the irrigation thing?

A. Excuse me.

Q. Tell me what the Navajo Irrigation . . .

A. The Navajo Indian Irrigation Project that's a hundred and ten thousand acres that they have south of Farmington. A big irrigation project that later on they built different tunnels and the water comes from Navajo Dam all the way south of

Shiprock as a matter of fact, big project, a big farming community with a government, Navajo Indian Irrigation Project.

Q. Was the water from the dam was it only for that? Was it distributed like they parcel out the San Juan and Colorado Rivers, was the water from the Navajo Dam parceled out also?

A. No. Of course, they still get their water from there. There is some water that's taken out there, Chama, that goes to Albuquerque and what not. It comes from the diversion, the little Watchamita and \_\_\_\_\_ **(23:30)** back there in that area.

Q. So tell me about your time you said you started as a laborer, when you actually went to work for the Bureau of Reclamation? Tell me about your progression upward.

A. Well I worked for several years as the laborer there as I say. Then I worked my way as a maintenance man and I worked several years there. And then, they had two houses below Navajo Dam there. And my supervisors knew that I knew all about what was happening. My immediate supervisor, he retired and went back to Nebraska and they wanted me to take over the job but they had a regulation that you had to live there. I said I don't want to live here. I've got my own farm down here fifteen miles. They had that regulation so I didn't apply for it. So they got another gentleman from Texas, Wayne. And so he was superintendent there for awhile and then he left. And then my boss, Larry Anderson, we were transferred at the time. They were going to build a power plant so we were transferred from the Durango Projects Office to the Montrose Curecanti Field Division which is tied with Glen Canyon and five other dams. And Larry Anderson said, "Well Leonard we want you to be the superintendent

here because you know what's happening. I'll do away with that regulation. Will you take the job?" And I said, "Yes." So I didn't have to move up there. I could still commute. Of course, I was on the radio and cell phone and hooked up to everything in the world. And of course when they were building, doing this retrofit with the French company, there was a lot of tension. There was another dam somewhere up there in Colorado that broke, or Utah I guess. And so there were a lot of people that were afraid and there was a lot of fear downstream that the reason why they were doing that is because the dam could break at anytime. So myself with the rest of the Bureau people were trying to reassure the people that it was not an immediate danger that was not why they were doing the retrofit, but for the future that it could possibly turn in to it. So we had two hats to wear there.

Q. So after you were the superintendent, what did you do?

A. Well then I took care of the reservoir and went through the whole shebang and then comes along a lot of other issues. Like I say, what's interesting that I always thought was way back in the '60s, one day I went out there and there was fish just floating all over creation there. And I asked what's with the dead fish and he said well we put some rotin ( 26:41) in and it killed all the fish. And I said what do you mean, why did you kill them and he said they're trash fish. They're the Colorado Sucker okay. We tried to kill them all and I'll be darned if we didn't mess up and left three alive and so now they're trying to spend millions and millions of dollars to bring them back in to design. As Governor Bullock told us one time at a meeting, if you guys wouldn't do such a lousy job with the government you would've got those three and we wouldn't have this problem. So that's the story.

Q. That was the environmentalists.

A. Yeah, so we left those three. To this day, I don't know. When I left, they'd already spent seven million dollars and they still only had three fish. I used to kid them. I used to say why don't you catch those fish and see if they're male and female. You guys need to establish that. That might be a reason why you're not doing it. I used to give them a hard time. What they were doing with this recovery is trying to simulate preconstruction, okay. Now preconstruction is ten thousand in the high and fifty in the low and you're going to go to five hundred on the low and five thousand in the high. I said you're missing it by fifty percent on both sides. I'd hate to go hunting with that kind of odds against you. You're just ain't ever going to get it.

Q. Did they listen to you?

A. No, they're still at it. I don't think they've made any advances at all. I haven't heard. I don't know where they're at.

