

Monthly Briefing

A Summary of the Alliance's Recent and Upcoming Activities and Important Water News

San Joaquin Crisis Grabs DC Attention *Congress and Obama Administration Respond*

New federal recommendations crafted to aid threatened and endangered fish species have further elevated the angst of California water users, and policy makers in Washington are taking notice.

Earlier this month, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) released a new biological opinion that outlines changes the agency will require to the operation of the State Water Project and the federal Central Valley Project to protect salmon and other species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The NMFS opinion found that state and federal water pumping from California's Bay-Delta system is contributing to the possible extinction of salmon, sturgeon, steelhead, and – to the dismay of many – southern resident killer whales. As a result, Delta water exports will be reduced 330,000 acre feet. This is above and beyond water reductions that have already been mandated due to the Delta Smelt by another federal agency –

the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) – in December 2008.

The latest government proposal to protect fish drew the ire of agricultural and urban water users alike.

“As nearly as I can tell from the NMFS Biological Opinion, they are issuing requirements that will cost a lot of water but they won't say how much,” said Dan Nelson, executive director of the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority, which provides water to thousands of acres of farmland in the Western San Joaquin Valley. “It will help the fish in ways that they cannot begin to predict.”

“This opinion adds another layer to a complicated landscape for California's water managers,” said Timothy Quinn, executive director of the Association of California Water Agencies. “These new requirements underscore the difficulty of making our half-century old water delivery infrastructure work for both the environment and the economy.”

Westlands Water District and San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority quickly responded with a lawsuit against NMFS, intended to force the

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Interior Secretary Ken Salazar addresses the California water shortage before an audience in Fresno, June 28. Pictured (L to R) are Mr. Salazar, Deputy Secretary David J. Hayes, BOR Commissioner Mike Connor and California Secretary of Resources Mike Chrisman. At the table on the right are California Congressional Representatives George Radanovich, Dennis Cardoza, Devin Nunes and Jim Costa. Photo Credit: Tami A. Heilemann DOI

California Water Crisis Draws Attention *Cont'd from Pg 1*

agency to prepare an environmental impact statement before adopting the salmon plan. The odds for success of this lawsuit may have been improved last month when U.S. District Judge Olive Wanger ruled in the smelt case that USFWS must take into account “the harm being visited upon humans, the community and the environment.” Judge Wanger also directed government officials to explain and justify how they reached their water-allocation decisions.

The opinion from NMFS triggered a firestorm of responses from elected officials, many of them critical in nature.

"This federal biological opinion puts fish above the needs of millions of Californians and the health and security of the world's eighth largest economy," said Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. "The piling on of one federal court decision after another in a species-by-species approach is killing our economy and undermining the integrity of the Endangered Species Act."

Gov. Schwarzenegger later in the month issued a state-wide executive order to send between \$3 million and \$4 million in emergency food and unemployment assistance to local governments and nonprofits. He also asked President Obama to declare Fresno County a federal disaster area in an effort to secure more emergency money.

U.S. Representative Devin Nunes (R-CALIFORNIA) called the decision’s conclusion that linked the death of killer whales to San Joaquin water users “outrageous”, and with the support of Central Valley Democratic Congressmen Dennis Cardoza and Jim Costa promptly introduced an amendment to the NMFS appropriations bill to over-rule the decision. While some in the U.S. House of Representatives did not even want this matter discussed on the floor, Rep. Cardoza, a



*U.S. Congressman Mike Thompson ((D-California)
Source: www.mikethompson.house.gov*

Member of the House Rules Committee, worked with House Leadership and the Committee and had the amendment made in order.

This action brought what is happening in the San Joaquin Valley to the floor of the House, and generated impassioned arguments for and against the amendment. Rep. Nunes told the House that 40,000 farm workers have already been laid off due to the shortages caused by the delta smelt decision. He said the situation has now been compounded by the NMFS action that “blames cities and farms in California” for the plight of the killer whale.

“This is absolutely absurd,” Said Rep. Nunes “What is wrong with this government? We are starving people to save the killer whale now.”

Other California congressmen with ties to salmon anglers and environmentalists fought the amendment, and made references that the current water crisis can be traced back to the previous administration.

“There’s a lot of cleanup to do after the Bush administration, and this is one of those projects,” said Rep. George Miller. “This project has to be brought together so



California Republican Congressman Devin Nunes advocates on the House floor for an amendment that would over-rule the recent NMFS biological opinion. (Rep. Nunes website).

