

## **PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES**

### **DEREK S. ARNDT**

### ***Speaker – Drought Monitoring***

Acting State Climatologist for Oklahoma, Oklahoma Climatological Survey

Derek Arndt joined the Oklahoma Climatological Survey in 1994, where he now serves as Oklahoma's Acting State Climatologist. He provides leadership in the continued development of OCS's drought monitoring tools, and is the state's primary voice for the U.S. Drought Monitor. Arndt is one of three OCS climatologists to have served the Core or Interdisciplinary Planning Teams of the National Integrated Drought System.

In recent years, OCS has aggressively pursued the task of improving drought monitoring in the state. These tools evolved during recent drought episodes to provide a comprehensive on-line monitoring center for Oklahoma's citizens and decision-makers. They incorporate real-time, high-quality data to provide timely information that is updated daily. Because drought affects different interests on different scales, the products are tailored to provide information across a spectrum of scales. Finally, the suite of tools incorporates educational concepts that help make the information more digestible by people with non-technical backgrounds.

Arndt holds an M.S. and B.S. in meteorology from the University of Oklahoma. He served as the Oklahoma Mesonet's Quality Assurance Meteorologist for two years before joining OCS's Climate Information Group in 1996. He is now heavily involved in OCS outreach activities which reach over three hundred emergency management agencies, K-12 classrooms and rural electric cooperatives.

### **KIRK BEMIS**

### ***Speaker – Drinking Water***

Hydrologist, Zuni Indian Tribe, Water Resources Program

Kirk Bemis has been the Hydrologist for Zuni since 1995 when he started the Tribe's Water Resources Program. Responsibilities include: data collection and monitoring to support water rights, the Zuni Safety of Dams Early Warning System, and the *Zuni Drought Contingency Plan*; project planning and management for supply development, flood and drought mitigation, stream restoration, and administration of the Tribe's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

Bemis received a B.S. Degree from Purdue University and a M.S. Degree from the University of New Mexico in Civil Engineering, specializing in water resources. He is a certified Engineer Intern in New Mexico and an Associate Member of the American Society of Civil Engineers. He is also an enrolled member of the Zuni Tribe.

### **J. MICHAEL CERLETTI     *Moderator– Recreation, Economic Development & Tourism***

Cabinet Secretary, Tourism Department

J. Michael Cerletti, a native of San Francisco, graduated from San Jose State University with a Bachelor of Science degree. Prior to coming to Santa Fe in 1974, Cerletti owned two restaurants in San Jose, California, following which he was the Food and Beverage Director of a large golf club in northern California. After coming to New Mexico, Cerletti was the managing

partner and co-developer of several hotels in Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Los Alamos including La Posada, Hotel St. Francis and The Plaza Real, all in Santa Fe, La Posada de Albuquerque and the Los Alamos Inn. In 1990, while serving as co-founder and president of Southwest Hospitality Group in Santa Fe, Cerletti was asked by incoming Governor Bruce King to serve as the first Secretary of Tourism for the state of New Mexico. Following his four years as Tourism Secretary, Cerletti returned to the private sector as the managing partner of Rancho Encantado, a small ranch resort north of Santa Fe.

In 2000, following the sale of the resort, he was recruited to become the interim head of the Department of Hotel Restaurant and Tourism Management at New Mexico State University, a position he held for two years. In 2003, Governor Bill Richardson asked Cerletti to accept the position of General Manager of what is now EXPO New Mexico, The State Fair, a position he held for fifteen months. In March of 2004, the Governor again asked Cerletti to serve as Cabinet Secretary for the New Mexico Department of Tourism. Cerletti is currently serving in that position.

Cerletti has held offices and has been a board member of many civic and statewide organizations, including the NM Lodging Association, the NM Restaurant Association, the United Way of Santa Fe, the Santa Fe Opera, the Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce, the Tourism Association of NM, and the Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau. He remains on the board of several of those and other organizations. Cerletti and his wife Helen have resided in Santa Fe for nearly thirty years.