Q. So I guess your opinion of mainstream political environmental movement is pretty . . .

A. Well, it's so simple that if they want that kind of a fish, they know the species and what not. I suggested to them just hatch them and put them in there and you have a thousand. Now find out through your system how many is there. You could be drowning them. This five thousand is what they wanted and originally the way we were operating is that you would conserve the water, fill up the reservoir. Then what I would do is figure out how much water is in the spring run off, which is up in the high mountains, how much water to expect so I would make room for it at Navajo Dam. That was part of my job.

And I will always remember, I think it was in 1984, when they overran Glen Canyon and all five dams spilt, except Navajo Dam. We got real close but every morning I would talk to the gentleman that I was working with from Salt Lake on water releases. I would tell Lee Morrison, I'll never forget his name, I've got to run two thousand more I need to make another foot. He says, "Leonard we may not need it." I said, "If we don't need it, we can always turn water loose and if we do need it, I got the space." It's easy to restrict but once you lose control then it's hady by the door. I said it's a little insurance, let me do this. Okay, okay, okay. He was undecided so I would talk him in to it and made room. And after all of this fiasco, the Project Manager that was running things in Salt Lake, Regional Director Ron Johnson, calls me up one day. He says, "Leonard what did we do different? That's the only reservoir out of five that didn't spill last year." And I said, "It's that Lee Morrison. He's one heck of a good man." I didn't tell him that I was bending him. Because I could see here, I was working closely with the Weather Service. A fellow by the name of Miller in Albuquerque and he would tell me what they have up there. These people up there, that are in charge of the reservoir, aren't paying attention that we are getting local snows up here in Bayfield, Colorado. I told my boss one time, "Here it is May and we've got two feet in Ignacio. It's never been that way. That water is going to come down, that snow is going to melt and it's going to come down." He said, "Well we can't be running the reservoir by what old timers tell you what's happening in Ignacio." I said, "I'm not suggesting that we run it by that but we better listen."

Q. Good thing you did. What year was that?

A. I think it was 1984 I believe when it's built.

Q. What would've happened if it would've overrun? Would the dam have held?

A. Well, no it just would've spilt and then you have no control. That's what happens really when you have no control. So what you are trying to do is figure out Mother Nature so that you make room. And now, of course, they have five thousand that they want to do it. Maybe two weeks of work maybe three weeks or whatever. In the meantime, we were taking care of the flood part of it and we weren't flooding the whole valley downstream. So now you just run it and it destroys people's property and you have bank erosion and all kinds of different problems that you cause. That was not the intent.

Q. That's has to be tough to know how much water can you release.

A. But once you know, you don't keep doing it.

Start that thought over again, we're rolling.

A. Okay, what happens is the five thousand that you could normally run and not have all of the erosion control and all the damage that you do downstream and so, although you don't need to run five thousand. Five thousand is basically for the fish project. A few years ago, if you have a dry year it makes sense to store the water not run it down there because it might benefit a few fish. Just like Governor Bullock told us one time after you do all of this, you still have trash fish. You didn't advance humanity any. And if it's of some useful use then you should have them. Raise them all you want. How many is enough? What's the goal? It's kind of like the war now; we don't know where we go and don't know where we've been.

Q. When you were making decisions about how much water to release or not release and everything else were people always understanding about okay I can

see why you have to reduce that much or you're not giving us as much as we want. What was your action?

A. They made a lot of different changes. At the time, we were under the Durango Projects Office and they had a water person there that was over Operations and Maintenance that I would work with, but the calls were being made out of Salt Lake City. And so I had direct contact with Salt Lake as to our releases. Sometimes we would consult with Durango. But ever since then, they've change it. They've changed everything around. Nobody knows what they're doing anytime anywhere. They were going to improve on the government but they just lost it I think.

Q. Back in those days, did you rely on water releases and what was going to happen by was it all purely scientific or did you call on your experience and say well there's two feet of snow in Ignacio and there's got to be . . . how did you do that? Was it kind of a mixture?

