

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

MARYANNE C. BACH



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Interviews Conducted and Edited by:
Brit Allan Storey
Senior Historian
Bureau of Reclamation



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“ . . . I got a number of my questions answered in very general ways in the two years that I was working with Neil. I knew that there was this other perspective and other piece of the picture that I could get from Austin, and . . . there was something about his personality that I just sensed his time was limited. . . .” 123

“ . . . I saw all sorts of issues. And, he [Austin] understood why I was coming. It did ruffle the feathers of some of the managers here. They were very bothered by it, very intimidated, felt a bit . . . uncomfortable, insecure that a Deputy R-D was coming into the office. . . .” 123

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“ . . . really, *really* challenging for Wayne and I. Because, part of that disease affects the memory and the motor coordination, and some of the critical thinking processes. And yet, what also is a part of that disease is a fighting of the self. . . .” 125

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“ . . . there was also the dynamic of what decisions Area Managers were making and whether they were . . . feeling enthusiastic about their empowerment and

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“ . . . each of these Indian water rights Projects are amalgamations of large distribution systems out of some kind of a reservoir. . . .” 143

“ . . . once Mni Wiconi went through then it became the bandwagon—everybody was on it. . . .” 143

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“ . . . my second assignment in my SES training program. I also spent time in the Pacific Northwest, and it convinced me that I would bless the person that would take that job when John moved out of it. . . . attended . . . meeting of the salmon task force . . . I felt that I could make more of a difference in that job than I could make a difference in P-N. . . . and I concluded that they *were not* psychologically ready for a strong woman to step into P-N Region. It was the community, the state, there were some very strong religious perspectives that could not handle a woman stepping in . . .” 152

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“Fortunately for me, I had, as one of the consultants for the ten Districts that were in Nebraska and Kansas interested in contract renewal, Joe Hall, who had . . . a very cordial working relationship with these individuals when he was the Regional Director. . . .” 155

“at the time Roger Patterson was the Director of Water Resources for the state of Nebraska. So I had two individuals that had a prior history with Reclamation—*both* of whom were prior Regional Directors in my *Region* who had instrumental roles in consulting with the water users. . . .” . . . 155

“So one of my challenges was to wean my water users off of the Commissioner who they were calling on a very regular basis. . . . get an interpretation from Roger . . . from Joe Hall . . . because by this point I had some really hostile parties at the table, and, because I had been Neil’s Deputy, they initially had their *guns up*. . . .” 156

“ . . . Eluid was brilliant in being able to weave around policies that this Administration was not going to budge off of, but in which he could demonstrate the implementation was impossible in certain parts of the country. . . .” 156

“ . . . I feel that we had thirty-year contracts. . . . policy of the Bureau was that the majority of the monies coming in were to go to the account that would essentially pay down the capital, but it was really apparent that these Districts were in desperate O-&-M repair. . . . I . . . [told] Eluid that if we really wanted healthy modernized Districts then it was necessary to allow them to build up a capital improvement account. . . .” 157

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“... the Garrison District ... from their perspective they never had anything but total warfare going on with the environmental groups and with Canada...”	166
“... <i>I am</i> the person who elected to step out of the position. I had a suicide in my family. I lost my eldest nephew, and it was really challenging to grieve the loss of a close family member and be a Regional Director at that time and be available to everyone. Cell phones had really taken off. Text messaging was there. Computers...”	167
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“... I also recalled that my original commitment to myself was to retire from Federal service at fifty. And that <i>was</i> a straightforward retirement at the time that I started in Government because I started in the Legislative Branch, and Legislative Branch, you had full retirement at fifty and twenty years—not	

thirty and 55. . . .” 168

“ . . . John [Keys] came from the world where he was there eighteen years in P-N Region. He couldn’t even imagine that somebody would step down. He wanted to know what type of cancer I had, and I said, ‘John, I’m making this change so that I don’t have that’ . . .” 168

“So, from my perspective, I had lots of data points that say ‘Better watch the stress.’ . . . the world of water resources had become so sophisticated . . . it wasn’t just a matter of distributing water out of reservoirs and renewing contracts. It was . . . relationship with the Native Americans . . . endangered species, and . . . I could go on and on and on. . . .” 169

Served a Year or less in the Research Office and Then Became Acting Director of Safety, Security and Law Enforcement 169

Larry Todd Moved to the Washington Office to Become Director of Administration . 169

“I had a large number of security, safety, and law enforcement issues when I was in Great Plains Region. . . . the President of the United States was from Texas. The Vice-President of the United States was from Wyoming, and the Secretary of the interior was from Colorado. . . . there were some very delicate security issues that I can’t go into that were occurring in all three of those states. So I did carry a . . . top secret security clearance, and I spent a good chunk of my time commuting back and forth to Denver to be able to participate in classified briefings. . . .” 170

“ . . . I felt very comfortable going into the Security, Safety, and Law Enforcement position. I had had a lot more experience than people had recognized that I had had when I was Regional Director . . .” 170

SSLE Issues Arose after 9/11 170

“ . . . we dealt with the resistance that Secretary Norton had with establishing another set of law enforcement officials . . . we could never obtain her approval to go for legislation to have Reclamation’s own law enforcement officials. . . .” 170

Reclamation Was Allowed to Contract with Other Bureaus for Law Enforcement Capability 171

“ . . . we also had to address the ability of the Regional Offices and of the Denver office to get secured information. . . .” 171

Work While Director of Research 171

“ . . . I had excellent staff, just really brilliant, fabulous staff, and the majority of our time was spent seeing how it was that we could help the Regions match up with expertise in the T-S-C and partner with other Federal Agencies on research topics that were multi-dimensional in nature. . . .” 171

“ . . . another part of the responsibility, was, I found myself back at the White House Science Office again because the Director of Research for Reclamation sat on some of the interagency working groups that I had established back when I was in the White House Science Office. So, it was, in some regards, I could feel that I was coming to the closure of my Federal career. I was coming back to where I had started. . . .” 172

“ . . . once 9/11 occurred we entered a whole new set of interagency relationships that we had not previously been party to. So the world of the F-B-I and the world of the classified community and classified research and then the liaison with state law enforcement that’s a whole new chapter in Reclamation’s life . . .” 172

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INTRODUCTION

In 1988, Reclamation began to create a history program. While headquartered in Denver, the history program was developed as a bureau-wide program.

One component of Reclamation's history program is its oral history activity. The primary objectives of Reclamation's oral history activities are: preservation of historical data not normally available through Reclamation records (supplementing already available data on the whole range of Reclamation's history); making the preserved data available to researchers inside and outside Reclamation.

The senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation developed and directs the oral history program. Questions, comments, and suggestions may be addressed to the senior historian.

Brit Allan Storey
Senior Historian
Land Resources Office (84-53000)
Office of Program and Policy Services
Bureau of Reclamation
P. O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225-0007
(303) 445-2918
FAX: (720) 544-0639
E-mail: bstorey@do.usbr.gov

BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF CAREER
MARYANNE C. BACH

November 1956–Born in New York City

Raised mostly on Long Island

1974-1978–Attended Providence College, Rhode Island, graduating with a B.S.

1978-1981–Graduate work at Iowa State University, graduating with a M.S.

1981–Brooklyn Botanic Gardens Education Department

November 1981–Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, U.S. House of Representatives

February 1989 to January 1993

- Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, Department of the Interior
- Assistant Director, The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, Executive Office of the President of the United States
- Director, Office of Program Analysis and Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior for Policy

January 1993–Director of the Office of Management and Organizational Analysis, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver

July 1994–Deputy Regional Director of the Great Plains Region of the Bureau of Reclamation, Billings, Montana

August 1996–Assistant Director for Policy, Office of Policy and Program Services, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver

November 1998–Regional Director of the Great Plains Region, Bureau of Reclamation, Billings

January 2004–Director, Research and Development, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver

August 2005–Acting Director, Security, Safety, and Law Enforcement, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver

January 2006–Director, Technical Resources, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver

January 2007–Senior Professional Counsel to the Committee on Science and Technology Minority staff at the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington, D.C.

February 2007–retires from Committee on Science and Technology

**ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS
MARYANNE C. BACH**

This is Brit Allan Storey, Senior Historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Maryanne Bach, Assistant Regional Director, in her office in the Regional Office in Billings, Montana, on November the 15th, 1994, at about nine o'clock in the morning. This is Tape 1.

Storey: Miss Bach, could you tell me where you were born and raised and educated, and how you ended up at the Bureau of Reclamation, please?

Born and Raised in New York

Bach: I was born in New York City and raised on Long Island, New York, until I was seventeen, when I went to Providence College, Rhode Island, for my undergraduate work.

Received a B.S. Degree in Biology at Providence College, Rhode Island

[I]¹ majored in biology.

Took a Master's Degree in Plant Ecology at Iowa State University

From Providence, when I completed that work, I went to Iowa State University and took my master's in plant ecology, vegetation ecology.

Went to Work for Science, Space, and Technology Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives

Upon completion of that master's program, I was offered the opportunity to serve on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives, and I served there for eight years. I worked for several Members of Congress in that capacity: one including the Congressman from New Mexico, Manuel Lujan Jr. who became the Secretary of the Interior in 1989.

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks under Secretary Manuel Lujan

At that time I was offered an opportunity to come down to the Department of the Interior, and did so as the Deputy Assistant Secretary [DAS] for Fish and Wildlife and

1. A note on editorial conventions. In the text of these interviews, information in parentheses, (), is actually on the tape. Information in brackets, [], has been added to the tape either by the editor to clarify meaning or at the request of the interviewee in order to correct, enlarge, or clarify the interview as it was originally spoken. Words have sometimes been struck out by editor or interviewee in order to clarify meaning or eliminate repetition. In the case of strikeouts, that material has been printed at 50% density to aid in reading the interviews but assuring that the struckout material is readable.

The transcriber and editor also have removed some extraneous words such as false starts and repetitions without indicating their removal. The meaning of the interview has not been changed by this editing.

Deferring to the preference of Ms. Bach, capitalization in this oral history follows normal usage within the Congress of the United States and the Government of the United States, rather than standard academic rules of usage in *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Parks.

I will transition quickly here, unless you want more detail: I served in a few capacities at the departmental level, one being DAS for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

Director of the Department of the Interior's Office of Policy Analysis

My second position was as the Director of the Office of Policy Analysis, which is the Department-wide office responsible for overall policy coordination and implementation within Interior. It is there that I worked more directly with Bureau of Reclamation—that *is* the responsibility of that office, to work with all Bureaus in Interior, and to coordinate policy issues, as well as to spearhead some major initiatives. And at that, time when I was in the Policy Office, the Omnibus Reclamation Act [Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustments Act of 1992, P.L. 102-575] was moving through Congress.

Worked on Proposed Transfer of the Central Valley Project to the State of California

I was assigned to a team of individuals from Interior who were working with the Governor of California on potential transfer of the CVP [Central Valley Project] to the State.

Director of the Office of Management and Organizational Analysis in the Denver Office

And upon completion of that working group's activity, I was offered a position with the Bureau of Reclamation as the Director of the Office of Management and Organizational Analysis in the Denver Office. My supervisor was Don Glaser,² and my second-level supervisor was Joe Hall.³

Don Glaser Asked to Serve as Acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science

When I came out to the Denver Office, Don was asked to serve as the Acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, and so in essence, for the next nine months, Joe Hall served as my supervisor. I came to the Bureau of Reclamation with their expressed interest in recruiting individuals who had an environmental background, who had had experience in resource management.

Reclamation in Process of Reorganization upon Her Arrival

As the Bureau had already identified its new mission statement, they had begun the process of the strategic plan and implementation plans, and were interested in recruiting people with backgrounds that were what they considered "the new Reclamation." I was recruited for *that* contribution, what I would consider to be a non-traditional occupation for Reclamation.

2. Oral history interviews with Don Glaser are included in Reclamation's oral history program.

3. Oral history interviews with Joe D. Hall are included in Reclamation's oral history program.

Storey: And that's how you got here?

Bach: That's how I got here. Actually, that's not how I got to Great Plains. (chuckles) I got to Great Plains ~~by~~ when Neil [Stessman] was advertising for the Deputy Regional Director position. Actually, at that time, it *was* Assistant Regional Director. It's now become [Deputy Regional Director]—he's eliminated the other Assistant Regional Director positions, and there's just one Deputy now. But I was asked as to whether or not I would consider applying for that position, and I was happily stationed in Denver, but I found the opportunity to be an exciting offer. And so I did apply for the position and was subsequently selected, and came up here to Great Plains in July of '94.

Storey: Good. Let's go back to your first appointment in the House of Representatives, if we may. The name of that Committee again was . . .

Appointment to the Environmental Subcommittee of the Committee on Science and Technology in the U.S. House of Representatives

Bach: At the time it was Committee on Science and Technology. And I began with that Committee November of '81. My first assignment was on the Environmental Subcommittee.

". . . responsibilities . . . oversee the programs and budgets of all of the environmental Agencies in the Executive Branch of government. . . ."

My responsibilities were to oversee the programs and budgets of all of the environmental Agencies in the Executive Branch of government. I worked with NOAA [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration], EPA [Environmental Protection Agency], the environmental portions of the Department of Energy, portions of the Department of Agriculture that were in the environmental arena.

Storey: And the EPA?

". . . focus on the research and development aspects of those Agencies. . . ."

Bach: Yes, EPA, I think I said that. I did focus on the research and development aspects of those Agencies, but did have wide-range responsibility for their oversight on their policy initiatives, regulatory initiatives, research aspects.

Storey: I believe the way you put it was that you said that you were "offered the opportunity" to work for them. (Bach: Um-hmm.) Did they just come out and find you at Iowa State, or how did that work?

Had Hoped to Be the First State Ecologist of Iowa

Bach: No, actually, it was a non-traditional study on how one finds a job. I was, having been trained in the ecological field, I had, I would say, I had been very much interested in pursuing an opportunity with the State of Iowa to become their first state ecologist. There is an effort underway with the Nature Conservancy—it's called the Stewardship

Program—where they have worked individually with each state on establishing and maintaining a database on species diversity, and inventory of lands throughout the state, particularly lands that have not been developed, have not gone into agriculture, but are considered more natural. It's a systematic, nationwide effort, which actually, many of the concepts have been taken by Secretary [Bruce] Babbitt and have been the foundation of the National Biological Survey, the new Agency in Interior. At the time, however, it was the Nature Conservancy that maintained the largest nationwide database on animals and plant species.

Graduate Work Had Involved Study of Plant Distribution along the River Systems of Iowa

And much of my graduate work involved collection of that type of information along the river systems in the state of Iowa. And I did some work under contract for The Nature Conservancy, and [I] was very much interested in the stewardship program that they were establishing and intending to then transfer over to the State of Iowa, and that was the process that The Nature Conservancy used. They would initiate the program in each state. They would then work with the state to train them on the stewardship program, and then transfer that program over to the state for their operations over the long term. The database, the state would contribute to the national database, and The Nature Conservancy maintained that database. That's one of the aspects that Biological Survey is now looking at, is how to, with the data that we have in the Federal government on animal and plant species and habitat, how do we mirror it up with what it is in the private sector in some of these conservation organizations.

"I was offered the position of state ecologist. . . the same week . . . [I was] offered the position with the . . . Environmental Subcommittee. . . ."

I was offered the position of State Ecologist in the State of Iowa the same week that I had been offered the position with the Science and Technology Committee on their Environmental Subcommittee.

And how I was offered the position on the Science and Technology Committee was through a process of what I'd call "beating the pavement." I came back to the East Coast. I had not been back there since I left for college, and very much interested and intending on continuing to work in my field of ecology.

Head of New York Legislature's Environmental Committee Suggested She Approach the New York Members of the Science Committee in Her Job Search

Being from the state of New York, I knew very well the head of the Environmental Committee for the state legislature up in Albany. He was from my original area where I was raised, and I had done some work for him on and off over the years in his capacity as Chairman of the Environmental Committee. And [I] spent some time talking with him about career opportunities. He pointed me in the direction of the U.S. House of Representatives where a few New York Members of Congress had just been appointed to the Science Committee. And I went down and interviewed with them. It happened to be that they did have an opening on the Committee. And that's why I say

it was non-traditional and it was by chance.