**JACK L. DANIEL**

***Speaker – Drinking Water***

Environmental Services Section Administrator, Nebraska Health and Human Services System

Jack Daniel has served as the Environmental Services Section Administrator for the Nebraska Health and Human Services System within the Nebraska Department of Regulation and Licensure since 1997. His primary program responsibilities center around the administration of the Department's public water supply program, water well contractors' licensure program, and other environmental health programs. From 1989 through 1997, he was Director of the Division of Drinking Water and Environmental Sanitation. Prior to that he served as the Director and Assistant Director of the Division of Housing and Environmental Health, beginning his career in 1968 as an Environmental Health Scientist.

Daniel earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology at South Dakota State University in 1967 and a Master of Environmental Science from the College of Engineering and Environmental Science at the University of Oklahoma in 1972.

**JOHN D'ANTONIO, P.E.**

***Speaker – Opening Session, Moderator – Drought Monitoring***

New Mexico State Engineer & Secretary, Interstate Stream Commission

John D'Antonio was appointed as the New Mexico State Engineer by Governor Bill Richardson in January 2003. He also serves as Secretary of the Interstate Stream Commission. He is a registered professional engineer in New Mexico and Colorado. He has experience in hydraulic design, acequia rehabilitation, water resource management, and water policy development.

D'Antonio was Cabinet Secretary of the New Mexico Environment Department in 2002. Before that, he was the Director of the Water Resource Allocation Program for the Office of the State Engineer from 2001 to 2002 and served as the District 1 Supervisor in Albuquerque from 1998 to 2001. Prior to that, D'Antonio worked fifteen years with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a hydraulic design engineer, as the Chief of the Hydrology, Hydraulics, Sedimentation, and Floodplain Management Program, and was the project manager for the Acequia Rehabilitation Program.

A native New Mexican, D'Antonio received a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of New Mexico in 1979 and pursued graduate coursework in water resources engineering, hydraulic structures, and water resource administration. He was a member of the Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Water Issues from 1998-2002. He is chairman of the Water Trust Board for the State of New Mexico and serves as the New Mexico Commissioner to the Rio Grande Compact and the New Mexico Commissioner to the Costilla River Compact.

**GARY L. ESSLINGER**

***Speaker – Water Development***

Manager/Treasurer, Elephant Butte Irrigation District

Gary L. Esslinger is the Treasurer-Manager of the Elephant Butte Irrigation District. Esslinger is a third generation member of a pioneer farming family living in the Mesilla Valley. His grandfather, J. L. Esslinger, Sr., settled in La Mesa in 1913 prior to the completion of the Elephant Butte Dam. His father, J. L. Esslinger, Jr., also farmed for over fifty years before retiring. Esslinger has kept his roots in farming as well as other agricultural based industry.

After receiving a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Northern Arizona University in 1973, Esslinger worked six years in Los Angeles for a large west coast flour milling corporation as office manager. Tiring of city life, he returned to the Mesilla Valley and began working for EBID in 1978, where he has remained for the past twenty-six years.

Esslinger began his District career as Purchasing Agent and has held the other organizational positions of Maintenance Chief and Assistant Manager. He has been the District Manager for the past sixteen years and is also the District's Records Manager. Esslinger was appointed by Governor Richardson as the Chairman of the search committee to select the State Engineer for New Mexico. Most recently, Governor Richardson appointed him to the Office of the Dona Ana Flood Commissioner.

Esslinger lives in La Mesa on the family farm with his wife, Tina and three daughters.

**JACK GARNER**

***Moderator – Water Development***

Deputy Director, Operations-West, Albuquerque Area Manager, Bureau of Reclamation

Raised in northern New Mexico, Jack Garner is the Deputy Director of Operations-West for the Bureau of Reclamation. He assumed the additional duties of Area Manager for the Albuquerque Area Office in December 2003, and directs all activities of the office, including those on the Middle Rio Grande and Pecos River.

Beginning his federal career in New Mexico, Garner worked for the Bureau of Land Management in Socorro, and the Forest Service in Santa Fe and Cloudcroft. In his thirty-two years of experience working for Reclamation, Garner has held a wide range of positions,

including serving as Area Manager for the Eastern Colorado Area Office in Loveland, Colorado; the Regional Liaison for the Great Plains Region in Washington, DC; Manager of the Pueblo Field Office in Pueblo, Colorado; Chief of the Lands and Recreation Branch for the Lower Missouri River Region, located in Denver, Colorado; and Natural Resources Planner in Sacramento, California.