A. Yes and then I worked with the Weather Service also. See they measure the water up in the high country, up there in the San Juan Mountains. If you got ten feet of snow, it translates into maybe so many acre feet of water. A foot of snow might mean three inches of water. But then you have to take in was last year a dry year? So a lot of that water although it will come down, not all of it will get down here because it goes into the ground depending on the dry year. What it was last fall? If you get a lot of snow and the water is already saturated, you'll get a lot of that coming back down. A lot of common sense that you have to use in there, also let's say that all of the sudden you get a hot weather streak. Well all the water dries, snow melts, so it comes down real fast and you get it all over here. And you can tell, you compute your inflow everyday. You can tell what is happening. It's not all of the sudden, it's just a gradual. You compute it. You figure out I'm releasing say two thousand cfs and I've got five thousand coming

in. Well, you know that I'm going to store three. Three computes into three inches of height on the dam. So then as you go, you figure how much room I have. When you start getting up to the top, a lot of people don't realize the higher the elevation the more space you have on the reservoir because you've got to go up into all those flat parts of your the canyon. So there is a lot of common sense that you have to use there.

Q. It's tough to compute common sense though.

A. If people will work together. See what has happened anymore, the reservoir superintendent here hardly has any input. He's just been told. And I guess maybe it's the personality of the people, I was just hard headed and would fight with my supervisor and tell them that sort of stuff. The guy who took my place well he just, whatever they say he accepts it. I'll always remember, I had a disagreement with a gentleman one time and they said . . . he asked me for my superior. It really upset me. I said, "No one is superior. Are you implying that I'm inferior?" I work for a guy but he's not superior, he's just an young engineer who got out of college and he asks me what are we going to do. But he got the position and that's where we're at. But we work together, he cooperates with me.

Q. You mentioned the power plant was that owned by the Bureau?

A. Originally during construction of the plan, there was a provision for a future power plant. The provision was in dispensed out, which was the large pipe they made a deal for it. On the side of it so they could remove this . . . it's like a big cap on a big pipe so they could remove that and build a power plant. A lot of foresight went in to it, into originally building a power plant. Well, the Bureau decided to build this power plant. As a matter of fact, they began building the power plant and then the environmentalists stopped them because basically

what it was that when they were to put these generators on there, was it going to be on demand power generation or was it going to be steady power generation into the system, into the grid system for Farmington and back into the system with Glen Canyon and what not. Provide power into this large network. And so there were some issues there and anyway they stopped it. And then along comes Farmington and they put in for this provision that was in the government framework that private entities could build a power plant on government installation. So although they had let out the contract, by the way that contractor was an awful happy gentleman because they paid him his contract. He'd gone about ninety days into the contract and it was thirty days behind and they paid him not to work. So he went home one happy jolly guy and the government ate it. So then here comes Farmington and they build it, with the intentions of course of running this power plant. In reality I used to give them heck because the power plant needs six hundred cfs minimum. And they could run one generator and they could be generating power today, okay. During all of this time, they don't have to go to this two hundred. Run the minimum like we used to and it's a win, win because the power plant, the City of Farmington, could be making money and we'll be fine and the heck with the fish. They'll survive. We don't need to change the world for the fish. We have the fish change for the world. That's just nature.

Q. Did they listen to you?

A. No. I think the power plant just runs half way I think half of the time whenever they're running. And for sure this two hundred that they run on the minimum for a period of November or whatever, that's a lost cause. No benefit.

Q. In your years and everything, what do you see as the biggest water issues for New Mexico?

A. Well, I think the trend is for drought conditions. You will find it. One of these days they are going to have to find out that we need to conserve that water and use it for purposes. There building like crazy in Albuquerque. Every time I go to Rio Rancho over there I have some friends, there's a hundred more houses and a thousand more houses and they're still plans to build more and build more and build more. One day it's going to be a rude awakening, it takes so much water for each house and somewhere it's got to come from some place and this is the only place around.

You know they're thinking of running water now to Gallup. All that water comes from that reservoir.