Storey: Who were these people?

Groundwater Protection Act Was a Big Issue in Congress

Bach: Those individuals were Congressman Bill Carney from the First District of New York, and Congressman Raymond McGrath from the Fourth District of New York.

Groundwater Issues in New York and New Jersey

They are both from Long Island, and what their interest was in *my* background was the Ground Water Protection Act was a major issue in Congress at the time, and Long Island sits on a natural aquifer, as does portions of New Jersey. New Jersey Pine Barrens was a very interesting topic to the Congress, because of its function in filtering ground water. What happened on Long Island was during the period of development in the '50s when [William J.] Levitt—who was a very well-known nationwide developer, and developer of communities—Levitt chose to construct the majority of his housing developments down the center of Long Island. It's a very flat area, very easy for construction, but is perhaps the worst thing that could have been done from the standpoint of ground water filtration for Long Island. And with the population increase throughout Long Island, they were beginning to experience saltwater intrusion in their ground water.

The Long Island delegation was very interested in studying this. There had already been some research done with the Pine Barrens in New Jersey, which has a similar soil profile, where it is a very flat area, [i.e.] scrub oak; the topography is very similar, and scientists had realized that the New Jersey Pine Barrens were critical to the filtration and cleansing of rainwater and sewer water through those layers back down into the ground water. And there was a growing interest throughout EPA to educate the populace about the importance of groundwater recharge and of the detriment that would be caused to water supplies if we didn't take some type of precautions in land planning, to acknowledge that there was a connection between surface accumulation and groundwater recharge.

Some Graduate Work Involved Groundwater

I had done some work in my graduate experience in this area, and so to these two gentlemen who are now sitting on the Science Committee, both of whom were associated with this Environmental Subcommittee, they were interested in having somebody that had some technical background that could work some of these issues for them.

". . . difficult decision . . . meant that I would be turning down a position . . . which I had coveted for . . . a couple of years . . . the premier opportunity that I could have been offered in my field. . . ."

So that was how the match occurred, and it was a very difficult decision, because to

choose to go with the Science and Technology Committee meant that I would be turning down a position with the State of Iowa, which I had coveted for, now, a couple of years, and which I had considered to be the premier opportunity that I could have been offered in my field. But the challenges that were presented to me with the Science Committee were something that I don't think very many people have an opportunity to work in.

I can recall the discussion with Congressman Carney, when I was really debating whether I would accept the position, and when he shared with me—and I've thought about it many times—when he said, "You will always have an opportunity to go back to your field directly, to your research field. There are very few Americans that ever have an opportunity to work in the U.S. House of Representatives, and to have the exposure that you will have to so many different fields of science, and to interact and to see first-hand what it is like to work in a legislative branch of government." And I think he was absolutely correct.

Storey: And you were glad you made that decision?

". . . in my own mind I have foreseen myself as both teaching at the university level and doing research . . ."

Bach: Absolutely! It was, as I say, a difficult decision. It was one that those I had studied under found very difficult, because when you are trained in a research arena, your advisors are very supportive of that tradition, and in my own mind I have foreseen myself as both teaching at the university level and doing research, and being actually on the land for my land management experience. And so this was a choice that . . . In *my* mind, I've always looked upon it as flip-flopping my career. I have *always* been intrigued by the impact that the Congress has on different fields of science and technology throughout this country. When I was finishing up my graduate work, it was the transition from the Carter Administration to the Reagan Administration.

The State of the Environmental Field at the Transition from the Carter to the Reagan Administrations

Under the Carter Administration, the environmental field had done very well in terms of financial support. And there were a *number* of pressing issues: Acid rain was a very large national debate. When I completed my degree and research and began my interview process, the Reagan Administration had come into office, and discussion of deficit was very much on the minds, and there was a freeze on Federal hiring. And *I* found that there was very *little* understanding that professors at my university had as to what was happening to their own field, and *why* their own field had been compromised.

Congress Was Waiting on Environmental Scientists for Data upon Which to Make Policy Decisions and the Scientists Failed to Produce in the Timeframe Promised

And what I did come to appreciate and understand when I came and worked the

Congress and *worked* those issues, and saw what was happening to the environmental field, was that there were a number of promises that environmental scientists had made to the Congress—answers that they said would be available in a ten-year period. And there were significant national policy decisions that the Congress was waiting *on* the science to produce information for. And the public was no longer willing to wait for those policy decisions. And Congress felt that they were let down by the science community. They felt that the science community could not produce, in the timeframe that they were funded to produce—and I specifically would point to the acid rain debate. There was a national task force that was set up to address many of these policy and research issues in acid precipitation. And the view of the Congress was that this group continually came back saying that they needed more research money, that the studies were not completed, that they could not give them the answer, and the nation was clamoring for some kind of direction in the way of emissions standards, voluntary *standards—something* to do to address the kind of die-off that we were seeing in forests up in the Northeast and elsewhere in the country. The plumes were moving. There was monitoring going on, and so there was an acknowledgment that there was a growing problem. And for me, it was a fascinating experience to see what happened to the field of environmental science, *why* it ran into a challenging period where the Congress felt that it could not support it at the level it had supported it before, and felt that its reputation was on the line—and in fact it was, as was for a few other fields in science.

The Disconnect Between the Congress and High-Energy Physics

High-energy physics was another area that I had an opportunity to work in, and at the time there was interest in building accelerators, to understand how protons and neutrons work, and whether or not there were sub-elements of protons and neutrons. And the initial facility that was proposed was located on Brookhaven, Long Island, New York. It was in the same [congressional] district as these Members that I was working with. It was a small-scale accelerator, it was a cylinder, it was a circular accelerator. Its name was called Isabelle. It then was renamed and upgraded, in the process of discussions, as to whether or not the Congress was going to fund this accelerator. It was renamed the Colliding Beam Accelerator. Those who worked on the magnets that were going to be in this circular building, that were going to speed up protons such that you could then bombard them, and they could split up and you could then examine whether or not there were what we now know are quarks or neutrinos—all these subelements—were going to be further explored through this accelerator. Because of the problems with the magnets, because the scientists couldn't produce the *magnets* to the *performance* value that they needed, Congress began to lose faith. And this has an end story, and the end story is that some of the same scientists, and some of the same physicists from high-energy physics, were also on the SSC [Superconducting Super Collider Project].

Storey: In Texas?

Bach: In Texas. Isabelle Colliding Beam Accelerator and the SSC have a progression that was a progression through the high-energy physics community, in an effort to better understand sub-particle physics. And to this Congress, there has been a history of lack of confidence that they have had with the performance level, that the high energy

physics community said that they could attain, and that Congress continued to fund. But up until the construction point, Congress felt that it was legitimate to continue to question whether or not these facilities were going to operate. And the funds associated with operating Isabelle, and then Colliding Beam [Accelerator], and then something like the SSC, have grown monumental. And so the debate that occurred on the SSC and the decision to cease construction on the SSC has a *very* long history. It has about a fifteen-year history in Congress. And it's fascinating, absolutely fascinating.

Work in the Congress Gave a Broad Understanding of Many Different Fields of Science

So for *me* to work, having come out of the technical field, to have worked in the Congress for the eight years, and to see so many different fields of science be debated, gave me a *much* broader understanding and appreciation than I would have had, had I taken the route that is considered traditional in my field, and that is to do your research, attain professorship, work at a university, and then eventually at some point or another, understand how public policy is made.

Going into Public Policy Development and Then Back into Resource Management Reversed the Normal Course of a Traditional Academic Career

I felt I reversed the trend: I went to Washington, worked in the public policy arena, had a much broader understanding of what is happening *across* the research and development fields in the United *States—and* internationally—and then have had the opportunity—which I always intended to seek out—to come back to the resource management arena.

Storey: Let's talk a little more about the scientists and your experience with them. What do you think was going on there? Was it that they were overly optimistic? Was it that they were being pressured to give timeframes that were not realistic? What do you think was going on there?

Interaction of Congress with Scientists over the Issue of Acid Rain

Bach: I think there were a few different dimensions to what was happening. In one case, in one example, the example of acid rain, I think the scientists felt a compelling national need, and a compelling moral obligation to produce the information so that a public policy decision could be made based upon the science, to the optimum extent possible. I truly think that they were morally committed. I do think that the problem was far more complex than we had ever studied before. The history of the field of ecology is also very fascinating.

Issues in Bringing Atmospheric Science and Terrestrial Science Together to Study Acid Rain

I think that the project, for the first time, brought together the atmospheric community, and the terrestrial community of science. The atmospheric community had been coalesced longer than the terrestrial community. The terrestrial community had so

many different dimensions to work on, that they were lagging behind. And it took almost—it took close to twenty years for the two communities to come together in many senses, in terms of database integration. In fact, at the time, if you put yourself—1981 is the year I said I went to the Congress—1981 was the time that the acid rain debate was *very* heavy and intense. I said that they had been working for about—I said ten years, it was maybe short of ten years at that time—but let's take ten years as the timeframe.

Supercomputers Were Young but the Data Sets Developing Required That Kind of Data Integration

Look at what was happening in computational science: It was a very *young* field at the time, but the amount of data that the scientists began realizing they needed to integrate could not be handled on the computers that we had available to the research community. The kinds of data and the immensity of the data sets are what we now think of in terms of supercomputers. At the time, 1981, the only arena in science that had access to supercomputers were in the Department of Energy, and they were predominantly in the secured areas.

Supercomputers Were Kept "Inside the Fence"

Supercomputers; high-speed computers; parallel processing; large, massive amounts of data integration; were being worked on at Los Alamos in New Mexico—to some extent, Lawrence-Livermore. They were at facilities that were called "inside the fence." They were defense-oriented; they were what some of our defense systems were built upon; they were not as readily available and used in the non-defense arenas. So at the same time that the scientists from the terrestrial end, the atmospheric fields were trying to come together to integrate their information, to understand what is happening as this particulate matter is coming down through the atmosphere, what happens when it hits the soil?

As Supercomputers Were Developing the Science Community Was Trying to Understand the Complexities of the Acid Rain Issue and Bridge the Gap into the Computational Community

At the same time, those two communities were trying to bridge the gap into the computational field. And through the period of 1981 up through 1992, you saw the development of high-performance computing. You saw in the *national* debate, there was a discussion as to whether or not university communities should be hooked-up on networks; whether these supercomputer facilities should be in the Department of Energy, that have the expertise; or should they, from a symbolic standpoint, be taken out of the defense community and put into the civilian community?

National Science Foundation Supercomputing Initiative

And eventually what developed was the National Science Foundation [NSF] Supercomputing Initiative, which was a location of six supercomputer centers across the United States, where *any* scientist in *any* field could access through Internet.

"The whole realm of interconnectability and communications was blossoming in this timeframe. . . ."

Again, that was another function that was going on—even communications, being able to download information. The whole realm of interconnectability and communications was blossoming in this timeframe.

"My hypothesis is that . . . they were responding to the congressional need for information to address acid precipitation and . . . were realizing that they didn't have all the tools to answer the questions. And . . . they needed more time for more research . . ."

So, getting back to what was going on with the scientific community: My hypothesis is that at the time that they were responding to the congressional need for information to address acid precipitation and emissions, the scientists were realizing that they didn't have all the tools to answer the questions. And I do believe that their representation to the Congress, that they needed more time for more research, was very genuine. I didn't interpret it that they were trying to prolong their careers or prolong their research. I think that they had a level, a standard that they felt that they ought to report back to the Congress at, and they couldn't attain that level, because they were limited; they were limited in their tools to present the information.

The Terrestrial Science Community Was Not United

Another issue was within the terrestrial communities: the terrestrial community isn't united either. Over the years you had agronomists who worked on soils, and predominantly for agricultural needs, not necessarily for understanding ecosystems. I mean, this whole idea of ecosystems management—even *watershed* management—these were new concepts that were coming up in the terrestrial community. Ecology was still a fairly developing field of science—across the university spectrum. Not many universities had ecology departments: if they did, some of them had separate animal ecology, which was considered the traditional wild[life]

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Ecology Was Expanding, Being Tested, and Having Resources Committed in Universities

Bach: What I was talking about was the field of ecology was going through its own evolution, ironically. It was . . . expanding on university campuses. It was being tested as to whether or not it had the integrity to be considered a separate field. It *is* the conglomeration of many fields of science, and therefore there was some competition going on amongst the university campuses about this so-called field of ecology, and how much of a hard science was it? What kind of tools did this hard science need? I mean, there were resources that universities were having to put into these departments. You know, "Do we really need a new department? Resources are tough at universities." There are a *lot* of *internal* issues going on within these fields at the time

that the nation had some very serious public policy matters.

"Nixon founded . . . the Environmental Protection Agency and NOAA. In fact, it was Nixon who first tried to make the environment an issue in national debates. . ."

.."

We were only beginning to understand—and we're now talking ten years after, approximately ten years after Nixon founded these Agencies through the reorganization—I believe it was [Executive] Reorganization Four[, an official action of President Nixon]—and many people don't remember this, it was Nixon who established the Environmental Protection Agency and NOAA. In fact, it was Nixon who first tried to make the environment an issue in national debates. He challenged John Kennedy in the national debate, and it went *nowhere*. The public didn't pick up on it *a bit*.

". . . ten years after . . . the public [was] . . . only beginning to *understand* some of the complexities of the natural resource issues . . ."

So we're now talking ten years after these Agencies have been founded, and the public is only beginning to *understand* some of the complexities of the natural resource issues [decisions] that we have to make in this country. And the *science* was evolving at the same time. So that was one situation.

Science Community Is Not Educated/Experienced in How to Communicate with Congress

The other is, I *do* believe that there are many in the science community that may not be as educated or experienced in *how* to communicate with the Congress. Congress is on demand to make timely decisions. And the public expects and wants timely decisions. And the public has a higher expectation of our scientists than perhaps is reflective in how far the fields are.

". . . the environmental community . . . given this challenge to address an issue for the Congress . . . wanted to do it with as much certainty as possible. But . . . it's [the] antithesis of science to have a hundred percent absolute certainty. . ."

And for the environmental community, having been given this challenge to address an issue for the Congress, they *very* much wanted to do it with as much certainty as possible. But there's not a field in science—it's [the] antithesis of science to have a hundred percent absolute certainty. I mean, it defies all the science to have a hundred percent. (Storey: But the public doesn't think that.)

"The public . . . want decisions a hundred percent risk free. And nature doesn't work in that way. And science isn't that way. . ."

The public doesn't think that because in the United States we operate in the mode of a hundred percent risk free: that's what our public wants. By and large, they want decisions a hundred percent risk free. And nature doesn't work in that way. And science isn't that way. And as a nation, in the early '80s, we were educating ourselves

in the field as much as the public was being educated as to some of the environmental problems that were occurring.

". . . the way that the scientists communicated with the Congress was . . . just crossing each other in the lines of communication. To the Congress, ten years is a millennium. To a scientist, ten years is a . . . drop in the bucket. . . ."

And the way that the scientists communicated with the Congress was antagonistic to how they have to respond. As sincere as they were, to say to the Congress that you need more time, when they have given you ten years in a research project, is just crossing each other in the lines of communication. To the Congress, ten years is a millennium. To a scientist, ten years is a pinhead, it's a drop [in the bucket]. Scientific discovery occurs in some fields over a much longer period of time.

". . . so how they were communicating ended up on the Congress' end as being perceived as maybe lack of commitment . . . being let down . . . So we go ahead with the best available information. . . ."

And so how they were communicating ended up on the Congress' end as being perceived as maybe lack of commitment, self-preservation, being let down, public can't wait, we've got to go ahead. So we go ahead with the best available information. And that was another aspect of what happened in that timeframe.