Garner is a graduate of Santa Fe High school and Colorado State University. He currently resides in Albuquerque, New Mexico with his wife, Lynn Johnson, an attorney in the Land and Water Branch of the Department of the Interior's Solicitor's Office.

**TOM GORDON**

***Speaker - Agriculture***

County Commissioner and Rancher, Toole County, Montana

Tom Gordon was a cowboy for the first nineteen years of his life and has been a cattleman for the last twenty-one years. He still performs all the cowboy and ranching tasks but now also incorporates the business side of things, having served as a County Commissioner for the past five years.

Living on the land and experiencing repeated droughts are a fact of Gordon's life. The last drought, which Montana has not escaped from yet, has been the worst one in the history of Gordon's ranch. His ranch was homesteaded by his great-grandfather in 1893.

Continuing to see the same problems through the years prompted Gordon and Ed Diemert to put their best foot forward in an attempt to change the way droughts are perceived and the response time when they are experiencing a drought. This led to involvement in the National Integrated Drought Information System.

**STEVE GREEN**

***Speaker – Recreation, Economic Development & Tourism***

Elephant Butte Chamber of Commerce Member

**KRIS HAVSTAD**

***Speaker - Agriculture***

Supervisory Scientist, Jornada Experimental Range, Agricultural Research Service, USDA

Kris Havstad is the Supervisory Scientist of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service's (ARS) science program based at the Jornada Experimental Range in Las Cruces, NM, a position he has held for 15 years. This ARS program ([usda-ars.nmsu.edu](http://usda-ars.nmsu.edu)) has become the largest rangeland research unit within USDA. Its mission is to develop new knowledge of ecosystem processes as a basis for management and remediation of desert rangelands. The ARS program is based on field research initiated by the USDA in 1912 when the 78,000 acre Jornada Experimental Range was first established by Presidential Executive Order. Also a site within the National Science Foundation's Long-Term Ecological Research network, the program is built on strong collaborations with other institutions and agencies interested in deserts, desert agriculture, desert ecology, and the management of desert rangelands. Jornada scientists conduct their research in the Jornada Basin, the surrounding region, and other arid regions in North America and around the world.



**EDDIE LIVINGSTON*****Speaker – Water Development***

President and Principal Engineer, Livingston Asso., PC

Eddie C. Livingston, MSCE, P.E. is President and Principal Engineer of Livingston Associates, P.C., a consulting engineering firm specializing in water resources and headquartered in Alamogordo, NM. Livingston obtained his Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from New Mexico State University and his Master of Science degree in Water Resources Engineering from the University of New Mexico. He has more than twenty years experience in various aspects of water resource planning, design and construction/operational phase services for more than seventy-five projects, including: water and waste water treatment, wells, pumping stations, storage, distribution systems and supply source development. His experience includes domestic as well as overseas assignments.

Livingston has also been involved in the planning and design of brackish water desalination systems and membrane treatment of surface water. Currently he is involved in the planning of an ultimate 13-million gallon per day (MGD) desalination treatment plant for the City of Alamogordo. Livingston has a wide range of experience in water treatment evaluation and design, including conventional (multi-media); ion exchange; microfiltration and reverse osmosis, for municipal uses as well as industrial and mining applications. Livingston has also been involved in a number of waste water treatment projects, including a reclaimed water tertiary treatment plant using membrane disc filters for the City of Alamogordo, which was recognized by the American Consulting Engineering Companies with an Engineering Excellence Award in 2003.

He is a member of the American Membrane Technology Association (AMTA), the American Water Works Association (AWWA) and the American Water Resources Association (AWRA). He was the past Water Resources Group Chairman for the NM Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). Livingston is also a member of the New Mexico Rural Water Association and teaches courses in hydraulics, water treatment, and well design. He is a registered Professional Engineer in New Mexico, Arizona and California.