Q. Is there enough water in the reservoir to share that much?

A. Well, some years there could be and some years there's not.

Q. Chance it'll run out forever?

A. Oh yes, very possible. A few years ago it was real low. The lowest it's ever been. As a matter of fact, almost got low enough where the water, where they would have to close the San Juan just to provide half of the water that they need for the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project. See that diversion can only divert so much water above a certain elevation otherwise there head gates will now allow it them. There diversion is not at the bottom. It's at the top, the top seventy-five feet I believe of the reservoir. And when the reservoir gets that low, they have to shut that project down.

Q. It didn't get that low?

A. No but it got close.

Q. What happened?

A. Things changed. The weather helped a little bit. But it can get that far and so they'll have to stop that project. There should be more water projects built.

Q. If they build water projects like what kind of water projects are you talking about?

A. Reservoirs. There haven't been any reservoirs built since back then.

Q. The thing I'm hearing is that maybe they'll never have a big construction project like that anymore in the Southwest. Have you heard anything like that?

A. No, that's what I've heard but that's the wrong thing to think about. A lot of people don't realize how important water . . . water is life that's just all there is to it, you can't get away from it. Water is life and water is progress. If there's no water to drink, you're not going to do without unless we turn to reptiles or something. It's a fact of life.

Q. It's tough to stop progress. It's tough to stop people from moving into the Southwest.

A. But that's one of the concerns that they better address now. There's no point in building a thousand houses with no restroom with an outhouse in the back.

People won't go for that. But they're not thinking of it you know long term. People think of what's immediate because it's okay. Twenty years from now, what's going to happen?

Q. Do you think there's anybody out there thinking ahead maybe trying to meet this challenge?

A. I don't think so. Everybody's just thinking of the future, I mean the present not thinking of the future at all.

Q. Do you see in the future that maybe the water will run out?

A. Well it won't run out completely but there's got to be a rude awakening. Out here in the Southwest, everybody . . . you talk to politicians and everybody wants growth. But you don't think about what it takes to promote that growth or even keep it afloat after you got it. How are we going to take care of it once its here? We want growth but with growth come all of these different elements that's necessary and needed you know.

Look where we are at with the energy crises. If they would've started think of that fifty years ago, we'd be planting corn.

Q. What are some water issues that you personally have been involved in?

A. Well it hasn't affected me personally in the fact that I get my water from the citizen's ditch and that comes from the top of Navajo Dam and we've always had enough water. We've always had enough water because we just use the water okay. Some day as water gets scarce; it's going to be a major mint of water.

Everybody's going to have to just get so much water and there ain't going to be any at the end of the line. There's going to be a lot of people without water for the local farming, for the cities even. Farmington Lake dries out over here. Bloomfield has very limited amount of storage project over there where they get the water for Bloomfield. They provide water for all of the Hammonds and now for Blanco and all of these different things. They've not increased their storage capacity. They still only have a ten day supply so if something happens to the ditch, these people are rationing water. And here they're building more homes well it looks like somebody would say dah we need to build a bigger storage capacity because we need more water. Something could happen to that irrigation ditch, which is the citizen's ditch, and does happen all the time. And they have a poor maintenance program there all of the time. When I was under operation and maintenance, I always figured prevention is worth a pound of cure. And maintenance is taking care of the problem before it breaks. If you see a crack, fix it. Don't let it break and then shut down.

Q. Well it seems like if it gets to the point where they're rationing water for certain things that people are going to vote yeah we have drinking water in the rural communities to take care of itself but what about the farming and stuff? What happens then?

A. Well they're not thinking that far ahead. Then they want the government to come in and do something drastic.

Q. But where you involved in any other water issues like the streams commission or the water commission here?

A. No. I was encouraged one time to put in for the water commission because I had experience with it and I have been experienced with doing public works and

stuff. With my local farming and my involvement with the schools and my job over there, I was already putting in a lot of hours. And these kind of jobs it take . . . you know if you run with the crowd then no problem but I would've sure enough been in the middle of it. I would've been outspoken about it and then you've got a lot of different problems. I try to think of decisions that you make now, I always thought of them with the schools, what effect is that going to have downstream? How is that going to affect you kids, like in education? I mean it don't effect them now but ten years from now when that kid can't read after he gets in the eighth grade, you've got a problem. And you can't correct it in a year. You've done lost eight years. Take care of it now. See what's going to happen down the road.