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Alliance Sets Up Legal Fund

The Family Farm Alliance Board of Directors on June 9, 2009 took extraordinary action by directing staff to seek a judicial order requiring the federal government to use the best available scientific data in documents intended to protect the Delta Smelt under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and is seeking contributions for a special fund established to support that effort. The organization is asking for contributions to fund legal action that will be filed soon.

“This effort is on top of ongoing Alliance activities, for which funding is already tight,” said Alliance Executive Director Dan Keppen (OREGON).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Biological Opinion demands severe reductions in the operation of the State Water Project (SWP) and the Central Valley Project (CVP) in order to protect an endangered species of minnow called the Delta Smelt. The restrictions are having a devastating effect on water supplies for two thirds of the state’s residents and more than two million acres of irrigated croplands.

The Alliance in December 2008 filed a request under the Information Quality Act (IQA) that was intended to ensure that the new requirements proposed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) were based solely on the best available scientific data. The Alliance believes the USFWS failed to comply with the requirements of the IQA when it developed the Delta Smelt Biological Opinion. The Alliance and USFWS have traded letters for the past six months, and the attorney representing the Alliance in this matter noted that administrative measures are not going to help San

Joaquin Valley communities.

“We have been forced to seek a judicial order requiring the USFWS to use the best available scientific data under ESA, withdraw the 2008 smelt opinion from the public domain, and make corrections under the IQA,” said Brenda Davis, the attorney from Sac-



Independent fisheries scientists discuss their findings with panel moderator Judge Craig Manson at the March 16, 2009 delta smelt seminar hosted by the Family Farm Alliance and Center for Endangered Species Act Recovery.

Photo Courtesy of Kings County Farm Bureau

ramento who is representing the Alliance. The action is an important one, not just for San Joaquin growers, but for farmers and ranchers throughout the West whose water supply certainty can be put at risk by agency opinions that ignore sound science to focus solely on control of irrigation diversions and dams. The Alliance hopes to judicially confirm that agencies must comply with the IQA when developing technical information that will affect water users.

“There are many, many stressors impacting Delta smelt, but the federal agencies appear to be focused only on

one: the water project pumps,” said Keppen. “We question the viability of their science and want to see their files associated with the science.”

“If we are successful in this endeavor, the IQA - as backed by the court - would give agriculture a new way of dealing with agency science decisions,” said Alliance Board member Chris Hurd, who farms in the San Joaquin Valley. “USFWS has already concluded that it does not need to act. This shows they don’t believe we are serious.”

“This is the first time the Family Farm Alliance has engaged in litigation, and it’s not a step we take lightly. We don’t expect to become a litigant on a regular basis, but our board unanimously felt other avenues used to advance our Information Quality Act request had run into dead ends,” said Alliance President Patrick O’Toole (WYOMING). “Litigation provides our only opportunity to advance our argument against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and turn around the faulty science that has shut down our members’ operations in California.”

As a result of the 2008 Biological Opinion for Delta Smelt prepared by the USFWS, members of the Alliance are facing potential damage to crops in the range of \$23 million to \$1 billion.

The Alliance has announced that it will create a legal fund exclusively to support this effort and is asking its membership to contribute.

If you would like to participate in this important endeavor, please contact Dan Keppen at 541-892-6244 or by email: dankeppen@charter.net. Contributions can also be mailed directly to: Family Farm Alliance Legal Fund, 22895 S. Dickenson Avenue, Riverdale, CA 93656.

Alliance Joins Other Ag / Conservation Groups in New Ranching Coalition

The Family Farm Alliance earlier this month joined the steering committee of a new coalition aimed at supporting working ranches and healthy and productive landscapes on public and private lands in the West. The “Coalition for Conservation through Ranching” will be driven by a steering committee that provides equal representation by ranching /agriculture and conservation interests. Alliance President Patrick O’Toole, a cattle and sheep rancher from Wyoming, will represent his organization on the committee.

“The single most important factor leading to the loss of wildlife and degraded landscapes is fragmentation from development,” said O’Toole. “Ranchers want a stable business climate for their operations. Conservation groups want healthy and productive landscapes. It makes complete sense that we work together.”

The new coalition has its roots in meeting organized by the Public Lands Council (PLC) that took place in Salt Lake City last February. PLC Executive Director Jeff Eisenberg and his staff organized the Western Range Summit, which brought together more than 120 participants from across the country to discuss public lands issues, ranching and the environment. Ranchers, federal agencies, academics, cattle

industry organizations and conservation groups were all represented at the meeting, which provided an open forum for the discussion of pressing public land and water issues. Those discussions made it clear that all groups found some common ground and realized the potential to work together.