". . . in the early '80s . . . the Congress was beginning to hone-in on the national debt . . . And there were tremendous social pressures . . . There was just tremendous pressure on what funds went to research, versus what funds went to other social needs. And so any field of science that was displaying tentativeness, or a lack of meeting commitments was going to have their funding affected . . ."

Another point I would make—and then maybe if we want to move on, we can—was because of the attention in the early '80s that the Congress was beginning to hone-in on the national debt, there were tremendous pressures for the allocation of resources: There was more and more scrutiny that was going to begin occurring. And where the majority of the research and development funds are appropriated in the Congress is on the Subcommittee on Appropriations; HUD [Housing and Urban Development], and independent Agencies. And there were tremendous social pressures . . . occurring within that Subcommittee. When you have HUD as one of the major sources of resource needs in that Subcommittee, there are limited funds that can then be distributed to all the other independent Agencies. And where did you have research? You had research in NOAA, an independent part of Commerce; but you had EPA, an independent Agency; the Department of Energy, some of its discretionary funds. There was just tremendous pressure on what funds went to research, versus what funds went to other social needs. And so, any field of science that was displaying tentativeness, or a lack of meeting commitments was going to have their funding affected, and thus the environmental field did.

Academics Didn't Understand the Trend in the Congress

But there wasn't a professor that I worked with in the university arena who could explain to me *why*, when I entered my graduate work in '78 and ended in '81, the career opportunities dwindled tremendously. They just were not really following what the national trends were. And to me, at some point in my career, I wanted to understand that. I wanted to understand what was happening in public policy. I wanted to understand what fields got funded; what fields didn't get funded; why; who represented the university community; who represented the research community; what the relationship of the Agencies were to the people across the country doing various research who were not Federal employees.

So, getting back to my original point, for me, I flip-flopped the traditional scientist's career. (Storey: Um-hmm.) I went to Washington first, and have come back into the natural resources field.

Storey: In history, since I've been in it, there's been a tension between what we call public historians and academic historians: people who are functioning in academia who just *do* whatever their research happens to be at the time; and people who are out in non-academic situations, doing history for a reason. There are tensions about whether or not those so-called public historians are as good as academic historians, whether their research is unbiased, whether their results are unbiased and so on. Were there those kinds of tensions in the science community also? People who were sort of sitting in their laboratories, doing whatever they thought was fun and neat and appropriate; as opposed to those who were trying to address real problems out there—for instance, Congressional issues. (Bach: Um-hmm.) Did you see any of that?

Issues Involved in Basic Research Versus Applied Research

Bach: What I saw was from the perspective or perception—perception, which is ninety-five percent of what I think you need to deal with in this world, and particularly when you're in Washington—from the perception of some of the Committees in Congress, that was an issue. They *were* concerned that with what research dollars we *were* spending in the United States, that perhaps there were some who were doing research that was not going to contribute as much as others. And the way that this took form, the kind of debate that took form in the Congress was how much do we as a nation fund for basic research, and how much do we fund for applied research? If you looked at it from the *university* community, the way that I think *they* would present the issue is, "How much funding from the Federal government went to Federal Agencies, versus how much came to the university community?"

There has been, what I would call, a cycle. It's the hills and the valleys in terms of how much this nation has invested in applied research, and how much we have invested in basic research. And another debate that was occurring, and I would say one of the reasons why this debate *was* occurring was because of resource limitations, because of the growing deficit.

The Issue of Competitiveness Played into this Debate and Was Hot at That Time

But the other reason was because of the growing issue of competitiveness, which was

also a very rampant issue in the Congress in the '80s. Because of those factors, this debate of applied research versus basic research was very much alive. How it took form—very interesting. Those who argued and were concerned that basic research would be considered by the Congress as irrelevant, with no payoff, promoting individuals that continued to work with butterflies and gesophenmelanagasters and fruit flies that you wonder, "Why do we spend all this time?! Why do we put in this money?!" In fact, there used to be a Golden Fleece Award. I don't know if you remember. (Storey: I do.) There used to be a Golden Fleece Award offered in Congress, and it was to the most preposterous example of funding in research. And what happened in the research community was an upswell of support and justification for why we need basic research.

Another Factor Was the Hot Issue of Technology Transfer among Companies, Between Companies and Government, and Between Countries

In fact, the trend for the technology transfer initiative came from the basic research community. We looked at the spinoffs from NASA [National Aeronautics and Space Administration] research. There was a tremendous amount of technology that was funded for the Space Program that found its way into the civilian community, has found its way into businesses. And the technology transfer legislation that actually was passed by the Congress—in fact, it was the same Committee, Committee on Science and Technology with its counterpart in the Senate, ~~which was Commerce, Science, Transportation—no, wait, it's a new Committee. No, actually,~~ it was the Committee on Science and Technology in the Senate too, I believe. In 1978 they began looking at this issue of technology transfer. And it *does* relate to the example I gave you about the computational field and what was happening.

". . . the technology transfer debate brought forward . . . whether or not it is appropriate for researchers to be sharing the basic research material . . ."

What the technology transfer debate brought forward was whether or not it is appropriate for researchers to be sharing the basic research material; whether or not there was payoff; whether or not there was spinoffs from this; and whether or not the balance was appropriate between basic and applied [science]. The legislation was passed to allow for Federal Agencies to designate technology transfer as an appropriate function, to actually *work* hand-in-hand with companies that they could transfer the technologies to. This was considered *heresy* back in the late '70s, that a Federal employee would work with a company that might be interested in a technology that that company would then take some aspect of basic research and commercialize it?! This was not a policy that the United States had previously accepted. This was government helping somebody get rich?! That was very much the debate going on in the late '70s. And the examples that were brought forward, and what people were doing, they were watching Japan, they were watching what was happening in Japan, and Japan was pilfering our basic research community. We openly publish throughout this country, and they were taking some of our *very good* basic research and taking it into the next stage. *Or* they were even taking our *applied* research and *applying* it in commercial fields. And here we went from a nation that in the '50s, to have something made in Japan meant it was trash, to now we're seeing something made in Japan as a preferable

product. What was going on?!

"If you looked at the manufacturing field . . . it was beginning to show a very appreciable decline. What was going to happen to our jobs? What was happening to our investments? What was happening to our manufacturing capacity?"

If you looked at the manufacturing field, if you saw the number of people who were going into manufacturing as an occupation, it was beginning to show a very appreciable decline. What was going to happen to our jobs? What was happening to our investments? What was happening to our manufacturing capacity? It was moving ~~offseas~~ [overseas]—we were now importing. What's happening to our exports? There was a tremendous relationship of these different factors going back to the question of our policy on basic and applied research. And the result was that the National Science Foundation perhaps came out—some might say that, that they really came out as the jewel in the end of this. They have always been seen, and were reemphasized as, the Agency in the Federal government that's predominant mission is to fund basic research in *all* various fields of science; and that other Agencies like the National Bureau of Standards, which has since been renamed National Institute of Standards and Technology [NIST], that NIST and Department of Agriculture and Department of Energy and EPA are those Agencies that are *more* engaged in applied research. Engineering was another strong issue of debate. We're now moving into the '80s, when the issue of engineering became a debate, but once you begin looking at what Japan is doing, and how their gross national product progress is occurring, you watch their currency, you watch what they are doing after we so-called "won the war." Watch the trends over in Japan and what's happening in the United States.

We had the Caribbean Basin Initiative at the end of Carter. Caribbean Basin Initiative *encouraged* U.S. businesses to establish themselves in the Caribbean Islands to help with the poverty levels there. And in fact, some were coming back and saying, "That Caribbean Basin Initiative is moving U.S. companies abroad." We are losing our manufacturing base. Employment figures were showing it.

". . . go to engineering. What was happening nationwide in our universities? . . . Engineering was not a popular place for an American student to be in: even our white males were not as interested in our field. But interestingly enough, Japanese would be more than happy to take those slots at our universities. . . ."

Well, from manufacturing, go to engineering. What was happening nationwide in our universities? We were seeing an increasing number of foreign students in our engineering programs. Engineering was not a popular place for an American student to be in: even our white males were not as interested in our field. But interestingly enough, Japanese would be more than happy to take those slots at our universities. We were hearing complaints about undergraduate students being taught predominantly by foreign students; they couldn't understand the material— not just in the field of engineering, but these [foreign] graduate students were teaching a number of courses. What was happening to our educational system?

"There was . . . debate in the Congress about funding of engineering, and there was an initiative in the Federal R&D [research and development] Agencies to support engineering . . . We wanted to somehow dispel the idea that you were a nerd if you were in engineering. . . ."

There was a hearty debate in the Congress about funding of engineering, and there was an initiative in the Federal R&D [research and development] Agencies to support engineering, so that we could recapture, rekindle the initiative in this country to support engineering. We wanted to somehow dispel the idea that you were a nerd if you were in engineering.

". . . if we did not somehow encourage those that were representing the increases in our demographics to get into some of the fields where we thought the opportunities were going to be, where were we going to be in the long run? . . ."

We were looking at the demographics. The demographics were showing that more women were coming into the work force. And, we had an increase in Hispanic population, and if we did not somehow encourage those that were representing the increases in our demographics to get into some of the fields where we thought the opportunities were going to be, where were we going to be in the long run? What was happening to our work force and our manpower capabilities?

The Science Committee in the timeframe that I was there, we looked at *all* occupations in the science and technology field and compared it to what was happening in U.S. industry, from the vantage point of competitiveness: What was happening to competitiveness? And the conclusion of the Congress—and it was definitely an education process through Congress—the message was, in order for our nation to be strong, at the bottom, at the base of our strength, has to be some core support for research and development. And there has to be a balance between the applied and the basic. And whereas, yes, you might think on face value that basic research is scientists in labs with tweed coats cutting up little frogs, there is a tremendous payoff, there's tremendous spinoff. It's appropriate for technology transfer; it's okay for even our U.S. firms to collaborate on research and development. They are not now in violation of antitrust [law]. Back in '78, they would be in violation of antitrust [law], they would suffer treble damages if they were found to be collaborating, corroborating on research. So these trends were the outgrowth of some of the discussions and the perceptions of the Congress as to whether or not we were spending our money appropriately, and whether we were wasting money on basic research.

Storey: Before we proceed further with the Science and Technology Committee, I'd like to go backwards again. You mentioned that you had worked with the chairman of the New York Committee for Science and Technology, was it?

Bach: Environment. He was in the New York Senate, and he chaired the Environmental Committee.

Storey: And his name was?

John Dunn and Work with the New York Senate Environmental Committee

Bach: John Dunn.

Storey: And how did you become involved with him, and what kind of work did you do with his Committee?

Bach: How I became involved with him was as a high school student. I grew up in Garden City, New York, and John Dunn was our representative to the State Senate. He was initially Assemblyman and then moved over to the Senate. And in high school I was interested in environmental issues, and from time-to-time he would take volunteers from the community—students—and let us work on projects, distributing information in the community. And that's how I got to know him.

Storey: Did you go *look* for this?

Volunteer Work as a Youngster

Bach: Yes, I did. As a youngster I was always looking for opportunities to work on outdoor issues. My family was originally more agriculturally-oriented, although by the time I came along, we lived in a suburb. But I think it was always in our blood. So from my perspective, I was always looking for My interests were always leaning toward 4-H type of activities. We didn't have a 4-H Club, so I always sought out 4-H type projects.

Storey: Like?

Bach: Oh, distributing information about recycling; working on gardening issues, how local communities can have gardens of their own. There were opportunities for students from the county that I was in to go and help those in other counties on Long Island that were agricultural. Actually a fair amount of Long Island, when I was growing up, *was* agriculture. There was very large potato production, cabbage production on Long Island. You see far less of that now, but as a youngster we had large migrant worker populations in the western part of Long Island. I had a brother who was a dentist and did a lot of volunteer work with migrant workers, and I would go out with him and work in the fields.

So it was from voluntary opportunities that I did some work with Senator Dunn. And so when I was completing my graduate work and looking for opportunities, I thought that I would like to work in the State of New York. It actually has a very good parks and recreation system, and upstate New York, much to many people's surprise, is a gorgeous part of the country. And I thought it made a whole lot of sense to contact somebody who sat as Chair of the [state's] Environmental Committee, to see what opportunities existed.

Storey: And then after high school, when you went to college, what did you study?

Biology and Field Work at Providence College Included Estuary Research and

Courses in Ecology and Environment

Bach: I was a biology major at Providence College, and I took my electoral courses in ecology and environmental science. There were few offered, but what was offered, I took. I did some estuary research at the time, worked with some river systems up in Rhode Island, did fish larvae collections and I would say learned some of the basics that one would learn before going into the field of ecology. It was a four-year institution and many of the students that I was in the biology program with went off into medicine and dental practices. At the time that I was going through school, that was what most colleges and universities recommended to people with biology degrees. But my interest was in natural resources, that aspect of biology.

Storey: Did you have any particular research projects at Providence?

Bach: At Providence, I guess I did, if I can remember what they were. I'm not sure I can! (both chuckle) It's been a while.

Storey: Well, in that case, let's talk about why you chose Iowa State.

Choice of Iowa State University for Graduate Work

Bach: I chose Iowa State because there were three or four professors that had good reputations in the ecology field, whom my professors at Providence knew and had recommended that if I could get to Iowa State and take some courses, mentor with these individuals, that they were likely going to retire in the next couple of years, and it would really be a nice opportunity professionally to have the interaction with them. And one was John Dodd, he was a limnologist. And, one was Richard Pohl, he is a taxonomist. He is known worldwide. He just died a year ago. He is a *remarkable* individual. He has written the Another person was Duane Isley, who is also a taxonomist, who is also known internationally. These three individuals were senior members of the Botany Department at Iowa State, and had made significant contributions to the field. Both Professor Pohl and Professor Isley are recognized for contributing to the food increase in agricultural production for South American countries. Because of their work on grasses and corn, again, from the basic research standpoint, studying what some of the native grasses are, why they would be more productive for certain countries to grow these crops, they have been recognized as significantly contributing to the decrease in hunger in some of the less fortunate countries.

Another individual closely associated with Iowa State—he's a *graduate* of Iowa State, he's not on the faculty there—but is also seen worldwide for his contributions to antipoverty, is Norman Borlaug, who now, years later, I had the opportunity to work on [with] *After* I served as Director of the Policy Analysis Office in the Department of the Interior, I took a fifteen month detail to the White House Science Office. I served as an Assistant Director in the White House Science Office, and I operated an interagency cabinet-level committee chaired by the President's Science Advisor. And I also staffed a committee: it was called the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. In my fifteen-month time, I had the opportunity once a month to sit in

the company of this twelve-member Council—President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, it's called PCAST [pronounced pee-cast]—if you take the initials, it's called PCAST. Norman Borlaug was appointed by President Bush to serve as a member of PCAST, and once a month we met with the President and discussed national issues in research, education, science, and technology. And full circle from my days back at Iowa State, having heard of Norman Borlaug, had the opportunity to work with him.

Storey: Now, you mentioned that you did some work on groundwater at Iowa State, I believe. Could you tell me more about that?

Groundwater Research at Iowa State

Bach: Yeah, on the scale that I worked on, it was somewhat small scale, *but* turned out to be on the leading edge of what ecologists were realizing about how groundwater systems operate. I assisted another graduate student and faculty member. The faculty member was on my committee. His work had been in estuary and marsh areas. And they were looking at the role of the plants in these marshes, in terms of filtrating the water. And what we discovered—there were a certain number of species, certain *types* of species of plants that were found in marshes—we were working predominantly now in the Midwest, but there were others doing similar research across the country—that had the ability to absorb pollutants and in actuality serve as the filters for water, as it went through the marsh.

Involved in Early Genetic Testing of Plant Material

And what we did was do water testing at different layers, and also did some of the original genetic testing that now has become very popular. Back in the late '70s, we would grind up this plant matter and . . .

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. NOVEMBER 15, 1994.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. NOVEMBER 15, 1994.

This is Tape 2 of an interview by Brit Storey with Maryanne Bach on November the 15th, 1994.