Q. Were you involved at all or are you involved at all with the Animas-La Plata Project?

A. No. I don't think anybody's involved with the Animas-La Plata. They just chopped it down and cut it down and this and the other. Now there building I think half of the project over there. Nothing what the people voted for. They voted, sixty percent of the San Juan citizens voted for a full fledged project. And so now they cut it down to a piece half a dozen people . . . there wasn't over a half dozen people and they had no real reason. They never could understand that they had a minimum of a hundred and twenty-five cfs that they would release. They never understood that you stored the water, the high water that goes down and floods you out and drowns you. You store it and then you release it when you need it. So they prefer to have the seventy-five in August versus a hundred and twenty-five and they said we're going to dry the river. They don't get that a hundred and twenty-five is more than seventy-five. To me it's simple. That's what we did at Navajo Dam. When it's dry, you release more water. You have it there, store it. And that's all they were going to do with the

Animas-La Plata. Store the high water, pump the high water, store it, fill up your reservoir, and then release it when you need it.

Q. When you were at Navajo Dam, what were your biggest successes? You were successful in what you were doing right?

A. Well in operation and maintenance of it, we used to operate it where we didn't have these kinds of problems. I had the reservoir up there. The recreation was plentiful. The water issues were fine. The economy, all these different people who depend on the river to make a living, they don't have this fluctuation up and down. I would make my releases on a Monday. If I had any changes, I wouldn't do it over the weekend because you would have people come from Albuquerque or Japan to come fishing on the weekend. If you release the water, the fishing has gone to hell. Well, you caused that with a little consideration, it's a win, win situation. Think about somebody else rather than I'm the government I do what I want. It's a bad way of thinking in my opinion.

Q. My last question, is there any advice that you would give to the people who are in charge of water issues right now in New Mexico, any advice you would give them?

A. I would give them the advice that they need to build more projects. They need to reinforce what they do have and think before how you are going to provide the water. I foresee that the water projects are going to be very, very important. Any time that you have this big building situation . . . the city is real proud that Farmington is growing and then in the middle of the summer – hey we've got to close it down, we're in stage 3, stage 2, and stage 1. You cost all those stages. You're not thinking. I mean build a larger reservoir.

Q. Is there enough water to fill larger reservoirs?

A. Well it's better than not having any. You lose a lot of water going downstream and I realize that there are commitments down there. Mexico has to have so much water and this and the other. But that's a growth that people have to understand. If there's not enough water to go around and you got to have so much down there and you keep growing over here, someday what's going to happen?

Q. You are also talking about rivers that are over allocated as far as who gets what share and everything else. They're giving away more water than it actually has. And when you have a drought, that's a problem right?

A. You bet. That's what's happening over here. It's going to keep getting worse and worse and worse. It isn't going to get any better. A lot of people don't believe that there's global warming and all of these different things. We went took an Alaskan cruise this past year and we seen where those glaciers used to be and where they're coming now. A lot of people don't realize and a lot of people don't care. You're nice and happy and just had a big steak and you're fine and in good health, hell with the future.

Q. As you look back on your life do you have any regrets? Would you have done something different? Would you've gone some other way?

A. No absolutely not. I'm happy with myself. I like me. I'm happy. I have a good life. I have my farm, my family, my grandkids, and I do what I want to do.

Q. And you had a good record in your career?

A. And I had a good record back in those days. I see some of the other people that I inter-mingled with in the government and they tell me things have gone to hell since I left. I go see the superintendent working over there now and he said he can't even do this and can't do that and he has to take orders from some person who never comes to the dam.

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