“Ranches in the West depend on the availability of both public and private land for economically viable operations,” said Mr. Eisenberg. “The health and productivity of landscapes cannot be fairly considered without looking at an entire landscape across jurisdictional borders. For this reason, the coalition will work to achieve our goals on both public and private lands in the West.”

Together, the members of the steering committee for this coalition share a common interest in supporting working ranches and healthy landscapes and will work to achieve this goal. In addition to the Alliance and PLC, the steering committee will include high-level representatives from Environmental Defense Fund, the National Association of Conservation Districts, the World Wildlife Fund, and the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association.

This group will control the development and implementation of ideas and work for the coalition. Two broad areas of activity, public relations and legislation and/or administrative work, have been identified for the coalition. The steering committee will establish the actual work plan.

Irrigation Assoc. To Host Conference

The Irrigation Association’s first-ever Water Conference will bring together experts and thought leaders from business, government and academia to discuss water and environmental issues. Irrigation executives, water providers and policy makers will meet July 22-23, 2009 at the Grand Summit Resort in Park City (UTAH) to discuss how best to ensure water is available for irrigation for future generations.

The intensive, one-day conference is jam-packed with insights and case studies on current and future water challenges in the United States, water management success stories, and real-world models for sustainable solutions. Event organizers say that the upcoming conference has been carefully crafted to maximize attendees’ time and return on investment.

The Irrigation Association (IA) is a nonprofit industry organization dedicated to promoting efficient irrigation. IA serves its members and the irrigation industry by:

- Educating the public on sound irrigation practices and management.
- Serving as a clearinghouse for irrigation research and innovation.
- Improving industry proficiency through continuing education.
- Promoting experience and excellence with professional certification.
- Lending expertise to water-use public policy at all levels.

Carefully crafted to maximize attendees’ time and return on investment, the IA Water Conference combines targeted presentations, productive dialogue and relaxed networking to provide real take-home value. You can register today for the upcoming conference at:

http://www.irrigation.org/show/pdf/WaterConference_2009.pdf.

“Ranchers want a stable business climate for their operations. Conservation groups want healthy and productive landscapes. It makes complete sense that we work together.”

**Patrick O’Toole, President
Family Farm Alliance**

Controversial Clean Water Act Bill Clears Senate Committee Ag and Other Producer Groups Prepare for Senate Floor Battle

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee earlier this month approved S. 787, the “Clean Water Restoration Act” after adopting an amendment drafted by Committee Democrats to address concerns that the bill would significantly expand the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act (CWA).

However, the “compromise” amendment offered by Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT) and co-sponsored by Committee Chair Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) did not blunt the opposition of Committee Republicans. The Committee approved the amended S. 787 on a party-line vote of 12-7. Several amendments offered by Committee Republicans to narrow the reach of the legislation were defeated by similar margins.

Senate Floor Vote Timing Uncertain

The next step for the CWRA legislation is a vote by the full Senate, but Senate consideration of the bill has not yet been scheduled. Because of the controversial nature of the legislation, it could be weeks or months before the bill is brought to vote. Both Chairwoman Boxer and Senior Committee Republican James Inhofe (OK) said that they expected a battle over the bill on the Senate floor.

In his opening statement, Sen. Inhofe said that because of “widespread opposi-

tion” to the bill, “there is no chance of it passing the Senate.” He promised to lead a “very robust and orchestrated effort” to protect farmers, ranchers and property owners from the bill’s “regulatory overreach.” Later in the debate, Sen. Boxer said that “we will have a hard fight on the (Senate) floor.”

The Committee debate over S. 787 was a preview of the expected contest in the full Senate, where the number of Democratic and Republican votes is more evenly matched than in the EPW Committee. The outcome of a Senate vote likely will hinge on the votes of a handful of moderate Democrats and Republicans, who will be courted heavily by opponents and supporters of the legislation.

Baucus Amendment

Sen. Boxer, Sen. Baucus and other supporters of S. 787 said that the Supreme Court decisions (referred to hereafter as *SWANCC* and *Rapanos*) were contrary to the original intent of the CWA, and the decisions have generated confusion in the application of the Act. The purpose of S. 787 is “restore” the jurisdiction of the Act to what it was before the *SWANCC* deci-

sion, “no more, no less,” said Sen. Baucus. Because the confusing Supreme Court decisions rest on the definition of “navigable waters,” it is necessary to remove that term from the law, said Sen. Boxer.