Bach: Yes, we would grind up plant matter, and we would apply the plant matter at the base of a tray of potato starch. We would put electrodes [to] create an electrical current across the potato starch, and this plant matter would move up this plant starch in bands. And because of the reagents that we used, the bands would represent chromosomal bands. And this was some of the original—this was the rudimentary research that has now gone into the genetic field where you can do blood sampling and test whether or not Or you can take serum from an individual and determine whether or not the victim of a rape is associated with the perpetrator, if the perpetrator lines up with that serum. Well, back in the late '70s, in many of the biology labs across the country, we were doing some of the very basic work with genetic research, trying to determine what plant species were the best in terms of absorbing pollutants, and it wasn't deleterious to the plant—they were actually able to assimilate the pollutants. But it was very significant to the contribution that wetlands make across this country.

Marshlands and Groundwater Recharge

And we were realizing in many parts of this country, where you do have groundwater recharge, the significance of the marshlands. (Storey: In purifying the water?) In purifying the water. And so that was the type of research. It was not mine, directly—I happened to be assisting another graduate student in the work that he was doing. And because of one of the professors on my committee, having come from *that* field of research, I was very intrigued by the lecture courses that he taught on the subject, and offered to get involved in the field work.

Storey: And was this field work as a result of an assistantship or of interest, or what?

Teaching Assistantship at Iowa State University

Bach: I was on a teaching assistantship when I was at Iowa State University, as was this other graduate student that I worked with. We each had our own research that we were pursuing for our master's and Ph.D. degrees. We frequently would team up for field work and help each other out. So, I had the opportunity to both help him in the field and then help him with the chromosomal work in the laboratory.

Storey: And the name of the professor?

Bach: Bob Chapman.

Storey: And the graduate student?

Bach: Roger Lauschmann [phonetic spelling].

Storey: Now, you just mentioned that you were working on a Ph.D.?

Deliberately Chose Not to Pursue a Ph.D.

Bach: Actually, I decided very deliberately to stay with a master's—much to the chagrin of my committee. My feeling was I had been a good student, very serious student, from high school, college, and through my graduate work, and I was ready for a break. And there were *so* many different fields that I was interested in, in science: ecology certainly was one of the strongest, but I could see myself, even in the field of ecology—there are many subdivisions—I could have picked any one of those and been fascinated with it—as well as I could have been fascinated with chemistry, with physics, with astronomy. And I wanted an opportunity to work in my field before I pursued my Ph.D. I needed a break from the standpoint of just the rigor of being in school. And I also had a desire to get out into what we all call "the real world," and see how it operated. So, I was deliberate in completing my Master's program and seeking opportunities to work beyond. Other people that I worked with were intending on pursuing their Ph.D.

I always say that I had every intention of coming back and acquiring my Ph.D., and I still do, and I have done some exploratory work into my opportunities for getting my Ph.D., but at the time, I needed a change of pace.

Storey: Did you write a thesis for your master's degree?

Bach: I did.

Storey: And what was that on?

M.A. Research Was on Vegetation along the Major River Systems of Iowa

Bach: I studied the vegetation along the Mississippi and the tributaries of the Mississippi, and the Missouri, through the state of Iowa, from north to south. I'm in error about the center. Let's see, the river system that runs through the center—[Des Moines River.] ~~actually, I will have to check on that.~~ But along the east [border] ~~coast~~ of Iowa, the Mississippi is the boundary. On the west [border] ~~coast~~ is the Missouri, and there is another set of tributaries down the center of the state. And you would think, having done the thesis, I wouldn't forget this! (laughs)

Storey: But, you studied the plants?

Bach: I studied the forests; I studied the plants, the distribution of the plants along these three river systems, and analyzed them in reference to the amount of moisture, the soil compositions—in essence, what made the forest patterns along these three river systems, which is the only place you find forests in Iowa. People think of Iowa as being part of the plains, but there is a fair amount of forest cover in the state of Iowa. There are a lot of tributaries and streams throughout Iowa. And what I was interested in was understanding why there were different distributions of trees on these three different river systems—and there were. The eastern part of Iowa would remind you of Wisconsin. The western part of Iowa is much drier and has a different set of tree and undergrowth species. And I was interested in understanding what the factors were.

Storey: Now, did you just deal with trees, or did you deal with trees and undergrowth?

Bach: No, I dealt with understory. I did undergrowth. In fact, my collection was both the undergrowth and the tree species. So, in my sampling, which I was required to do for my thesis, I did collection of information on all species. That's what the taxonomy training helped me with. I had to key out all species along those river systems. There was a certain *pattern* of sampling that is considered acceptable and reputable in the field. And so I went out and I did the collections and did the analysis. And the analysis work that I used, I used some traditional analyses that were very popular in the field, and then I noted that the computational field was evolving, and that the marriage between ecology and computational science was just developing. Well, there was a very well-known scientist at Cornell University: his name was ~~John Whitaker—no~~; Bob Whitaker. ~~John Whitaker is another figure. He's interesting. John Whitaker is also in natural resources, but~~ Bob Whitaker was at Cornell University. And he and a handful of graduate students had developed some computer programming for analyzing vegetation along different gradients. So for me, my gradient was the river system in Iowa, and I used several of his computer programs to analyze my information, analyze my data, and then compared it with some of the more conventional means of analyzing data that had been popular in the field.

Storey: And you used, for instance, Soil Conservation Service soil maps? Or did you sample the soil?

Soil Analysis Had Not Yet Merged with the Study of Ecology

Bach: Yeah. Well, this is an interesting This contributed to why I chose to step out and not continue my Ph.D. In the field of ecology, there was not a lot of soil analysis being done. The marriage had not occurred as significantly between the Agronomy Department and above surface. So whereas the department I was in—I was in the Botany Department—but you can take this example across the country. I mean, I could be at Duke University and I'd be saying the same thing. Where the field of ecology was, at the time, was sampling what was above ground. People in the Agronomy Department sampled what was *below* ground. (Storey: Um-hmm.) Where the marriage was occurring was in the marshes. People were finally beginning to understand that, "Hey, we gotta do soil samples to find out how much of the particulate matter, how much of the pollutants, or what's happening to water quality once it hits the marshes? What's being absorbed into the plants? And where is the rest going?" So the project that I worked on with Roger Lauschmann in the marshes, we did do soil samples, and had the Agronomy Department analyze the samples for us. But in *my* work, in terrestrial ecology, the field had not evolved to understanding the soil. And I found that as a frustration, frankly. And our databases were not set up, our models were not set up to handle that information. That was a whole additional layer of information that computational science could not handle. Those were two large databases. As it was, I walked around with several boxes of computer cards—that's when I was in graduate school, we still had the computer cards; you typed everything out on the computer cards. And the computer programs couldn't handle soil profiles, *nor* could they handle atmospheric information. So from the bigger picture, if you *really* wanted to understand what was contributing to the distribution of plant species along the river systems, in my *own* mind, what I produced was an incomplete picture, because I had that layer that was above the soil and below the atmosphere. I did not have what were the dynamics occurring. The dynamics, the interaction of the atmosphere to the plants involved in the '80s—particularly with the Global Change Research Program that's now a nationwide program—that's where those two fields began to come together. And then the interaction between soils and plant life was taking form more in the wetlands arena. So my timing was to come into I studied in the field between these two parameters.

Storey: Okay. That's very interesting. Let's move back to Science and Technology now. You told me that you started out with one particular assignment, which was, as I recall, coordinating the research in the various Agencies?

Work on the Subcommittee in the Science Committee

Bach: Environmental, yes. The Subcommittee had a very lengthy name. They fortunately now have renamed it the Subcommittee on Environment. But yes, that's where I began. I worked on that Environmental Committee for two years, and then I moved on to the Subcommittee that dealt with the technology transfer issues, manufacturing

competitiveness, what was happening to our graduate institutions in terms of American populations, the funding of a National Science Foundation, the issue on computation and computational facilities—that Subcommittee was called Science, Research, and Technology.

Storey: How did that change from one Subcommittee to another?

Bach: Well, the Science Committee, at the time, ~~they [had,] operated, I believe, eight Subcommittees.~~ They had eight standing Subcommittees. I was offered a job opportunity by the Member who took over the Science, Research, and Technology Committee, that Subcommittee, if I wanted to move over. And, for me, it was a broadening opportunity, so I accepted the challenge.

Storey: And that person was?

Bach: [Congressman] Judd Gregg of New Hampshire.

Storey: And you've already talked quite a bit about that: basic research and technology transfer and that kind of thing. Was there anything else about your work at the Committee that would be interesting [to talk about]?

Planned Annual Hearings with All the Nobel Laureates

Bach: Yes, there were a *number* of things about the Science Committee that were fascinating. One of the more delightful opportunities I had each year was to plan our annual hearings with all the Nobel Laureates. Each year we brought in the Nobel Laureates, in the science field, to discuss the future of science in the United States. And we also, at that time, brought in the Science Advisor to the sitting President, and had very interesting, broad-reaching discussions about the health of science in the United States, what ought the Congress do, where were the challenges, where were the pitfalls, where were the concerns? And so that was one example.

Another example was one of our Subcommittees was the Subcommittee on Space, and the astronauts would come in after each flight and do a briefing—in the form of a hearing, but it was actually a briefing—and would show all the footage that they took on their particular exploration. So, I had the opportunity to meet each of the crews from the various shuttle flights, and that was, again, very fascinating.

Ocean Dumping and Marine Pollution Were Issues of Concern

Ocean dumping, marine pollution was an issue that we dealt with. We did have another Committee in Congress that also dealt with that issue, but we had [Jacques-Yves] Cousteau come in and discuss with the Committee, testify on behalf of what he and his crew saw over the years in terms of ocean dumping and increased pollution problems. That was rather fascinating.

"The number of scientists and the figures throughout the world that I had the opportunity to meet and interact with, was maybe one of the most rewarding and

fascinating aspects of the job. . . ."

The number of scientists and the figures throughout the world that I had the opportunity to meet and interact with, was maybe one of the most rewarding and fascinating aspects of the job.

"When the Congress wants to explore a particular field . . . it does want to bring forward the best information to the nation. And therefore you have an opportunity to work with some of the most incredible figures, well-known individuals. . . ."

When the Congress wants to explore a particular field, no matter how new and evolving that field is, or how developed and established it is, it does want to bring forward the best information to the nation. And therefore you have an opportunity to work with some of the most incredible figures, well-known individuals. For me, being from my field, it brings goose bumps to me, the day that I sat at the hearing where [James] Watson and [Francis] Crick who came in to testify. Watson and Crick who discovered DNA, the double helix. Watson and Crick! I mean, you all study it, you learn it. To sit across the table and have Watson and Crick at your hearing, talking about what ought to happen with the Human Genome Project, where is the Human Genome Project going? what have we learned about DNA? what have we learned about the human chromosomal structure? what's happening to the field of genetics? Absolutely fascinating. Really remarkable.

High-Performance Computing Initiative

I had the opportunity to work in so many different fields that were evolving: the high-performance computing initiative. Now, people talk about it as the Information Highway. It's an issue that Vice-President Gore has been very interested in. Vice-President Gore served as a Member of the Science Committee when I was there. I feel like I know him "when he was a pup." (chuckles) Fascinating to see where some of these Members of Congress have gone too, very fascinating. Some of them have gone on, like Judd Gregg, to be a Governor of New Hampshire. He's now back in the U.S. Senate.

"A majority of the Members on the Science Committee, Members of Congress, were not trained in science . . ."

A majority of the Members on the Science Committee, Members of Congress, were not trained in science—I mean, that was not their forte. We had *one* individual, George Brown, who is now Chairman of the Science Committee—or, he will be the outgoing Chairman—who was a chemist. We had a few Members of the Committee that, in one time or another, in their walk of their life were engineers. But, it's fascinating when you get called in by a Member of Congress, because they really need to understand the basics of the subject matter. And to explain biotechnology to a Member of Congress, to explain supercomputers to a Member of Congress, to explain parallel processing—was both a challenge for me, I was learning *constantly* on the job; but having been trained in science, and I love to teach, I had experience teaching—those

were really fun times.

Visited China While on the Science Committee

I could go on. I had the opportunity to do international travel. I had an opportunity to serve on a delegation to China. Just after . . . Let's see, this was in the early '80s, so it was as China was moving into a democratic form of government. I had the opportunity on that trip—it was the first time, actually, I thought that I would not make it back. (nervous chuckle) When we landed in China, our passports were confiscated by the military. We did not receive our passports until we left the country. We were being reassured by the [U.S.] Embassy not to be concerned, which was a difficult thing to convince us of, because as we pulled out of the airport, there were military lining both sides of the street with machine guns. My experience, having grown up in the United States, is I had never seen a machine gun in my life, except for on TV. So I just thought, "Where in the name of God am I?!"

Air Quality Was Terrible in Beijing

We landed in Beijing—the air quality was *terrible* in Beijing. It was so thick that the smell of coal, that it was hard to imagine that people were not going to have health consequences. I came down with strep throat while I was in China. I went out and jogged *one* day; I came back with strep throat. And, I had a *very* severe case of strep throat. And people walked around Beijing with masks on their face—that's how bad the [air] quality was. So, for me, it was a very profound experience in the impact that we can make on the environment.

Visited the Great Wall of China

I had the opportunity to go and view and walk on the Great Wall, of China, which is absolutely profound to me, because I can remember my freshman year of high school being asked to list places that I would like to see sometime in my life. And, the Great Wall of China was the first place that I had listed. And it didn't occur to me until years later, when I was working for the Science Committee, and here I was one day, found myself on the Great Wall of China—absolutely fascinating, just remarkable.

Storey: Well, I hate to say this, but my two hours are up.

Bach: Is that right?

Storey: I appreciate your time. I'd like to ask you if you're willing for people from within Reclamation and outside Reclamation, who are interested in your interview, is it alright for them to use this material?

Bach: Yes, they're welcome to. I imagine that it is going to be somewhat non-traditional for what they listen to in Reclamation information, but . . .

Storey: Thank you.

END SIDE 1, TAPE 2. NOVEMBER 15, 1994.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 1. NOVEMBER 16, 1994.

This is Tape 1 of an interview by Brit Allan Story, with Maryanne [C.] Bach, Assistant Regional Director, in her offices in the Regional Office in Billings, Montana, on November the 16th, 1994, at about nine o'clock in the morning. This is Tape 1.

Storey: [You moved to Science, Research, and Technology] on the Subcommittee staff. Who was the principal Congressman involved there?

Bach: The Chairman of the Subcommittee was Doug Walgren, from Pennsylvania, and the Ranking Minority was Judd Gregg, from New Hampshire, who was my boss.

Storey: Judd Gregg was?

Bach: Correct.

Storey: You say the Ranking Minority Member, so that means you were a Minority Member of the staff?

Served as Minority Staff on the Subcommittee

Bach: Right, I was on the staff of the Minority, correct.

Storey: Tell me how Minority and Majority staffing works. Do you all work for the same person on the staff, and so on?

Bach: Technically, under the rules of the House of Representatives, *all* Committee staff work for the Chairman of the Committee. The Chairman of the *Full* Committee, when I first started, was Don Fuqua from Florida. Fuqua retired about four years after I joined the Committee—I believe that's correct, four years. And Chairman Bob Roe of New Jersey took over. From a practical day-to-day standpoint, however, I was assigned as a Minority staff, and therefore I worked more so with Minority Members, though at any point in time, I could do staff work for a Majority Member.

". . . Science and Technology was perhaps the most bipartisan Committee in Congress. . . ."

As far as the Committee was concerned and how it operated, [the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on] Science and Technology was perhaps the most bipartisan Committee in Congress. It was certainly in contrast to *other* Committees that I interacted with, which were far more political in nature. The way that Don Fuqua and the Ranking Minority—who when I started was Larry Winn, from Kansas—the way that they operated the Committee was that we were frankly all professionals, many of us were technical in background, given the nature of the work that we were involved in. And their expectation was that we would work in as much of a bipartisan nature as they operated in. And by and large, they operated in a very congenial manner. There were times where I would get called upon by a Chairman of a Subcommittee or Full

Committee and asked to staff them on a particular issue. I do recall staffing a Member of Congress from Colorado, a Democrat from Colorado [Mark Udall], at a series of hearings in the State of Colorado on competitiveness. I was the primary staff person with him for those hearings.