**PENNY LUEHRING*****Speaker – Wildlife and Wildfire***

Watershed Improvement Program Manager, Forest Service Southwest Region

Penny Leuhring serves as the Watershed Improvement Program Manager for the Forest Service Southwest Region in Arizona and New Mexico. Her current job responsibilities include overseeing soil and water improvement in eleven National Forests in the Southwest Region, including post-fire emergency stabilization and long term rehabilitation and restoration. She has been in this position for sixteen years. Prior to that she worked as a Soil Scientist for the Santa Fe National Forest and the Big Horn National Forest in Wyoming.

Luehring has a Bachelor of Earth Science from Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

**RITA PEARSON MAGUIRE *Speaker – Recreation, Economic Development & Tourism***

President and CEO, Arizona Center for Public Policy

Rita Pearson Maguire is President and CEO of ThinkAZ, a non-partisan research center concentrating on natural resource, education, health care, immigration, and fiscal policy issues relevant to Arizona. Prior to joining ThinkAZ, Maguire served as the Director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources. During her tenure there, Maguire was instrumental in the development and implementation of critical western water management initiatives including the Arizona Water Bank Authority, an innovative program that stores water underground for cities and other municipal water providers in the Lower Basin States of the Colorado River. A licensed attorney, Maguire specializes in environmental, natural resources, and administrative law.

**PATRICIA MULROY**

***Speaker – Water Development***

General Manager, Southern Nevada Water Authority and Las Vegas Valley Water District

Patricia Mulroy was appointed General Manager of the Las Vegas Valley Water District by its Board of Directors, the Clark County Commission, in September 1989 after serving as Deputy General Manager for four years. Mulroy took over as General Manager during one of the most difficult periods in Southern Nevada's water history, a year when the community began growing at the rate of 3,000 to 5,000 residents per month -- a trend which continues to-date. Water supplies were running out, and the five separate water agencies were each anxious to guard its own supply. Recognizing they must work together to achieve a regional solution to Southern Nevada's water supply problems, these agencies formed the Southern Nevada Water Authority in 1991 and subsequently appointed Mulroy as its General Manager.

Since assumption of her position, Mulroy has been active in water issues on a national basis. She is a member of the American Water Works Association and currently sits on the Board of Directors of the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies. In 1992 she helped found and was the original chairman of the Western Urban Water Coalition. She is also a member of the Colorado River Water Users Association and has served on its Board of Directors. Additionally, she serves on the Desert Research Institute Research Foundation Board of Trustees and was the recipient of the University and Community College System of Nevada Board of Regents' 1999 Distinguished Nevadan Award.

**ANDREW ORTIZ**

***Speaker – Agriculture***

Conservation Program Specialist, Farm Service Administration, USDA

**JOANNA PRUKOP**

***Moderator – Wildlife and Wildfire***

Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

Joanna Prukop was appointed the Cabinet Secretary for the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department on January 1, 2003. She previously worked for the NM Department of Game and Fish for twenty-six years, the last sixteen as the Division Chief for the Northeast Field Operations in Raton. Among the many boards and commissions she serves on, Prukop is involved in water-related issues with the New Mexico Finance Authority, the Water Trust Board, and the Governor's Drought Task Force. Relative to her agency, divisions or departments directly affected by drought are the State Forestry Division, the State Parks Division and the Department of Game and Fish.

**DAN RANSOM*****Speaker – Drinking Water***

Water Conservation Specialist, Santa Fe Water Division, City of Santa Fe

Dan Ransom has been with the City of Santa Fe Water Division's Water Conservation Office for seven years. During this time period, Santa Fe has frequently been under drought conditions, forcing the adoption and implementation of aggressive conservation and drought policies. Prior to working for Santa Fe, Ransom worked as a licensed contractor in irrigation and landscaping for over twenty years. He owned and operated a landscape management company for eight years.

Ransom is currently Vice President of the New Mexico Irrigation Association and holds several certifications with the National Irrigation Association. He has been an active member of the New Mexico Water Conservation Alliance for many years.

**KELLY REDMOND*****Speaker – Drought Monitoring***

Regional Climatologist, Western Regional Climate Center, Desert Research Institute

Dr. Kelly Remond has been the Regional Climatologist at the Western Regional Climate Center since 1989 and Deputy Director since 1992. The Center is located at the Desert Research Institute in Reno. Redmond worked in the Atmospheric Sciences Department at Oregon State University from 1982-1989, the last six years as State Climatologist for Oregon, and served as President of the American Association of State Climatologists in 1989-90. His research and professional interests span every facet of climate and climate behavior, its physical causes and behavior, how climate interacts with other human and natural processes, and how such information is acquired, used, communicated, and perceived.