But Sens. Boxer and Baucus noted that S. 787 as originally drafted raised concerns that it would expand the reach of the law rather than simply return it to what it was before the Supreme Court decisions. They said they drafted the Baucus amendment to address those concerns by re-affirming existing exemptions and clarifying that Congress intends no expansion of authority.

The Baucus amendment was adopted by the Committee on a voice vote at the beginning of the debate as a substitute for the legislation as originally introduced by Sen. Russell Feingold (D-WI) and others.

Sen. Baucus said that his amendment included “extra steps” to protect existing agriculture exemptions under the CWA, and the amendment strikes provisions from S. 787 allowing regulation of “activities affecting” waters of the United States. Sen. Baucus acknowledged that the

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Tell your story!
The “Water Review” focuses on Alliance members and the issues and actions they are involved with. If you would like to have a local project or issue featured, send a request to: dankeppen@charter.net

*In next month’s issue of the Water Review.....
A Northwest law firm publishes a new hand book that many Western water district managers will find useful.*

CWRA Moves On—Floor Battle Looms *Cont'd from Pg 5*

“activities” provision could be “construed as expanding (the Act) beyond its historical scope” and he said that removing that provision ensures there is no expansion.

Sen. Baucus said that as revised by his amendment, S. 787 will “protect our agriculture from undue burdens” and ensure that farmers and ranchers can continue to “live the life they love.”

Sen. Boxer introduced into the record a list of organizations that support the Baucus amendment, including environmental, conservation, hunting groups and the National Farmers Union and the National Wheat Growers Association.

Republicans on the Committee objected to the basic purpose of the bill – to ensure that the CWA is applied as it was under EPA and Corps regulations prior to the 2001 SWANCC decision – and they argued that removal of “navigable” from the Act makes the assurances and exemptions in the Baucus amendment potentially useless.

Sen. Mike Crapo (R-ID) said that SWANCC and *Rapanos* decisions reigned in federal agencies that had taken an “extremely expansive interpretation” of the CWA. By eliminating the limitations on jurisdiction implied by “navigable,” the Baucus amendment codifies an “unjustified expansion” of federal authority under the CWA, Sen. Crapo said.

Sen. Boxer said that the pre-SWANCC federal regulations were in keeping with the original intent of the CWA, and she repeatedly emphasized that the Baucus amendment ensured that there was “no expansion of federal authority” beyond what existed before SWANCC. The amended S. 787, she said, protects against “regulatory creep.”

Senior Republican Member Inhofe asked the Republican and Democratic Committee Counsels a series of questions



U.S. Senator Max Baucus (D-MT).
Photo by Carolyn Bunce

about the jurisdictional scope of the amended S. 787 and about the effectiveness of the agriculture exemptions included in the legislation. In essence, the Democratic Counsel said that what was not regulated pre-SWANCC would not be regulated under the Baucus amendment. But the Republican Counsel argued that by removing “navigable,” the amendment casts doubt on decades of case law and leaves jurisdictional issues and existing exemptions open to re-interpretation.

Committee Member David Vitter (R-LA) and Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY) offered amendments intended to protect agriculture but all were defeated after Chairwoman Boxer voiced opposition to them.

The Family Farm Alliance is working with others in the regulated community to oppose the bill in its current form. The Alliance has twice testified in opposition to earlier forms of the CWRA concept. For a better understanding of why many producers have concerns with CWAR, visit: <http://www.nationalcenter.org/CWRA.html>.

Senator Mike Crapo (R-IDAHO), concerned about significant expansions in the power of the federal government, voted against the Clean Water Restoration Act and has vowed to filibuster the bill, if necessary.

Source:
www.crapo.senate.gov.



San Joaquin Crisis Gets DC Attention *Continued from Page 2*

that the Central Valley Project can serve its clients, can serve the needs of the whole State of California. And if it doesn't happen that way, it's not going to work politically, it's not going to work environmentally, it's not going to work scientifically, and it's not going to work economically."

Rep. Mike Thompson, who represents fishing families on the north coast of California, stressed that the debate should not be about choosing one person's job over the job of another person.

"We have lost boats, lost businesses, lost fortunes, lost opportunities, and all because the science was scrapped," said Rep. Thompson. "The last administration pushed forward a water policy that was illegal, that didn't pay any attention to anything other than politics."

The final vote was 208-218 against the Nunes amendment, an exceptionally close vote on an ESA matter. The floor debate can be seen on YouTube at [YouTube Channel](#).