Storey: How many people were there on this Subcommittee staff?

Bach: There was only one Minority staff person, and Majority staff there were about fifteen.

Storey: Is that a normal proportion for staffing that you see?

Relations Between the Majority and Minority and Their Staffs

Bach: Yeah, that's not an unusual ratio—in fact, that's probably modest. If you were to look at Energy and Commerce, it would not be uncommon to find one Minority staff person to about twenty-five Majority staff people on a Committee. Now, that is a very political Committee. Energy and Commerce, their offices were just across the hall from where I was located. We were both located in the Rayburn House Office Building. I would say that there were *very* difficult relationships between the Majority and Minority staff. It would not be uncommon for a Minority Member to come into a hearing and have absolutely no background and be totally surprised by a report that was being released at the hearing, that he or she was not familiar with at all, that the Committee had ordered. It would not be uncommon for G-A-O⁴ to be asked to do a report, or [the] Congressional Research Service to be asked to do a report and for that staff to be told that they were explicitly *not* to communicate with the Minority. The Minority was *not* to know that this report was going on. That was less common in the Science Committee.

"Very rarely did we [the Science Committee] experience issues where information wasn't shared. . . ."

Very rarely did we experience issues where information wasn't shared. It may be that a Majority staff person took the lead and predominantly oversaw a particular issue, but it was not as if there was an intent to politicize the issue.

Privatization Was an Issue at That Time

Let's see, I worked with the Committee for eight years. I did see certain topics, like the issue of "privatization" become a little more political. And that was based upon philosophies of the Republican Party versus the philosophies of the Democratic Party, in terms of what functions did get "privatized." That developed after the Grace Commission Report in the '80s, and concern on both sides [of the aisle] as to what criteria were going to be used to privatize certain Federal functions.

Many Issues at the Subcommittee on Science, Research, and Technology Had Bipartisan Support for Political Reasons

4. Hyphenation of letters in this manner indicates the person spelled out the acronym letters rather than pronouncing them as if they were a word.

But if we were looking at the Space Program, I wouldn't say that there were party lines drawn on Space issues: what I *would* say is that you might see Members on *both* sides of the aisle from a particular State, or particular area of the country, coalescing on a particular point of view, because maybe it was that they had Space facilities or NASA facilities in the desert, and so they were sticking up for it; they were defending those facilities. It wouldn't be unusual when we debated Department of Energy issues, we had a number of Members on the Committee who had national laboratories, National Department of Energy Laboratories, in their districts. And it didn't matter what side of the aisle they were on; they generally voted and thought alike.

The Subcommittee on Science, Research, and Technology Was a Pleasant Place to Work

So from my standpoint, it was in contrast to what I saw other people on other Committees having to operate with; it was a very pleasant place to work. Similar to the Committee that we operated with, our counterpart in the Senate, the Senate Science Committee, by and large seemed to operate in a fairly bipartisan fashion also.

Storey: How long were you on the staff of the Subcommittee on Science, Research, and Technology?

Bach: I believe that I was there for another two years.

Storey: So that would be about '83 to '85?

Manuel Lujan Moved over to the Science, Space, and Technology Committee

Bach: Yeah, I think that that's I should have brought a bio in here. But that's how they . . . What happened at the end of that Congress . . . I came in, let's see, I believe I came in in the Ninety-Seventh Congress. At the end of the Ninety-Eighth Congress, Larry Winn from Kansas retired—the Ranking Minority Member—and that is when Manuel Lujan, from New Mexico, took over as Ranking Minority Member of the Science Committee. He had been Ranking Minority Member on the Interior Committee for many years. And he had the option of maintaining that ranking position *or* choosing Science and Technology. And he chose, at that time, to take Science and Technology. And at that point, I was promoted to Full Committee staff, and I oversaw several Subcommittees.

Storey: And the name of that Committee was?

Bach: Science. At that time they renamed it Science, Space, and Technology. The Chairman of the Committee was Bob Roe, of New Jersey.

Storey: Were there other Minority Members on the Committee staff?

Bach: There are Members of the Minority and the Majority who are Committee Members.

Storey: I misstated my question. I'm wondering about the staff. Were there other Minority staff members on the Committee?

Bach: Yeah. For each Subcommittee, there was one Minority staff person.

Storey: On the Committee?

Staff Activities and Responsibilities on the Committee

Bach: There was one Minority staff person assigned to each Subcommittee, and then at the *Full* Committee, there were just a few Minority staff. Maybe what I could draw the analogy to . . . At Full Committee you have the Chairman and the Majority Members, you have the Ranking Minority Member and other Minority Members. At Full Committee, there were—I'm going to approximate—something in the order of sixty staff who worked *Full* Committee—and that might be high, maybe it was less than that. But let's just say for purpose of example, there were perhaps fifty staff working Full Committee. And there were *five* Minority staff working Full Committee.

Storey: And let's see if I'm understanding this: each of those five Minority staff would have overseen Subcommittee work (Bach: Yes.) on behalf of the Minority Members.

Bach: Yeah. There would have been one technical Minority staff person assigned to each Subcommittee, but at the Full Committee, we did have a small crew of staff who coordinated the activities of each of the seven or eight Subcommittees. We also insure that the House schedule, that we had our bills moving to the House floor; we would prepare the necessary material and brief all Members of the Minority; we would prepare materials to go to the Rules Committee. There were a number of functions that the Full Committee staff performed that were different than what the Subcommittee staff performed. The Subcommittee staff were seen as the technical experts on the issues. The Full Committee staff were seen as the overall policy directors, and interacted with other Committees throughout the [U.S.] House of Representatives, other Committees in the Senate, [and] worked with the Rules Committee . . . So that's why I noted that essentially four years after I joined the Committee I was promoted to the Full Committee staff.

Storey: It's a Little Confusing to Me That You Have Majority Staff and You Have Minority staff, and I *think* you used the phrase "oversight over several of the Committees."

Bach: Oversight to the Subcommittees.

Storey: Right, over several of the Subcommittees. Yet you're in the Minority. What kind of oversight *is* this?

Bach: Okay. For instance, the jurisdiction of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee was research and development throughout the Executive Branch of government. Therefore—and they are an authorizing Committee—they put forward the authorization for Agencies to spend the money that Congress appropriates. In the area of R&D, there are approximately seven or eight major Federal Agencies that spend R&D dollars:

Department of Energy, NASA, EPA, NOAA, Department of Agriculture, National Bureau of Standards—now NIST. I'm missing some big players here.

Storey: Defense maybe?

Bach: Yes, Defense. Let's just take those. In the Department of Energy, there are a number of subprograms. For general purposes, let's call them nuclear/non-nuclear. At least for the purposes of the debates that were occurring in the '70s and '80s, let's call them nuclear/non-nuclear. The nuclear, some were civilian and some were defense oriented. The defense aspects of the Department of Energy were not under the purview of Science, Space, and Technology. Science, Space, and Technology oversaw R&D in the civilian world. (Storey: Okay.) Therefore, we did have coordination responsibilities with another Committee in Congress that did the defense work. So we would assign to our Subcommittee whatever activity had to be done to authorize the civilian aspect of the Department of Energy. We would bring that bill into Committee, and then we would work with the respective Committee in Congress that did the defense aspects, so that when the bill went to the House floor, the U.S. Congress authorized the entire Department of Energy's bill, not separate segments. So the distinction between the Subcommittee and the *Full* Committee would be the distinction between the details that were assigned to our Committee, and the coordination that had to occur with the Full House of Representatives, so that you brought an intact Agency's bill to the House floor. (Storey: Um-hmm.) Does that help?

Bach: Well, it helps me understand what's going on, but it doesn't help me understand how Minority staff would have oversight responsibilities over a Subcommittee. "Oversight" sounds like power to me, somehow, to influence and direct.

Bach: Oh, okay. Well, you are influencing and directing on behalf of the Ranking Minority Member. The Ranking Minority Member [of the] Full Committee, and the Chairman, are the two who are responsible for taking *all* the legislation to the House floor. They are the ones that open the debates, they are the ones that assign the time, they are the ones that essentially carry the issues on behalf of the Committee. When there's negotiations going on, it is the [Committee] Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member who are negotiating. And so, therefore, there is staff assigned to that Ranking Minority Member who are ensuring that the Minority Members, collectively, are coordinated. It would not be unusual for me to arbitrate a difference of opinion on policy issues between two Minority Members.

Storey: Or to negotiate with a Majority staffer (Bach: Yes.) over what was being done to a bill or an issue?

Bach: Oh, absolutely. Correct. Yes.

Storey: Okay, I'm just having trouble figuring out how, when you have two power bases functioning out of the same entity, how all of this works. And then it's got all these smaller subentities involved.

The Committees in Congress Are Intended to Be a Vehicle Where Staff Can Work

out Differences among the Staff and among Members

- Bach: Yes. Right. And the subentities are the place where the detailed work is being done in preparation for agreements to be struck at the Full Committee level, before you bring this issue to the Full House. (Storey: Okay.) Yes. And so it would not be unusual—for instance, a Ranking Minority Member and a Chairman could agree on a majority of issues—let me not use the word "majority," because it will confuse it—on the bulk of the issues. You can have a *lot* of agreement between a Ranking Minority Member and a Chairman. Similar, too, in a Federal Agency, you can have a lot of agreement on the overall basic direction between a Director of one Bureau and a Director of another. But when you get down into the heads of the divisions or Regional Directors, you may have some *very* different points of view. And in order to bring some collegiality to the issue, and in order to educate the Full House of Representatives on the issue, to the extent that you can minimize the differences and take care of them in the Committee, that is the purpose for having Committees in Congress.
- Storey: Okay. And the staff is doing *most* of the detail work.
- Bach: Yeah, the staff is doing the detail work, and the staff is doing a fair amount of the brokering on behalf of Members. I mean, I would go, when I worked at Subcommittee, for instance, the person that I reported to was Judd Gregg, from New Hampshire, but I always knew my Full Ranking Minority Member was somebody that I—whatever positions Judd Gregg was taking, I was always double-checking them with Full Committee to be sure that we were not out of line with where the Ranking Minority Member wanted to be. I was also checking with my *Subcommittee* Members to make sure that we were addressing the issues that they thought were important.
- Storey: Okay, so pretty complex. And I can see a scenario where Minority Members would disagree among themselves. (Bach: Absolutely.) And that then *also* had to be worked out.
- Bach: Absolutely. Oh, certainly. And Majority staff have this problem too—you know, have this dilemma. Maybe there were five or six Members [of Congress] who served on a Subcommittee, and they may be from every political spectrum within the Republican party: I might have ultra-conservatives, I might have extreme moderates. I might find that some of my conservatives agreed with some of my Southern Democrats. And they might *very* much disagree with a Member from New York, who they considered to be as much of a Democrat as . . . (Storey: As the Democrats.) As the Democrats—oh sure! It wasn't uncommon, despite the fact that we're dealing with science and technology issues, which you would think have no political boundaries, but when you get down to where the resources are going in the country, you can bet that if Members have facilities and universities that are receiving Federal dollars, they are *very* interested in whatever recommendations the Subcommittee is making. And so, therefore, the staff would work to minimize the differences. And differences would come forward by way of amendments at the Subcommittee level. And if the amendments weren't resolved, or if there were other Members on the Full Committee, maybe there were Members that did not sit on that Subcommittee, but were still interested in that issue, and those issues could come up one more time at Full Committee, and they may come up again when

you go to the House floor.

Storey: So you were busy coordinating all of this?

Bach: Um-hmm.

Storey: Now, if I understand correctly, each Committee has a person who is the head of the staff? (Bach: Staff Directors.) And that staff director would be appointed by the Majority?

Bach: Yes. There is a Staff Director for Majority, and there is a Staff Director for Minority.

Storey: There are two?

Bach: Yes.

Storey: How did you relate to these folks? Did you report just to the Staff Director for Minority?

Bach: Yes.

Storey: Okay, so you have two heads, so to speak, also, and they're negotiating between themselves also, all the time.

Bach: Correct, that's right.

Storey: Okay. Seems like it's a little schizophrenic. What kinds of problems does it cause to staffers, to be in a situation like that? Or is it just something that takes some getting used to, and then you know how it works?

Congressional Staffers Might Be Looked at as an Extension of the Balance of Powers Doctrine in the Constitution

Bach: I think you get used to it fairly quickly. It may sound repetitive, but if you . . . What I would do is step back and look at the concept of our government that is the balance of powers. It's the balance of powers between the three branches of government. Within the Congress, if you take the Legislative Branch of Government, within that branch of government, there are predominantly two parties. And the Committees are set up in terms of the ratios; they are reflecting the ratios that those two parties have in the U.S. House of Representatives. And so, therefore, the staff are a further extension of that balance, [i.e. the ratios].

Storey: You're looking at another system of balances, but in one branch of the government.

Bach: That's right.

Storey: When you were on the Subcommittees, about how many issues would you be dealing

with at any one time, do you have any idea?

Staffers Dealt with Multiple Issues All the Time

Bach: Oh, multiple. I mean, twenty issues, thirty issues. The mainstream . . . Well, first of all, I would say I *never* had a day in the Congress that ever repeated itself. There was no sense of mundaneness or routineness. What was routine was there were responsibilities to report out of Committee authorization bills.

One of the Goals Was to Meet the Schedule of the House

There were certain times that authorization bills had to be voted on by the Full House of Representatives. There were certainly times that there are set schedules for when appropriation bills go forward. So there *is* a House and Senate schedule. And so to the extent that there is any routine, the routine is that you need to meet the goals and marks of the House schedule, and that is to keep in synch with the entire Federal budget process. However, we had oversight functions, oversight responsibility for the various programs in the Federal Agencies. So at any point in time, I might be working on four, five, six, ten hearings: I'm looking for witnesses who are experts in different topics to come forward; I'm looking at new initiatives that the Agencies have started, want to look at how those initiatives are being formulated; whether the people in the scientific community are a part of those initiatives, what views they might have, what we might learn from a previous initiative. It might be exploratory work. It may be that—let's take the issue of biotechnology. It was a new technology coming into the marketplace; there were a number of ethical questions about biotechnology. There were a number of scientific questions about biotechnology. There were regulatory issues about biotechnology. It's one thing to authorize funds for an Agency to engage in biotechnology research; it is another responsibility to insure that the public interest is being protected in whatever Federal dollars are going toward an initiative. So we did run a number of hearings where we brought in people from around the world on the appropriateness, the scope, what cautions we wanted to take in the field of biotechnology.

Another area would be supercomputer development. We were moving from large mainframe computers in this country to a variety of forms of computational science. To what extent does the Federal Government fund or support the development of those types of machines, or is that a private sector issue? And if the Federal Government is going to invest, how do they invest in such a way that they are not essentially playing the market, that they are not essentially supporting one company over another company? How do you promote the basic concepts of competitiveness, of free market, at the same time wanting to encourage the developmental stages in a field that looks like it has some potential, and also, for which the government has a vested interest? Some of our large systems are operating off of these computers. To some extent, in a secured environment. What precautions do we have to take in the Federal Government? What precautions does the Executive Branch take as we take a technology and open it up for civilian use?

So those are a whole host of issues that the Committees [is] ~~are~~ looking into,

that as staff we would be responsible for doing the background work on.

How Staff Interacted with Members on Issues

Storey: So if I were a Member of Congress and I were on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, I might come to you as a staffer and say, "You know, I'm sort of interested in what's going on in the development of supercomputers and their applications to 'X,' or their development 'Y.'" I'm a dumb historian from Colorado. What is it you do for me?

