

Monthly Briefing

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

The West And Water *Alliance Survey Seeks Project Opportunities*

Nothing is more at the heart of the West than its supplies of water and the Family Farm Alliance has launched a broadly-based initiative to identify project, program and policy changes that could improve conditions and help meet future needs.

"This is among the biggest and most important efforts ever undertaken by the Family Farm Alliance," said Executive Director Craig Smith (OREGON). "Our goal is to develop a report on West-wide opportunities to enhance water supply and lower barriers to development of these projects. It is an exciting opportunity."

A California engineering firm, Provost and Pritchard, has been commissioned by Alliance directors to conduct the survey, compile a database and prepare a report.

"**WE ARE DOING** this project because we believe the Water 2025 initiative needs a supply enhancement component," Smith said. "The Alliance will compile a master list of potential projects from throughout the West as a means of catalyzing the process and helping the Interior Department understand the need to embrace development of water supplies to meet growth, environmental and agricultural needs."

"It's a tremendous project," said Norm Semanko (IDAHO). "I just looked at the draft survey and it is well done. Hopefully it will give the Bureau some insights on its Water 2025 program,

Creating The Project And Survey

A West-wide water supply enhancement study and database questionnaire to gather vital information is nearly ready to be distributed.

It is the crucial element in the Family Farm Alliance's program to identify possible water supply and related environmental projects as well as potential chances in federal law and water policies in 17 Western States.

THE SURVEY EFFORT is moving ahead quickly under direction of a well-known Central California engineering firm, Provost and Pritchard. The company will also prepare a report and compile a database.

"This project came out of the Alliance board," Richard M. Moss, a Provost and Pritchard

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which falls short on dealing with water supplies."

Semanko called it a "great idea to bring the focus onto additional water development. This is going to benefit

everyone in the West," including urban areas, the environment and farmers. "It's good to have the Alliance in the lead."

"We need to identify more projects," said Grant Ward (ARIZONA), an Alliance Advisory Committee member. "If you'll pardon the pun, we've been dry for 25 years." He said the current severe drought that is adversely affecting much of the Southwest has focused concern and attention on water supplies and related environmental issues.

"Thanks to this project, the Alliance has the potential to have a database for the entire West that nobody else has," said Richard M. Moss (CALIFORNIA), who heads the project team for Provost and Pritchard and serves as Alliance Advisory Committee Chairman.

LIKE THE ALLIANCE itself, information gathered as part of the database "will probably always have a federal flavor to it," Moss said, because federal officials, in the administration and in Congress, will be key beneficiaries of the collected information.

Alliance members, who hail from each of the 17 Western states included in the study, will also benefit from the information that is collected.

The database is expected to help Alliance members involved in grassroots communication with federal

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ALLIANCE SURVEY SEEKS WATER PROJECT INFORMATION

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officials by making details and pictures on projects readily available.

“IT’S A REAL good value to find out all the programs in the different states,” said Harvey Bailey (CALIFORNIA), an Alliance board member. “This is a chance to compile all sorts of ideas and possibilities so they are better known and can be compared.”

Bailey said that “many people don’t have any idea what’s going on with water in other states and even in other parts of our state. This effort will be a good way to improve understanding of the West’s water issues and needs. We will be able to share support for one another.”

“It will help us appreciate the opportunities in other regions and what they mean to a region,” said Dan

Errotabere (CALIFORNIA) an Alliance director.

The project represents “a large undertaking,” said Steve Arveschoug (COLORADO), an Alliance Advisory Committee member. “If we can get it all pulled together, it will be an outstanding database.”

ALONG WITH BASIC information, the database that will result from compilation of the survey will have a GIS element and will include pictures, maps and a description of up to 500 words for each project or proposal.

Moss said new GIS format technology will be imbedded that will permit viewers to see a map of 17 Western states and then “drill down” to see map details of a project area.

“Nothing brings the point home more than a visual,” Errotabere said.

The entire project, Arveschoug said, “is another example of the Alliance doing what is tangible.”

ANOTHER ALLIANCE board member, Don Schwindt (COLORADO), noted the survey’s timing is coincidental with a more formal statewide review that has been approved by the Colorado Legislature.

“It’s a big deal for Colorado,” said Schwindt, a member of the state’s Water Conservation Board. “We wanted a list of projects we wanted to go out to get built.” The \$2.5 million study is also meant to be a grassroots investigation that results in a tiered list of projects.

“We have been living off the foresight of our forefathers,” Schwindt said. There are times that we are going to be hurting because we didn’t keep up with the foresight.”

CREATING THE ALLIANCE’S NEW PROJECT AND ITS SURVEY

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Vice President and former California water agency manager. Moss chairs the Alliance’s Advisory Committee. The engineering firm is headquartered in Fresno. “The thought was, ‘Can’t we do better in response to the Bureau of Reclamation’s Water 2025 plan?’ And the answer was yes.”

AS WITH ALL Alliance projects and activities, this new effort is member-driven and grassroots-based.

“Not only will all Alliance members and friends have an opportunity to be part of the process, their help is needed because of the project’s tight time frame,” said Bill Kennedy (OREGON), Alliance President.

A survey form that can be filled out on-line has been developed and will soon be available to anyone interested in helping identify potential projects to be listed in the program’s database. “*Project* is broadly defined as meaning actual construction on one hand, or possible changes in Bureau of Reclamation policy and federal law in the other,” Moss said. “Each project should have some nexus to provide

new water supply or benefits.” Some beneficial projects could be environmental “and take pressure off of agriculture,” said Moss.

THE SURVEY FORM begins by asking for information on the respondent and key contact, the project local sponsor and the Family Farm Alliance official most knowledgeable about the project. A check-off form asks about the type of project. Space is provided to describe the project or activity in up to 500 words. Project pictures and maps will be accepted and the survey asks for exact details on location due to the geographic nature of the database. Other questions deal with the project status as well as project benefits and costs, and its prospects for being implemented.

“Someone who devotes time to fill out the full survey is obviously serious about doing a project,” said Alliance Advisory Committee member Norm Semanko (DAHO). “Of course, the real challenge will be doing something with the list and getting some of these projects authorized.”

NAMES IN THE NEWS

- ◆ **Kendrick “Rick” Hafen** (Utah) is the newly named Tehama Colusa (California) Canal Authority General Manager. A water attorney and licensed surveyor, he has managed irrigation districts in Nevada and Utah and has worked for years on water issues in the Southwest.
- ◆ **Kris Polly**, a National Water Resources Association staff member and Family Farm Alliance friend, is the new NESARC Legislative Committee Chairman, heading a group dedicated to reforming the Endangered Species Act. He has been a tireless advocate for ESA reform. Polly is a former Congressional staff member.

FAMILY FARM ALLIANCE

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