Days later, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar, Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Mike Connor and Secretary Salazar's Deputy Interior Secretary David Hayes attended a packed town hall meeting in Fresno, where Mr. Hayes was introduced as the Administration's point man who will "bring all of the key federal agencies to the table" to coordinate Bay-Delta efforts. California Congressmen Cardoza, Costa, Nunes and Radanovich and agricultural representatives reiterated requests made to the Obama administration, including a call to streamline

the environmental review of the "Two Gates" proposal, which would place removable gates in the central Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to block threatened fish from getting entrained by the pumps.

A flurry of other legal and legislative actions followed in the wake of the recent federal fisheries decisions:

- Prior to Secretary Salazar's arrival in California, the Pacific Legal Foundation announced that it had formally requested both President Obama and Governor Schwarzenegger to act to convene a special federal panel – nicknamed the "God Squad" – to address California's water emergency caused by harsh federal environmental restrictions that dramatically reduce the flow of water to millions of agricultural and urban water users.
- Rep. Costa introduced legislation authorizing the Interior Department to engage the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to do an 18-month evaluation of the science underlying Delta management decisions, including the NMFS and USFWS biological opinions on the salmon and smelt. The NAS study also would enumerate the factors contributing to the decline of protected species in the Delta and rank those factors according to their impact on protected species. The bill is co-sponsored by Reps. Cardoza, Radanovich, Nunes and McCarthy.
- The Family Farm Alliance announced that, for the first time in the

organization's history, it would seek a judicial order requiring the federal government to use the best available scientific data in documents intended to protect the Delta Smelt under the ESA ([please see related story, Page 3](#)).

The newest biological opinion covers the state and federal export facilities in the delta, the Nimbus hatchery on the American River and the operations of diversion structures like Red Bluff Diversion Dam. That latter structure helps provide water to 150,000 acres of water on the west side of the Sacramento Valley, and those acres will be protected as the Tehama-Colusa Canal Authority works to implement fish passage improvements over the next three years. A new, \$165 million pumping station should be completed by the 2013 irrigation season.

Further south, water users dependent upon the Bay-Delta are worried about the continued federal focus being placed on their operations.

"It is frustrating to have federal agencies continue to reduce the water for 25 million Californians and our farmers while refusing to acknowledge the impacts that ocean conditions, predator fish, pollution and a reduced food supply has on these endangered species," said Dan Nelson. "Unless something is done to address these causes of fish decline, the people of California will continue to suffer from flawed attempts to protect our endangered species."

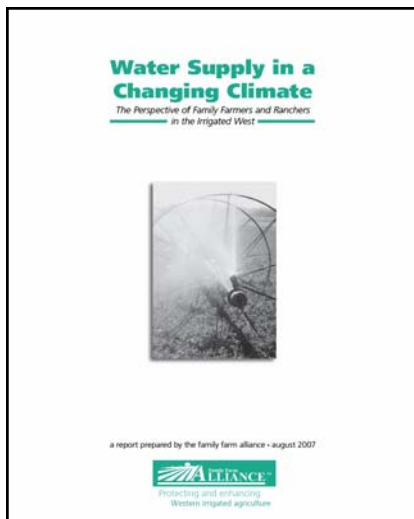
"This community has my commitment, and the commitment of the Obama Administration, that we will work with state and local officials to address continuing conflicts associated with transporting water from northern California through the Bay Delta – that includes fisheries-related conflicts and other deteriorating environmental conditions in the Bay Delta."

U.S. Interior Secretary Salazar , June 28, 2009, Fresno, California.

Cap and Trade Bill Narrowly Passes U.S. House *Adaptation Section Carries Possible Implications for Western Ag*

The Family Farm Alliance continues to discuss potential effects and impacts of climate change in the West, building upon the interest created by the Alliance's report on climate change that was issued in September 2007. Climate change and water are receiving high priority and scrutiny from the new Congress and the Obama Administration.

The vehicle that will likely move climate change legislation in a comprehensive way is the "American Clean Energy & Security Act of 2009," put forward by the House Committee on Energy and Commerce early in 2009. That Act narrowly passed the House of Representatives earlier this month, by a vote of 219-212. The bill now goes on to be voted upon in the Senate. This massive and controversial bill contains an adaptation sec-



The Alliance's 2007 Climate Change Report can be downloaded at www.familyfarmalliance.org

tion that could have implications for many Western water users.