Bach: Okay, what I would do for *you* is I would say, "You know, there are other people in Colorado who are very interested in this issue. In fact, I was contacted by [the] National Center for Atmospheric Research [NCAR]. It's in Boulder, Colorado. It receives all of its support, \$25 million a year, from the National Science Foundation. You're sitting on this Subcommittee and you happen to oversee the budget of the National Science Foundation. And you know, not only is NCAR interested in supercomputing, because they happen to operate all our atmospheric models on it, but down the street from you in Boulder is NOAA, and NOAA operates all of its Landsat satellites on supercomputers. And by the way, you know, you've got a company, Cray Research and CDC are two major companies up in Minnesota, and I understand that they're interested in establishing manufacturing plants outside of Minnesota. And Colorado happens to be one that they're looking at. And I actually think that there's a few other Members of Congress on this Subcommittee who are interested in this topic too. What I can do for you . . ."

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BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. APRIL 16, 1994.

Storey: So you would scope out this issue.

". . . I would scope out this issue from a national perspective, likely from a regional perspective, and then within your state. . . ."

Bach: Right, I would scope out this issue from a national perspective, likely from a regional perspective, and then within your State.

Identifying the Issues by Consulting Inside and Outside the Government

And I would work with—I might call Congressional Research Service, which is a . . . There are three "think tanks" for the Congress—House and Senate: Congressional Research Service, Office of Technology Assessment, and GAO [General Accounting Office]. And I could call upon any one of those three to back me up, to get some information for me as I scope out this issue. I would also call down to the different Agencies that *I* think are interested in this issue. I might also call some trade associations. I might call specifically into some of these companies and say, "What are some of the policy issues that you're facing?" Or they may have been in to visit me and say, "You know, we are really concerned that the defense community is not going to allow this technology to be a civilian technology. And it's very important that it be a

civilian technology, because there are *so* many opportunities there, and you know, frankly, from a market standpoint, we need it. But we know the day is going to come that Japan is going to want to purchase one of our machines. And what's the Federal government going to say? What is the Congress going to say? Are they going to allow us, or are they going to put some type of trade barriers that we are not going to be able to export our machines to Japan, because *they* might be afraid that Japan then will know how we operate one of our B-1 bombers." So I would scope this issue out and present it back to the Member and say, "Which aspects These are the various policy issues, and the various funding issues, and the various research and technology challenges that are a part of this issue of supercomputers. Which kind of aspect might you want to pursue?"

Storey: Can you as a staffer make any recommendations?

Bach: Yes, I would make a recommendation. I would say, "I happen to know that four other Members of Congress have come to me and said that they're interested in these kind of aspects. I've gotten calls from trade industries and they are really worried about GAP (unclear). You know, GAP's coming up for renewal and they really think that somebody on Foreign Affairs is going to try to block them on GAP. They've got a proposal in to [the] U.S. Trade Representative; they want to trade. They want to be able to sell their machines, and they're hearing that foreign affairs or the Defense Committee, [i.e., the] Armed Services Committee, they're going to put a block on it. And maybe we ought to look at this; maybe we ought to look at it from the standpoint of this is a applied technology, it has widespread ramifications for communications; widespread opportunities for database in this country; our researchers are all clamoring at these universities—I had the chairman of the Astronomy Department from Colorado State, Fort Collins, call me, and say that he needs to get his people on a computer. As a matter of fact, they want to purchase a supercomputer, and they want to know out there, are they going to be able to do it, because they're hearing that"

Storey: Well, now I've gotten your report, and I want to make sure, I believe it's in our interest to assure that we "civilianize," as it were, supercomputers, and I like two or three other things you have suggested, and I want to proceed with a bill. Now what do you do for me?

Bach: What I would do now is

Storey: Oh, but I don't want credit companies to be able to buy supercomputers. Okay?

Bach: Okay. Now what I do is, at this stage, I would like to call down to the Federal Agencies that I think are involved—at least the ones that I feel we have jurisdiction over on the Committee, and I would say, "I just want to inform you that the Congressman from Colorado has asked me to draft legislation. These are some of the things that he's interested in. I know that you can't give me your position on this, because you have to have your position approved by O-M-B⁵ [Office of Management and Budget], but are there some issues that you would like to caution me on? Are there some issues that you were planning to deal with? Was there any legislative authority that you were going to

5. See footnote on page 27.

be requesting of us that you might *want* me to be informed about as I go ahead and draft this legislation?"

I would also call over to a group of attorneys called Legislative Counsel. There are a group of attorneys, ~~that are~~ bipartisan in nature, that are a service to the House of Representatives. And there's a Legislative Counsel team that are services to Senators, and they help the Members draft legislation. What they'll do is, they'll pull out all the U.S. Codes. What I would do is, I would draw up the framework of the legislation. I would list out the goals. There is a format for writing legislation, and I've written quite a bit of it. I would write up a preamble that says, "These are the findings. And the findings are: it's in the national interest for supercomputers to be in a civilian technology. It's in the national interest that universities have access to these facilities. It's in the national interest that our GAP proceedings support trading export of supercomputers." I would, you know, I'd lay out what these findings are. And then I would say what the purpose of this legislation is. "The purpose is the following: The purpose is to open the market, the purpose is to allow for research on these computers, the purpose is to allow NSF to fund these facilities." And then I would, for whatever Agency I wanted to affect, I would amend their statute, or I would write a completely new provision for them. And then I would have Legislative Counsel clean it up, in essence, and put it in appropriate legal terms, refer to U.S. Codes where it might be appropriate to refer to U.S. Codes, and they would come back to me with a redrafted bill. The Member[s] of Congress would then review it, and decide if they want to go in and introduce this legislation. If they say they do, you're happy with it, then the Member of Congress puts it in the hopper, H-O-P-P-E-R. That's what it's called when you introduce the bill, you put it in the hopper. And putting it in the hopper means you introduce it in the [U.S.] House of Representatives; it gets an "HR" number, House of Representatives number that's assigned by the Clerk of the House, and now your bill, the Clerk of the House introduces it and it's determined who has jurisdiction on your bill, what Committees in Congress have jurisdiction on your bill. Now, if I'm a smart staff person, I will seek to draft a bill for you that you have control over in the Committee that you serve in, that you can shepherd this bill through. So I will try to form the provisions for you, based upon the Agencies where you have some stature in your Committee assignments. Not always—because if you say to me, "I want to be sure that it is"—and this occurs— "I want to be sure that it is not a violation of anti-trust for *any* U.S. company to work with another U.S. company on the developmental stages of this technology. I want to be sure that R&D is an acceptable function for two companies to come together." And before 1986, I believe—'84 or '86—I mentioned yesterday—it was a violation of anti-trust for U.S. companies to do that. And if it became known that two companies were collaborating on research, they could be fined up to three times for that violation.

Cooperative Research and Development Act

And so in the '80s, what I worked on, and with one or two other staff people on the Science Committee, is I drafted the legislation to allow for collaborative R&D. And there's something called Cooperative Research and Development Act—that's what it was—Cooperative Research and Development Act. It allowed not only industry partners to come together, but it also allowed a Federal Agency to work with the

parties, so that there was a collaborative process. People from industry could come into our Federal laboratories, they could use our equipment, they could work with our scientists, they could work with our engineers, and there was no violation. And, it was considered in the public interest that we do that.

Storey: But that's a change in perception that came in.

Bach: It was a dramatic change in perception. Now that legislation that we drafted, even though it involved the functions of research and development, we amended antitrust law, and that legislation got referred to the [House] Judiciary Committee, and we collaborated with the [House] Judiciary Committee. That bill moved through the House, moved through the Senate, and when we had a House and Senate Conference, we had Members from the [House] Science Committee and [House] Judiciary Committee who served on that Conference. And from that, you see organizations like MCC—Micro Computer Corporation. Sematech—I don't know if you're familiar with Sematech. (Storey: No, I'm not.) These are conglomerations of U.S. companies that have a variety of interests in computing. There's an extensive array of collaborative efforts now—*Commerce Business Daily* and the *Federal Register* frequently will list those companies that have . . . They do have a reporting requirement to the U.S. Government. They report on the collaborative ventures. I'll tell you, from the standpoint of U.S. industry, they wanted an affirmative statute that they could point to, because they did not want an outside competitor taking them to court on violations of anti-trust. So they wanted an okay from the [Federal] Government, which is the reporting requirement. They report in, they file papers with the Commerce Department, saying that they have legally established themselves as a joint venture, and they are informing the Commerce Department of that, and that reporting requirement to them [U.S. Department of Commerce] puts everyone on notice in the Private Sector that they are really a legitimate entity.

Storey: Well, now as you're drafting this piece of legislation for me—maybe I didn't hear it—are you working with Majority staffers also?

Bach: I might be. I might be, depending upon what your desires are. You may say, "Listen, I'd like you to get this drafted, and I want to get it introduced, and then once I introduce it I'll go talk to the Members on the Committee. I've got a timeframe of, I promised some people that I'd look into this issue and get it drafted." Or they might say, "You know, I really would like you to work with the Chairman of the Subcommittee because I really want to move this issue; I want to get some hearings scheduled real fast. And if he or she has some interest in this issue, I want to do that work up ahead. I don't want to go through a whole bunch of amendments and changing the bill and redrafting or whatever. I want to move this through as fast as I can." It depends on what the Member's need is.

Storey: Say there was a Judiciary Committee issue, you might go over there and talk to them?

Bach: That's right, I might go over, talk to the [House] Judiciary Committee. Probably, on something that significant, I would advise the Member to go and have a meeting with the Ranking Minority Member first, and explain to him what you want to do. And this

is what I did with Judd Gregg. Judd Gregg came from the State of New Hampshire, high-tech state, and his computer people were very interested in seeing how quickly this technology was moving. They thought for absolute *survival*, "If we don't have the opportunity, if one company doesn't have the opportunity to work with another, the U.S. computer industry is going down the tubes. We just can't possibly keep up. Things are changing too rapidly, and Japan is over there pilfering our research. I mean, they are picking up our basic research in the literature and taking it, and we can't even work with your Federal Agencies because there is this climate in this country that it's inappropriate, it's not in the public interest. I mean, what are we going to do here?!" Well, Judd Gregg happens to be an attorney himself, and my advice to Judd was, "I think there are a number of Members of Congress pretty interested in this issue, including Members on the Science Committee. And I've got some Committee staff, we've already been sitting down talking about this issue, and my advice to you is to go talk to the Ranking Minority on Judiciary, feel them out, and maybe even he and the Chairman, maybe you need to all three of you sit down." And they did so, and there were provisions . . . We introduced a bill, started moving it. As I recall, Judiciary introduced their *own* bill—they were dealing with some other anti-trust issues that were broader than what we were dealing with. So we both moved individual bills. Before we went to the House floor, we merged our bills, and then we had to again negotiate with the Senate when we finished in the House. Fascinating process.

Storey: What about if I want a bunch of other people to . . . I've forgotten what the term is. (Bach: Co-sponsor?) Yeah, co-sponsor the bill. Did you get involved in that? (Bach: Yes.) Or was that my job?

Bach: No, I got involved in that too. So long as the issue was a topic of relevance to the Committee— Science, Space, and Technology—then I would get involved in that issue. If this was an issue that was *not* in the science and technology purview, that Member might go to another Committee and another staff person, or he might have somebody in his office that's doing work for him. But yeah, let's take the issue of anti-trust and computers, supercomputers. What I did, at that point, is actually worked with—I worked hand-in-hand with Majority staff on this issue. We drafted up a "Dear Colleague" letter that went around to all Members of Congress from the Ranking Minority and the Chairman of the Subcommittee, and that letter said, "Here's some draft legislation, which we intend to introduce." Or it could say, "We just introduced, today, this legislation, so we are the sponsors of this legislation. We are interested in your joining us as co-sponsors. This is the summary of the bill, and if you want more detail, call these staff people." And what Members would do, would respond back. We would collect the names of the Members who wanted to co-sponsor, and then the sponsors of the legislation would go over to the House floor and enter into the Congressional Record the names of the additional sponsors of the legislation. And so when the legislation was printed and distributed for consideration in the Committee, it would have the sponsors and co-sponsors attached to it. So that's why, when you pick up a bill that's been introduced, you might see a lengthy series of names that are co-sponsors. Co-sponsoring of bills can be done at any point in time before you report the bill out [of Committee]. Many Members like to get as many names as possible onto the legislation when they are introducing the legislation, particularly if they want to move it fast. Because they want to show how much interest there is in the topic.

It reminds me of an issue I worked on with a female Member of Congress from Rhode Island: she was very interested in indoor air pollution, and wanted EPA to set up some standards for what the air quality ought to be inside buildings. And she foresaw this to be a very controversial issue—not the least of which is from the tobacco industry. And so she sought a widespread co-sponsor list. She wanted as many co-sponsors as possible, because she wanted to be able to present to the Subcommittee Chairman that we ought to move on this, there's enough consensus here that this is an important issue. We ought to hold hearings and start moving this legislation.

Storey: What percentage of things you worked on were introduced and then passed—do you have any ideas? High percentage? Low percentage?

Reintroducing Bills That Didn't Pass During a Session

Bach: High percentage. It wouldn't be unusual for the bills that did *not* make it through to be reintroduced the next Congress.

Storey: To come back maybe two, three, four times? (Bach: Absolutely.) And by that time they had evolved maybe?

Concerns about Science and Math Education in Schools

Bach: Yes, evolved quite a bit, yes. It also wouldn't be unusual to have—let's talk about science and math education: mid '80s a lot of interest in pre-college education. Were our American students learning a sufficient amount about science and math, up through the grade levels? Why were we losing so many female students after second or third grade? What do we need to do [for] to the teachers? We have a lot of teachers out there who are not comfortable teaching these subjects. What do we do to provide training opportunities? Well, I bet you we had no less than twenty bills being introduced.

Since the Congress Affects America Through Legislation, That Is Where the Energy Goes

One thing about the Congress that a number of Americans don't understand—and there is a phenomenon here, and subsequently there's a consequence here—but how the predominant way that Congress has moved their ideas has been through legislation. (Storey: Um-hmm.) That is an apparent mechanism that they have to effect a change in governing, is to amend the U.S. Statutes. So a good amount of the work that you are doing is working *with* legislation. You're amending it, you're repealing it, you're rewriting it, you're reissuing it.

". . . if a topic is hot, you're going to see a lot of bills introduced on that topic. And through the process of congressional hearings, those ideas mature, are challenged, are debated, and so you'll see evolution in legislation. So it would not be uncommon to have one, two, or three Congresses take up the issue. . . ."

So if a topic is hot, you're going to see a lot of bills introduced on that topic. And

through the process of congressional hearings, those ideas mature, are challenged, are debated, and so you'll see evolution in legislation. So it would not be uncommon to have one, two, or three Congresses[, i.e., sessions of Congress,] take up the issue. Health care is a good example. There are so many different aspects to health care that, for the public to have a sense of confidence on any changes, it is not unreasonable for an omnibus health care bill to take more than one [session of] Congress to make its way to the President's desk.

Storey: Or maybe even more than two Congresses, maybe?

Bach: It may take more than two Congresses. There may be some incremental changes that can be made, *or* what you can see is that perhaps there have been Committees in Congress that have been debating these issues, they *have* been holding hearings, they *have* been looking into the various aspects of health care. There has been some kind of groundwork going on, working with the public, which then renders the public ready for an omnibus bill that changes a number of aspects of it. But to do all the background, to take a new issue—let's say just take a new issue, whatever it is, that affects a broad sector of the population—to take that issue and to have it move through one Congress with significant changes to statute, is a real challenge, because you're educating people all the way through the process. You're changing how Agencies are running their programs, you're raising the issue up and then presenting to the American public the changes that you're going to make. And I would bet, if you would poll 500 people across this country, they would have 500 different answers as to what the program is, who runs it, how important it is to them, what kind of changes they want to see. There's an evolution in our thinking about where we ought to go. And the more significant the public policy issue, the more challenging it is to come to consensus—but it *is* a public process. That is the basis of our Constitution. And so in order to have a public process, there is a level of openness and discussion and debate and involvement that we have respected in this country.