Redmond was born in Wausau, Wisconsin and raised in southwest Montana. He received a B.S. degree in Physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1974 and M.S. (1977) and Ph.D. (1982) degrees in Meteorology from the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

**PAUL TASHIJIAN*****Speaker – Wildlife and Wildfire***

Hydrologist, Fish and Wildlife Service, US Department of the Interior

Paul Tashjian has worked for as a hydrologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service since 1991. With over 13 years of professional experience in New Mexico, Paul's expertise includes water management and water protection for wildlife, New Mexico water law, water monitoring, aquatic habitat, and river restoration. He is the founder and coordinator of the Bosque Hydrology Group (<http://bhg.fws.gov>), an inter-agency, inter-university think tank that assimilates and synthesizes information regarding the physical restoration of the Middle Rio Grande, New Mexico. His current research areas include habitat-flow characterization of the Middle Rio Grande, shallow ground water hydrograph restoration at Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, and Pecos River habitat restoration at Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

Tashjian has a MS in Geology from Temple University and additional graduate work in surficial geology and climate from the University of New Mexico.

**ROSENDO TREVINO III*****Moderator - Agriculture***

State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, US. Department of Agriculture

Rosendo Trevino is currently the State Conservationist in the USDA's New Mexico Natural Resources Conservation Service, having been with this agency from January, 1995 to the present. The Natural Resources Conservation Service, formerly the Soil Conservation Service, provides leadership in a partnership effort to help New Mexicans conserve, maintain and improve the state's natural resources and environment. He has been a Soil Scientist and Soil Conservationist in two locations and a District Conservationist in two locations. In the Washington, DC National Headquarters, he was the Natural Resource Manager for the Conservation Planning Division and the Chiefs Wetlands Team. Trevino served in the U.S. Army from 1967 to 1971.

Trevino received a B.S. in Agronomy from Texas A&I University in Kingsville, Texas. His work includes traveling, including several trips to Mexico representing the Agency and traveling to England and Scotland on a Technology Exchange. Trevino is married to Norma Linda Trevino, 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, and has two daughters, Carissa Linda, a Senior, Education Major, and Gabriela Linda, a Junior, Speech Pathology Major, both at the University of New Mexico.

**ANNE WATKINS**

***Moderator - Opening Session***

Special Assistant to the State Engineer, Office of the New Mexico State Engineer

Anne Watkins was appointed Special Assistant to the State Engineer by Governor Bill Richardson in January 2003. In that capacity, she serves as Director of the NM Drought Task Force and as legislative liaison for the agency. She also coordinates a variety of activities for the State Engineer, including planning for water project funding and water development as well as collaboration with other state agencies on drinking water, water quality, and watershed issues. Prior to her appointment, Watkins served as Transit Director for the City of Albuquerque for eight years.

**JEAN WITHERSPOON**

***Speaker – Drinking Water***

Program Manager, City of Albuquerque

Jean Witherspoon was appointed Albuquerque's Water Conservation Officer in June of 1992 and was primarily responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of that program through late 2002. She is now serving as the 2003 and 2004 President of the New Mexico Water Conservation Alliance, as well as representing this group in efforts to advise the state's Drought Task Force. Over the last two years, her work has focused primarily on fiscal and administrative aspects of the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Ground Water Protection Plan. In the early '70s, she was a land use planner with the cities of Albuquerque and Phoenix. Witherspoon received the New Mexico American Public Works Association "Person of the Year" award in 1996 in recognition of her work. In July of 2001, Witherspoon received the Bureau of Reclamation's Water and Resource Management Award for her "outstanding contribution to water conservation in Albuquerque and the State of New Mexico."

Witherspoon received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Architecture from the University of New Mexico in 1970. In May of 1995, she received the University of New Mexico's Master of Water Resource Administration degree, an interdisciplinary degree including courses from a number of disciplines and emphasizing communication skills. Witherspoon is a native New Mexican from Silver City and Gallup.