The Act implements its programs primarily through federal agencies and states. Notably, the Adaptation provisions of the legislation provide support for local governments including capacity-building and resiliency grants to local governments (and states and tribes). A set of provisions would dedicate a small share of cap-and-trade revenues to fish, wildlife and ecosystem "adaptation" studies and measures.

At the time this *Monthly Briefing* was being prepared, Family Farm Alliance contractors were still in the process of assessing potential impacts to irrigators associated with the adaptation section.

House Ag Committee Compiles Responses to Climate Change Questions

The House Agriculture Committee earlier this year solicited the opinions of more than 400 agricultural, environmental, scientific and educational groups and other members of the public, through a print- and web-based questionnaire. The questionnaire allowed stakeholders throughout the nation to provide the Committee with their views on the different options being considered in Congress to reduce greenhouse gas emissions - especially as they relate to the agriculture and forestry sectors.

On April 10, the Family Farm Alliance submitted a letter - along with its 2007 climate change report - to the House Committee on Agriculture. The Committee's questionnaire focuses primarily on the important topic of carbon sequestration, cap-and-trade, and other carbon reduction proposals.

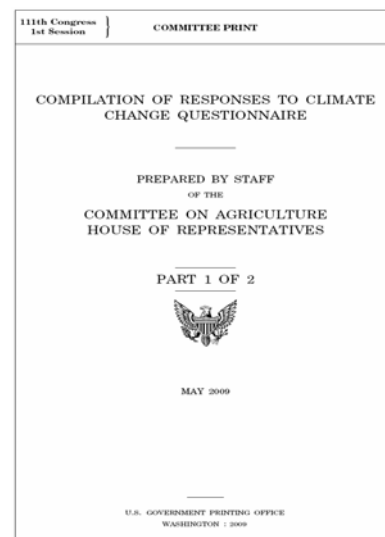
"In our transmittal, we thanked the Committee for outreaching to the public and agricultural parties in particular for input on this topic," said Alliance Execu-

tive Director Dan Keppen. "We used this opportunity to provide specific suggestions for federal policies intended to minimize or avert the expected impacts of climate change on Western irrigated agriculture, which are likely to be of national significance.

The Committee apparently received more than 2,500 pages of recommendations in total. Earlier this month, the committee released the publication, which includes comments submitted by more than 200 groups, including conservation, agricultural and forestry associations, farmers, and energy industry groups. The document can be downloaded on the internet at <http://agriculture.house.gov/inside/publications.html>.

"The tremendous response to the Agriculture Committee's climate change survey demonstrates the real concerns and contributions that these organizations can offer in the discus-

sion about climate change," Committee Chairman Collin Peterson said in a statement.



Responses to the House Ag Committee's Climate Change Questionnaire Are Now Available

Lundgren Steps Down from Alliance Board

Jim Lundgren – a long-time director with the Family Farm Alliance – announced earlier this year that he would step down from the Alliance board. Mr. Lundgren represented Nebraska irrigators with the Alliance, one of many volunteer roles he served over the past 20 years, supporting and directing Western water policy at the local, state and national level.

“My time with the Alliance has been some of the most pleasurable of my life,” said Lundgren. “The people associated with the Alliance, and especially the Board, are my kind of people and I have deep affections for all of them. But, life brings changes to old bodies that slow us down and the Alliance needs active leadership at this critical time.”

“Jim Lundgren – Irrigationist”. That is what his business card says, and that is what he does.

“Jim advocates for irrigated crop production,” said Alliance chairman of the board Bill Kennedy (OREGON). “He has been willing and able to think straight, and give “The Rest of The Story” on advocacy or political posturing. Without belittling anyone, Jim has been able to express how some of our detractors operate and where they fall short of practical direction.”

At the local level in and around Lexington, Nebraska, Jim worked with local and state resources agencies, the Nebraska Legislature, and served on the Governor’s Platte River Advisory Committee, the Basin-wide Integrated Management Plan Committee, and the Central Platte Natural Resources District Integrated Management Plan Committee. He was also involved in the resolution of state water conflicts through creative concepts like the Nebraska Plan and the Platte River Endangered Species Partnership.

On a national level, he co-founded the Nebraska Water Users, Inc., an

organization that he brought into the fold of the Family Farm Alliance. Within the Alliance, he worked directly with elected officials to craft legislation that ranged from dealing with Endangered Species Act issues to trying to improve how agencies like the Department of Interior and EPA worked. He directly contributed to the development of a Family Farm Alliance economic white paper that was published a decade ago. That paper provided a clear sense to policy makers of irrigated agriculture’s economic importance.