Storey: Tell me your perspectives about those issues and how they arrive at the door of Congress, and how they get through the door of Congress—whether or not Congress is seeing them timely, and those kinds of issues.

How Issues Come to the Congress

Bach: Well, I'll speak to it from the standpoint of the issues that I worked on. How the issues come to Congress are oftentimes in the form of constituencies representing the issues to Congress: constituencies seeking out meetings with Members of Congress, or with staff. The issue of math and science education, concern for what was happening at the pre-college level, testing scores—how our testing scores are going down nationally—the number of not just metropolitan areas, but the number of rural areas that were seeing changes in the college scores, which some people feel is an indication of quality of education. In fact, there were reports that came out, analyses of reports done by non-governmental institutions can often catch the attention of Congress. There *were* reports that were coming out in the mid '80s comparing U.S. aptitude tests and scores to other countries, to Japan, to Canada, to Europe, and this just didn't look very good for the United States. And so there were people in the education community, people in the

university community, who came to the Congress, to the Education Committee and to the Science Committee, and said, "We think something has to be done here. Somehow we have to have some type of a debate, some type of national awareness about this issue." And when each of these interest groups come in, they all have their own solution or recommendation, they all have different ideas. Some of them even come in with bills drafted, by the way. (chuckles) They come in and say, "Not only do we see what the problem is, but we have a suggestion as to the solution. And we would like you to promote our solution." So if twenty different interest groups approach a variety of Members, it wouldn't be surprising to have twenty different bills introduced—could have *forty* different bills—could have three. The interest groups are not necessarily lobbying groups. Many of them are non-profits, they're 301-C-3s that are in existence to promote and assist in the support of the ideas that organizations have. They might go and hire a lobbyist, maybe not. But in the science community, most of the groups that I dealt with were 301-C-3s, they weren't for-profits, they were non-profits. They were groups of universities that hired a . . . they had a small Washington office, or they might rotate who was the president of their organization, who came into Washington on a periodic basis to meet with us. There are groups like the American Association of Universities. There's the AAAS, the American Association for the Advancement of Science. There are also groups like the National Association of Manufacturers. They *are* a trade association. IEEE [Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers]—it's a conglomeration of engineering organizations. NSPE, National Society of Professional Engineers. They are collections of organizations that are watching issues in their fields—issues that they believe have some type of a national dimension. And they meet on a regular basis; they come through Washington; they have annual meetings in Washington; they'll make visits to Members on the Committees; they'll set up special times for staff people from the Committees to listen to them. They may invite Committee staff out to their annual meetings to do presentations on different issues. I had an *extensive* speaking engagement list. I did *many* presentations, many discussions, many roundtables on behalf of the Committee on the issues. If I was involved in legislation, for instance when I was involved in the anti-trust legislation, I made *innumerable* presentations to different trade associations and organizations throughout the country, explaining what the legislation was about, where the interest is, what I think the Congress is going to do, what concerns different Members have, is it going to get through in this session, is it not. I would have discussions with them about whether I thought their positions were going to succeed or not, or what changes I thought that they would be best to make if they really wanted to see this issue move; what concessions I thought that they might want to consider.

It's also very possible for an individual to bring forward an issue. There was a few scientists in the supercomputer field—one in particular. I'm not going to remember his name. I can see him vividly. He was a computer scientist from Cornell University, and we . . .

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. APRIL 16, 1994.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. APRIL 16, 1994.

This is Tape 2 of an interview by Brit Storey with Maryanne C. Bach on November the 16th, 1994.

Storey: There was a man from Cornell?

Bach: Yeah, a computer scientist from Cornell who played a *very* instrumental role in educating some of the New York Members about the technology, and about the constraints that he was finding in his field, by [not] being able to solve some problems—you know, important social problems—because he couldn't analyze the data *fast* enough. We had another scientist from Florida who educated the Chairman of the Committee on the same issue. We had a couple of companies, like I said, C-D-C⁶ and Cray Research, who were out of Minneapolis, Minnesota. They played an *instrumental* role in educating some of our Midwestern State Members from Wisconsin, from Minnesota, about the issues; so that when we took up the topic and held hearings, many of our Members were educated by some of their own constituents.

". . . it's interesting to see how an issue comes to the national light from all these different points. . . ."

And it's interesting to see how an issue comes to the national light from all these different points. They're like little fingers out there. There can be a number of people talking about a particular issue from different vantage points, and they're starting to communicate with their Representatives, or to Committees, or to staff. They may have all different perspectives, but the Members come to these discussions and to these hearings with their constituents' point of view: they are there to represent their constituents, and so there are a number of constituents who are sharp enough to seek out their Representative and say, "Listen, this is an issue for me, and you happen to be sitting someplace, and I think you can help this issue." I know, in the case, of this particular scientist from Cornell, he actually sat down and gave lessons. He did his instruction to these Members about what a supercomputer was, and *how* it operated, and *why* it was important.

Storey: Using this process, do issues arrive at the Congress in a timely manner, or do they lag?

Factors Affecting How Quickly an Issue Moves Through the Congress

Bach: Well, to some extent, the phrase "squeaky wheel gets the grease," works. Members of Congress are responsive to those who come forward with concerns. So, to the extent that constituencies, interest groups, are speaking up on the issues, "Yes," the issues can be taken up timely, and many of them are. They may not progress at the speed that some in the public want them to proceed *with*. It may be that there is a Chairman of a Committee who is not particularly interested in moving your issue. He may not want to move it, because he's got five issues *he* wants to move, that are *really* important to him, and he *is* the Chairman, and guess what, he *does* control the schedule of hearings. (Storey: Um-hmm.) And so, yeah, your issue may not move quickly enough for your constituency, or even from *your* perspective.

Storey: When you went up to the Committee, did the number of things you were working on change, or did the nature of the things you were working on change?

6. See footnote on page 27 for an explanation of hyphenation here.

Bach: Oh, tremendously. Sure, if we go back to the time in which I was hired, some of the topics that I had worked on were reflective of the graduate work that I had done. The issues that I've just gone through with you (chuckles) were not issues that I studied in graduate school. The number of issues that I became involved in far exceeded my expectations. It was very helpful to have been trained in a science program, to have had that curricula to have trained under, because there are processes that you use to examine scientific issues that are transferable from one field to another. But there was a tremendous learning process on my part, too. As much as I was explaining the issues to Members, there was the time that preceded that, where I was just absorbing and gobbling up the issues myself. What I found very useful was the thought process that I learned in the science community to lay out the hypothesis: this is the hypothesis, how do you go about testing this hypothesis. That process of thinking was very helpful when you're laying out an issue that a Member wants to explore. It's a logical process of testing a statement, questioning the statement, wanting to thoroughly examine it so you bring in all various points of views. You're testing it from every direction, to insure that it meets the public need. And the public represents a number of facets. What is in the public interest is always a challenge, because there are different aspects of the public.

Storey: Many different publics, yeah.

Different Members of the Public Have Different Interests and Concerns about Various Issues

Bach: Um-hmm. To say that we are promoting a particular piece of legislation because it's in the public interest, to somebody in Billings may be a matter of viewpoint. They may not think . . . We can take issues in Reclamation: if you go to someone in Wyoming and talk about water marketing and say that it's in the public interest that the price of water be market-driven, that it be fair—what's fair to a person in Wyoming, a farmer in Wyoming, I can *tell* you, is not going to be fair to someone in California; or to somebody, let's take an environmentalist, or someone who is concerned about environmental issues, in Oregon.

Storey: Yes. And I think later I do want to discuss those issues of competing publics and public interests.

". . . working in the Congress is an *excellent* background for working in the Executive Branch. You're *very* sensitized . . . to the competing interests . . . and what is the public interest. . . ."

Bach: I feel, just in closing that, the experience of working in the Congress is an *excellent* background for working in the Executive Branch. You're *very* sensitized when you work as a staff in the Congress to the competing interests that represent or that contribute to the public and what is the public interest. I think civil rights legislation is a good example. You know, there was a very fascinating exchange, I thought, in this last confirmation hearing on the Supreme Court Justice, on [Stephen G.] Breyer. Some of the initial discussions and the questions that he was getting from the Judiciary Committee were about takings, about private property rights. And this is a very, very

popular, very timely issue in natural resources. And the Committee discussed what approach would this potential Supreme Court Justice take on environmental issues? Was it appropriate to allow mining to occur in certain parts of the country? Were there reforms that needed to occur in the mining law? Was it in the public interest to set aside certain lands? Was it *appropriate* for the Federal Government to say that certain activities, even on your private land, was not in the public interest? What does it mean to be in the public interest? *Fascinating* contemporary discussion that occurred. And I think anyone who works in the natural resources area would find it instructive to go back and read the transcript from that Supreme Court Justice nominee's hearing. Here you have Members of the Judiciary [Committee] asking questions very relevant to this Agency [Department of the Interior]. And some of the discussion led to a reflection on when civil rights law was written, when safety laws were written, that some of these same debates occurred then. Was it in the public interest? Was it in violation of our constitutional rights to pass the civil rights legislation? Isn't that, in some form or another, the Federal Government standing up and putting a qualifier on our inalienable rights? (Storey: Um-hmm.) And were we doing it for the public interest? Is there a time at which it must be done? Or is the farmer in Wyoming correct to say that that's a violation of his rights? It's intriguing, really.

Storey: Same kind of debates happen whenever there are major *policy* changes like that. The eight-hour day (Bach: Yes.), if you read Reclamation's Annual Reports, some of the Project Engineers rave—or maybe it's the project histories—they rave about "What are they going to do with all that free time?! They're just going to go waste it!" (chuckles) "We can't keep to our schedule!" You know, just all kinds of issues that come up and get resolved.

Bach: Yeah, minimum wage. How old an individual must be before they enter the work force. What protections ought to be taken for minors?

Storey: What I understand we've talked about so far, issues that you handled at the Subcommittee—also at the Committee?

Bach: Um-hm. Yeah, we did.

Storey: So you were overseeing the supercomputer and the issues about education and all of those kinds of things at both levels?

Bach: Yes.

Storey: How long were you at the Committee?

Bach: I was with the Committee just short of eight years before I came down to the Department of [the] Interior.

Storey: So that would have been '92?

Bach: No, I came to the Committee in November of '81, and I went down to Interior . . . February of '89.

Storey: Oh, so you're referring to your Subcommittee and your Full Committee staff time (Bach: Collectively.) as a collective thing.

Bach: Yeah. I worked Subcommittee activities for four years, and approximately three-and-a-half years I worked Full Committee.

Storey: Were there any other major issues that you dealt with on the Full Committee that you haven't discussed yet? And in particular, were there any water issues that you call to mind?

Groundwater Research Act

Bach: The water issues that I worked on were groundwater issues, Groundwater Research Act. Directly on water issues, I would say not, because the direct water issues were moving through the Committee on Public Works—mostly Committee on Public Works, Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, and their reauthorizations, to some extent over on Interior Committee, (unclear). The Committee on Public Works also dealt with Corps.

Storey: The Corps of Engineers?

Bach: Corps of Engineers. Now, I did deal with issues that *involved* the Corps of Engineers, like 404 permitting, because EPA was in my purview. (Storey: Right.) And obviously EPA has a stake. Now we were looking at the research needs under this Clean Water Act or the Safe Drinking Water Act, and insofar as the permitting process was under debate and under challenge, when the wetlands issue became a little more in the forefront, I did deal with some of those issues. But the *leads* on those pieces of legislation were in other Committees. It would have been a situation similar to the anti-trust legislation, where all the anti-trust aspects were technically, or from a legal standpoint, they were in the jurisdiction of the Judiciary Committee. But insofar as what brought the issue forward, or some of the interests in that issue were research-oriented, there was an obvious involvement.

Storey: Okay. Where did you go after you left the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology?

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

Bach: Where I went was down [i.e., down Constitution Avenue from the Congress to the Executive Branch] Department of the Interior as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks.

Storey: Fish, Wildlife, and Parks.

Bach: Yeah.

Storey: So you were working primarily with the Fish and Wildlife Service

Bach: And National Park Service.

Storey: And the National Park Service. And what were the major issues that you were dealing with there?

Expansion of the National Park System Was an Issue

Bach: Major issues there were expansion of the National Park system. One of the first issues I worked on was the expansion of . . .

Reagan Administration Policy Was to Avoid Expansion of National Parks and Concentrate on Maintenance Issues

Under the Reagan Administration, there was a policy in the Executive Branch of not making additions to the Park System, but rather to use the funds appropriated by Congress to improve the maintenance. There is a tremendous backlog of maintenance at the Parks. And the policy position taken by the Reagan Administration was to use those resources to improve what we had, rather than to continue to add to the estate.

George H. W. Bush Administration Supported Expansion of the National Park System

The Bush Administration had a different policy on that, and when I came into the Executive Branch the Bush Administration had come into office. And one policy change that we were supporting was expansion of the National Park system.

The "America the Beautiful" Program Was Aimed at Upgrading Public Lands

We were also advocating a major initiative throughout Interior, which I worked on, for upgrading public lands. It was a program called "America the Beautiful," where we explored various revenue sources and funding mechanisms: things like looking at concession contracts, looking at various user fees and where those user fees are going to, and whether they were going to the General Treasury, whether they somehow needed to be put back into upgrading refuges, parks, BLM [Bureau of Land Management] lands. Part of America the Beautiful was fish and wildlife initiatives on Federal lands, not just wildlife refuges.

"Recreation 2000"

So expansion of parks, coupled with a major program on O-&-M [operation and maintenance] for public lands, fish and wildlife initiatives, "Recreation 2000" was another initiative. We had a recreation policy that I worked on for the Department of the Interior.

Wetlands Issues

I also worked on wetlands issues. I was responsible for chairing a wetlands task force within the Department of the Interior. It was the first time we presented a cohesive

budget to the Congress on our wetlands investment, and identified a number of initiatives for wetlands restoration, habitat restoration, wetlands research, wetlands acquisition. And I also served as the Interior representative on the wetlands task force in the White House.

Storey: Yet it was during the Bush Administration that they redefined wetlands and—am I thinking correctly?—substantially reduced the amount of land that was considered to be wetlands?

Bach: I think the issue that you're talking about is the delineation manual on wetlands. Just prior to the Bush Administration being elected into office, there was a delineation manual issued by technical staff at Fish and Wildlife, the Corps of Engineers, EPA . . . And there's a fourth . . .

Storey: And maybe a fourth [bureau] ~~Agency~~.

Bach: (reflects to herself) Maybe it was just three.

Storey: Not Marine Fisheries or something?

Bach: Maybe there was just three. I was thinking maybe it was NOAA, but . . . The delineation manual had been represented as strictly a technical manual to help people in the field. It became a controversial document in the early Bush Administration, and the controversy persisted throughout the four years. And I think what you're referring to is that there was a rewrite of that delineation manual, and the original manual was—the controversy was that the manual was really *not* strictly a technical manual, that it actually expanded the interpretation that people in the field could make as to what was a wetland, so it became quite a hostile issue in a number of communities across the United States because if people had land on their property that was in standing water for three months of the year, it could be considered a seasonal wetland, and therefore subject to 404 permitting requirements. There were some that were arguing that what these four Agencies did was to slip through, under the auspices of a technical manual, a very significant *policy* change, or policy expansion that did not go through any kind of a public process. I think if you were to talk to technical people, they would probably represent it differently, but how people in the public were saying—the *impact* of this document, people were saying, was subjecting them to regulations that they hadn't previously been subjected to. (Storey: Um-hmm.) My sense was that the people who were involved in preparing and promoting that document thought that they were producing a useful tool for the goal of no net loss of wetlands. And you might recall that President Bush did endorse that goal of no net loss of wetlands.