“The Family Farm Alliance would not be the organization that it is today without the leadership and support of Jim Lundgren,” said Craig Smith, who served as the Alliance’s executive director from 2000-2005. “Jim brought the entire state of Nebraska with him and never let us forget the value of irrigated agriculture to the West.”

He has received numerous honors for his work in agriculture and water, including induction into the Nebraska Hall of Agriculture and the Platte River Endangered Species Partnership Leadership Award. However, Jim’s role with the Alliance and the relationships he developed have left a much more personal impact on the lives he touched. Craig Smith relied on Jim Lundgren’s friendship as the Alliance struggled in Smith’s early years as the organization’s executive director.

“Jim Lundgren is one of those people that when you meet them you know you have made a lifelong friend,” said Smith. “He is warm, sincere, caring, a true servant and one of the most ferocious advocates for Nebraska irrigated agriculture that you will ever meet. Jim never missed a board meeting, unless his health demanded it, and was always the first to volunteer for a new assignment.”

His associates tell great stories



Long-time Alliance director Jim Lundgren has resigned from the board. His replacement is Tom Schwarz, a grower from Nebraska .

about Lundgren’s legendary guided tours for visitors of Nebraska’s farm country.

“Jim drove half way across the state to pick me up at the Lincoln airport and then insisted that we stop at every point of interest along the way back, just so I would get the feel for Nebraska and its unique history,” recalls Smith. “Jim filled me in on the Friday night football huddles and the state’s passion for its agriculture base. Of course, we had to stop at several great home cookin’ cafes as well. I could hardly walk by the time we got to our destination.”

On one of his favorite trips to Nebraska, Kennedy remembers a time when Jim directed him to an espresso stand in Gothenburg.

“Jim ordered a 20-ounce white chocolate coffee drink made with whole cream,” said Kennedy. “Friends don’t let friends go to Starbucks.”

Tom Schwarz will serve as Mr. Lundgren’s replacement on the Alliance board of directors. Mr. Schwarz – a fellow Nebraskan from Bertrand – has participated in several Alliance farmer lobby trips to Washington, D.C. and has also been extensively involved with Platte River and FERC negotiating trips.

“Tom has served many Nebraska governors and the Nebraska Legislature on water task forces,” said Mr. Lundgren. “Plus, he and his wife Linda have dedicated themselves to protecting water for agriculture.”

The Schwarzs’ own and operate an

Cont’d on Page 10

Water World Mourns Loss of Craig Bell

As members of the Western Governors Association prepared to tackle pressing renewable energy and wildlife resource challenges at the organization's meeting held in Park City (UTAH) earlier this month, attendees were shocked to hear of the loss of one of the West's hardest working water officials. Craig Bell, who served as executive director of the Western States Water Council (WSWC) for 35 years, passed away suddenly on June 13th due to a heart attack. According to a statement prepared by the WSWC, Craig was at home, with his wife Beth, and sons Scott and Ryan. Paramedics were unable to revive him.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with his family," WSWC said in its statement. "Craig was a devout and religious man, and while this is a difficult time for his family, they take comfort in their faith."

A memorial celebration of his life will be held on July 16 at the Park City Marriott hotel.

The staff at WSWC had been preparing to celebrate Craig's 35 years of service to the Council at meetings set for next month. His retirement was scheduled for August.

Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Michael L. Connor quickly issued a statement on the passing of Craig Bell.

"Craig Bell's experience, calm mediation skills and keen insight will

be missed by those who served with him in the water community," said Connor. "Craig and I closely collaborated during my time on Capitol Hill and, most recently, in my first weeks as Commissioner. I relied on his counsel. Craig was always low-key but, simmering beneath that calm exterior, you knew he was looking ahead – searching for new ways to meet future water needs and tackle the current



Craig Bell, 1945-2009.

challenges facing western water management."

Craig worked closely with the Family Farm Alliance on several issues of mutual interest to Western irrigators and state policy officials. In recent years, the Alliance and WSWC have worked together on finding solutions for aging water infrastructure,

advocating for loan guarantees to repair that infrastructure, and taking a hard look at impacts associated with agricultural-to-urban water transfers.

"I was one of Craig's many friends and colleagues who witnessed his determined and focused work to constructively address the water challenges facing Western states," said Alliance executive director Dan Keppen. "He was also a very personable and pleasant guy. I had just communicated with Craig two days prior to his passing about some troublesome draft water legislation that was being circulated on Capitol Hill. He provided me with his usual professional, prepared assessment, but was even more concerned about what was going on in my life."

Alliance President Pat O'Toole often crossed paths with Craig at various water meetings across the West. "He was the consummate professional but understood the big picture as well as anybody. He truly respected the importance of farming and farming communities," said O'Toole.

"We will miss Craig greatly. Our thoughts and prayers turn to Craig and his family."

Cards and letters may be addressed to: Beth Bell, 408 East 10145 South, Sandy, UT 84070.

Donations may be made on behalf of Craig Bell to the Perpetual Education Fund, C/O: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 50 East North Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84150

“Irrigationist” Steps Down from Alliance Board *(cont'd from page 9)*

irrigated and dryland farm, as well as a custom hay grinding operation. The farm relies on both surface and groundwater. They have two children; the youngest is still in college and the oldest is recently out of college and hoping to return to the farm.

"Tom Schwarz has jumped into his

new role with real energy and has been key to our fundraising efforts in Nebraska," said Alliance executive director Dan Keppen. "If anyone can fill Jim Lundgren's shoes, Tom may be the guy. But we will all certainly miss the unique skills and great personal charm that Jim brought to our organi-

zation."

Others echoed those sentiments.

"I can say without hesitation that it was an honor and privilege to know and serve with Jim Lundgren," said Smith. "The Alliance board will miss him greatly."

Alliance to Address Farm Foundation Forum in DC

The Family Farm Alliance has been invited to participate at the July 14 Farm Foundation Forum to address the topic of "Competition for Water Resources". The Forum is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. (Eastern) at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

Alliance executive director Dan Keppen will join four other invited presenters scheduled to appear at the National Press Club event: Erik Peterson of the Center for Strategic and International Studies; Dan Tarlock of Chicago-Kent College of Law; Mike Connor of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation; and Sara Hopper of the Environmental Defense Fund.

Keppen has been asked to explain the mission of the Family Farm Alliance to the audience and then outline the key water and water related issues facing irrigated agriculture in the West.

Farm Foundation hosts 10 Forums a year, highlighting timely issues impacting agriculture, the food system and rural communities.

Keppen participated in another

event sponsored by the Farm Foundation on June 12 in Sacramento (CALIFORNIA), where he outlined priority issues of concern for Western water users, including Clean Water Act legislation, aging water infrastructure, and regulatory uncertainties associated with environmental laws.

Earlier that week, Keppen also participated in a briefing hosted by Oregon State University in Klamath Falls (OREGON) for agricultural dignitaries from Mexico. He and extension agents from OSU presented the challenges facing Klamath Project irrigators and the role OSU has played locally on water matters. The Mexican contingent spent several days touring rural Oregon and learning more about local agriculture, forestry and other environmental matters.

At the upcoming event in Washington, D.C., Farm Foundation Vice President Sheldon Jones (a member of the Family Farm Alliance Advisory Committee) will introduce the Forum at the National Press Club. Former Texas Congressman Charlie Stenholm

will moderate the discussion after the presentations.

Audience members will include Capitol Hill staffers and commodity group representatives, Embassy attaches, NGO representatives, government staff and academics.

Farm Foundation is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization focused on economic and policy issues impacting agriculture, the food system and rural regions. It's mission is to serve as a catalyst for sound public policy by providing objective information to foster deeper understanding of issues shaping the future for agriculture, food systems and rural regions.

"Our 76-year history of objectivity allows us to bring together diverse groups for meaningful discussions," said Jones.

For more information about the work of the Foundation, please visit its Web site, www.farmfoundation.org. From the home page, click on the Farm Foundation Forum logo for details on the Forums and past sessions.



Family Farm Alliance executive director Dan Keppen (standing, center) and Oregon State University Extension officials on June 8 briefed agricultural academics from Mexico on Western U.S. water challenges. Photo taken by Michelle Emory.

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June 2009

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Your contributions matter. Whether you support the Alliance's advocacy, outreach or education efforts, you can rest assured that your investment will promote the protection of Western irrigated agriculture and the strong rural communities that it supports.

Make your tax-deductible gift to the Alliance today! Grassroots membership is vital to our organization. Thank you in advance for your loyal support. If you would like further info, please contact Dan Keppen at his NEW e-mail address: dankeppen@charter.net, or visit our website:

www.familyfarmalliance.org



**Contributions can also be mailed directly to:
Family Farm Alliance
22895 S. Dickenson Avenue
Riverdale, CA 93656.**