No Net Loss of Wetlands

And endorsing that goal, that concept of no net loss, was the product of a series of conferences that were being held in the conservation community in the '87 through '89 timeframe. And where it came from was a concern from the conservation community that with development there was a tremendous amount of loss of habitat, and that people were perhaps narrowly—people were perhaps not fully *educated* on the

importance of wetlands. As I mentioned yesterday, I had studied in graduate school the role of wetlands and the role of estuaries in cleansing and providing increased water quality. They are also places of very rich animal life, very rich plant life. They also happen to be habitat for ducks and various waterfowl. I'd say certainly groups like Ducks Unlimited were *very* interested in a goal of no net loss of wetlands. And they had a very receptive ear with the Bush Administration. But if I recall correctly, I think both candidates, at the time, endorsed the concept or the goal of no net loss. And it was something that the conservation community, recreation community, environmental community, [were] ~~was~~ very interested in.

Storey: That was in '88?

Bach: Yeah, '88 was the Presidential election, and '89 was the year of taking office.

Storey: And how were you involved in this discussion that was going on?

Bach: The discussion: I was *less* involved in the delineation manual, those discussions. What I was involved in was a task force effort, headed by the White House Domestic Policy Council on how to contribute, how to attain the goals of no net loss of wetlands—what things could we do in the various Federal Agencies? What measures did we want to recommend to the President to take for no net loss of wetlands? So I was the Interior representative to that White House task force, and I also chaired a task force within the Department of the Interior where I brought together the Bureaus within Interior and we formulated a strategy for the wetlands activities that we had. And that involved a number of Reclamation Projects, because there was potential for wetlands restoration on Reclamation lands and Reclamation Projects.

Storey: What kind of different public groups were interested in the issue and were talking to your Committee?

Bach: Quite a diversity, again: agricultural community, the environmental community, recreation community, wildlife supporters, fishermen, scientists, city planners, metropolitan planners, state planners, state governments, water districts.

Storey: Why?

Bach: Because the goal of no net loss of wetlands had an impact on the use of water.

Storey: Has an impact on the use of water, it also has an impact on the use of land.

Bach: Um-hmm, because there's been several hundred thousand acres of land that has been taken out of its original natural state of wetland and has been converted for other use: it's been drained, it's been used in farming . . . To some extent there's been land that through flooding has been *created* into wetlands that wasn't previously. So in terms of land use, there were a number of people interested in the issue.

Storey: Did you say this was a working group?

White House Working Group on Wetlands

- Bach: Yes, we had a working group in Interior, and there was the White House working group on wetlands.
- Storey: When you're functioning on a working group like that, and you have *all* of these different public interests coming in and espousing needs or perceptions of needs that are very often diametrically opposed to one another, how do you go about sorting through those different perceived needs and coming up with a policy that operates in the interest of the American public?
- Bach: Um-hmm. Well, how you do it, there are a number of ways to do it, but a way that is considered by many to be fair is a process of public participation. And what the White House task force chose to do was to set up a series of public hearings across the United States in an effort to focus in on those communities that were most interested in the topic: for instance, Alaska. Alaska natives, Alaskan citizens, were very concerned about how the Federal government might interpret the goal of no net loss of wetlands. Did that mean no net loss nationwide? on a regional basis? by state? by community? Did that mean that there could be *no* progress, and from their perspective, no development of any land up in Alaska, because they have quite a bit of submerged land? They make a significant contribution to the amount of acreage of wetlands in the United States. The agricultural community was very interested in wetlands. Coastal communities were very interested in wetlands. Coastal communities were having population demands: a lot of people liked to move to the coast, a lot of people liked to have beachfront property, a lot of people liked to build their houses right up against estuaries. Some of them wanted to *drain* the estuaries so they could be closer to the coastline—wouldn't have to walk through this marsh to get right to the coast. Louisiana and Texas were very interested in the issues.

Water Quality Issues in South Florida and Everglades National Park

People down in Florida very interested in it. They have some *very* serious water quality problems in the Everglades and north of the Everglades from Lake Okeechobee down to Everglades. It's very serious pollution problems. The Everglades, as a natural system, is much larger than Everglades National Park. A few of the reasons why we were interested in the expansion of the Everglades National Park was because of the contributions they made to the wetlands goal. It was also because the Park boundaries were smaller than the natural boundaries of the Everglades. There were water quality issues that we felt we could handle better if the Park was expanded, if we made major additions to the Park, and we had some willing sellers. (Storey: Um-hmm.) There were regulated structures north of the Park that limited the amount of water that flowed into the Park, and also protected the farming community on the eastern side of the Park. But in so doing . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 2. APRIL 16, 1994.
 BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2. APRIL 16, 1994.

- Bach: The degradation, the quality of water into the Park. And we began seeing—scientists in

the Park began seeing changes in the plant structure, the types of plants that were growing in the park. And there are certain indicator species (Storey: Like cattails.) like cattails, right. When you start seeing cattails, you realize that you have an integrity problem. So what the task force did, frankly for the time that I served on the task force, which was about a year, we went through a process of educating each other on the functions within our various Departments and Agencies in government. We did a series of presentations to educate all members of the task force and set up a number of sub-working groups where we had multi-agency participation, and worked in initiatives that we could do within the Federal government to increase our collaboration. Once we were fully . . . I'd say "up to speed"—and we also identified, we identified opportunities for collaboration, we also identified opportunities that the Administration could take to advance this issue of no net loss. Some of those recommendations a number of people in the public were very interested in. Second stage of the task force was to conduct a series of public meetings and to put some of these issues before the public. At the time, I participated in the task group up and to the point where the public hearings began. And then I accepted a detail over to the White House Science Office. And so the person who came in behind me as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, took over the task force.

Storey: Okay. I should have asked you at the very beginning: How was it that you moved to be Deputy Assistant Secretary?

Secretary Manuel Lujan Offered Her the Position as Deputy Assistance Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

Bach: I interviewed with Secretary Lujan. I made a personal request to go down to the Department of the Interior, specifically with interest to work in Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, which I felt was compatible with my technical background. And Secretary Lujan—well, first of all, he had been Congressman Lujan. He had been the ranking Minority Member on the Science Committee, and when he went down to Interior as the Secretary, he did bring with him several staff from the House Interior Committee, and the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee—and I was one of the staff that came down with him.

Storey: And you in effect said, "Mr. Secretary, I'd like to see about a job in Interior"?

Bach: What I said to him was that I was looking at opportunities for getting more closer to my field in natural resources and would be very interested if he felt that there was something I could contribute at Interior, and where I would be *very* interested in would be to work in Fish, Wildlife, and Parks as a start—or any other area that he thought my background could be a contribution. And he came back and offered me the Deputy Assistant Secretary position, Fish, Wildlife, and Parks.

Storey: What was he like to work with?

Working with Manuel Lujan

Bach: Oh, very enjoyable, very fun, very good person, challenging. He's somebody who has a

very strong commitment to stay close to the people. It's a part, I believe, of his Hispanic heritage. It's very critical for the senior male in a Hispanic population to be one of the people, and that's something that he never forgot. He was a person less interested in the pomp and circumstance than he was in the day-to-day concerns of employees, and the people he felt he oversaw the resources for. Very humane.

Storey: I sort of have the sense that you had a career plan.

Career Plan

Bach: Yes, I did.

Storey: Would you mind discussing that?

Bach: No, I don't mind discussing it. I had said yesterday that I viewed my career as somewhat of an inverse of many others, that I had trained in a technical field and had the opportunity, upon completion of my training, to remain in that technical field or to chose a path that was more public policy oriented and broader. And that I was very interested in the public policy aspect, and frankly *knew*, at some point or another in my career, that I would want to understand that process and experience and work in that area. And I chose to do that up front. I was offered the opportunity to do that, but had a commitment to myself that I would maintain and return to the natural resources field. And that stayed with me, and has always stayed with me—certainly stayed with me through the seven-and-a-half, eight years that I was on the Science Committee. There were times during my tenure with the Science Committee that I could work more directly with issues that were closely related to my training than other times. There were obviously opportunities to expand well beyond. But about the time—it was merely coincidental, frankly, as far as I was concerned—Congressman Lujan had made a personal commitment to himself that he would serve twenty years in the Congress—I wasn't privy to that; that was something that he made with himself, and his twentieth year came due at the end of '88. And he was very much looking forward to retirement. Being a Member of Congress for twenty years and raising a family in that timeframe is a challenging task. I saw a number of Members of Congress go through that—men and women. They have tremendous demands on their schedule, a large number of people who feel that *his* time is *their* time. They each were voted in to represent their constituency, so there are several hundred thousand people who own that person's time. And, it's pretty challenging for those individuals to maintain their connection to their districts and work in another city. And I saw a number of Members of Congress retire during my tenure there, or chose to step out of public office and return to their communities. And I think it's a dilemma that they all have. It is a challenging lifestyle. I don't know that, by and large, the American public appreciates the responsibility that they vest in this one individual when they go to the polls. And it disturbs me the number of individuals in this country who do *not* go to the polls to represent their views, to speak their views, and yet individuals are representing them. You know, to me it's an honor to be able to vote in this country. I also think it's a responsibility, and yet there are very poor statistics on the number of people who vote in this country. And I think I saw it, first hand, when I worked in the Congress. I mean, the lessons that I learned in the Congress are far beyond what I ever learned in a textbook about how

the government works, about U.S. history, about science. But they'll run deeper. They're the lessons of life that I think are invaluable.

But yes, in terms of a long-term plan, I've always had a commitment to my personal interest in natural resources. And for me, it was fortuitous that President Bush selected Manuel Lujan as Secretary of the Interior, and that *further* the Secretary felt that there was something that I could contribute, and he was very sensitive to the fact that I had long-term interests in the Executive Branch, and not short-term interests in the Executive Branch. So I actually came to the Executive Branch as a career person, and deliberately so.

Storey: But not at that stage?

Bach: Yes, I did.

Had a Long Term Interest in Working at Interior and Held a Career Position in Interior as Deputy Assistant Secretary

Storey: You mean you had a career appointment as Deputy Assistant Secretary?

Bach: Um-hmm.

Storey: Isn't that a little unusual?

Bach: Well, yes, I suppose it is unusual, but it is maybe more common than most people think, because we also had other career people who served as Deputy Assistant Secretaries—for instance, Doyle Frederick was a senior manager in the U.S. Geological Survey, and for approximately, I think close to a year, Doyle served as Acting Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, and Deputy Assistant Secretary for Water and Science. There has been, for many years in Interior, a career Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget—I believe in this Administration, that doesn't exist. But for many years there's been a career Deputy. Most people don't know that I was career D-A-S, because those jobs are presumed to be political, but they don't have to be.

"I eventually did accept what they call a political appointment, but it was . . . not how I came into Interior. . . ."

I eventually did accept, what they call, a political appointment, but it was . . . not how I came into Interior. When they converted, they converted the D-A-S position to a political position. My understanding is they did it more for uniformity—they had a number of D-A-S positions that they were going to fill as political, and I was in one as a career, and they converted it. But I always had my career status and my career conversion opportunity. I think Doyle stayed career . . . Actually, when they converted me, I think Doyle may have moved on.

Storey: Would you mind telling me what grade or level you came into that position as?

Bach: Um-hmm, I came in as a fifteen.

Storey: A GS-15, okay.

Bach: My [SF]171⁷ was analyzed and reviewed and rated and graded according to GS qualifications, and I qualified as a fifteen.

Interactions among the Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Bureaus and How They Are Defined

Storey: One of the areas I'm particularly interested in is how the Agencies relate to the Assistant Secretaries and the Secretaries, and of course the Deputy Assistants under the Assistant Secretaries, and how you know who does what, who has which responsibilities, and where the gray areas are between the Agency and the Assistant Secretary's Office.

Bach: For the most part, in the Department of the Interior, the authorities to operate the Bureaus are assigned to the Secretary of the Interior, and they are further delegated to Directors of Bureaus. How you decipher this is you do go back to the legislation that was written for the Bureaus, or for the Department. And this is where you do draw upon your legal advisor, your legal counsel. There are delegation documents in the Department, and the *Department Manual* in fact—what I would say is the *Department Manual* translates what's in the statutes into an everyday working situation. And there are certain functions that have been delegated to the Assistant Secretaries; certain functions delegated down to the Director level; certain functions that have been assigned, by the Congress, strictly to the Director; certain functions that have been assigned to the Secretary and an understanding that they are kept at that level. So based upon those delegations of *authority*, that's the first step of what distinguishes who does what at what level. (Storey: Um-hmm.) Then there can also be policy decisions made in different Administrations about who will handle what subject matters. The management of the Bureaus varies from one Secretary to another, and because of these delegations of authority, there's room for flexibility.

Secretary Lujan Sometimes Went Around the Chain of Command in Interior

Secretary Lujan chose to operate in a fashion that I would describe as one that had a bit of tension between the Assistant Secretaries and the Bureau Directors. Secretary Lujan, being the type of person that he is, likes to deal directly with the people who are doing the work, and so from his point of view, he thought nothing of calling up a Bureau Director or an Assistant Director in a Bureau who he felt was the responsible individual, and hopefully informing the Assistant Secretary that he did that. There might be an Assistant Secretary who had their nose out of joint because of that, or may have been very comfortable with it. But his style was such that he liked to go right to the people; he wasn't one that liked a lot of layers. But in terms of overall policy direction and guidance and leadership, he did view His Assistant Secretaries as his leadership team, and he viewed the Bureau Directors as a part of that Leadership Team. Also, he looked to the Assistant Secretaries to help reinforce the leadership decisions or

7. Standard Form 171.

the leadership goals and principles of the Administration.

In Interior, it's not unusual, *I think*, for Bureaus to have this healthy tension with Assistant Secretaries. There are a lot of details that are, from my view, best kept within the Bureaus. And there are certain overriding guiding principles that the Office of the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary staffs can be quite effective in reinforcing.

Storey: For instance, your relationship with the Park Service, out of your office, say: who were you talking to, when you were talking to somebody in the Park Service?

Bach: Frequently, the Deputy Director, who I considered to be the day-to-day operating officer of the Bureau.

Storey: And about what kinds of issues?

Bach: Oh, hmm, a variety of issues: positions we were taking on legislation, major themes within the Park Service priorities. I did seem to get a lot of concession contracts (chuckles) up on my desk.

Storey: (laughs) Because there were political issues involved?

Bach: No, because the delegation of authority for signature was up in the Assistant Secretary's Office. I'd say the broader issues. I would certainly also talk with And I say the Deputy Director because the Director did spend a fair amount of time in the field, and understandably so, meeting/visiting with the field people and bringing that Washington contact, bringing that bond from Washington out to the field. And the demand for the Director's time was such that he did have a very fluid and active travel schedule. So I dealt with the Deputy to a great extent.

Storey: Who was a nonpolitical appointee position? Or a political one?

The Director of the National Park Service Is Appointed by the Secretary Without Consent of the Senate

Bach: No, he was career. In fact, the Director of the Park Service is a political appointment, however it's not confirmed by the Senate. That's an appointment made by the Secretary.

Storey: Is the Deputy Assistant Secretary confirmed by the Senate?

The Director of the Minerals Management Service Is Appointed by the Secretary Without Confirmation by the Senate

Bach: No. The positions in Interior that are confirmed by the Senate are the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, the Assistant Secretaries, and the Bureau Directors, with the exception of Minerals Management Service and Park Service.

Storey: So they can just make an appointment.

Bach: Those are administrative appointments, um-hmm.

Dividing Work Between the Assistant Secretary and the Deputy Assistant Secretary

Storey: How about the relationship between an Assistant Secretary and a Deputy Assistant Secretary? How is the work split up there?

"In the time that I was there as D-A-S, I did a lot of the . . . day-to-day 'big picture' items. . . ."

Bach: Oh, it can vary, again. Much of it is scheduling demands, where is the Assistant Secretary expected to be?; is that person surrogating for the Secretary?; does that person prefer to take an external affairs approach?; and does the Deputy take the internal affair approach? In the time that I was there as D-A-S, I did a lot of the day-to-day—but day-to-day "big picture" type items, not day-to-day administrative activities. It was day-to-day "big picture" items. Day-to-day, what were the types of themes that we wanted to present to the Congress?; how do we want to respond to some of the demands, some of the interests that they had?; what type of budget initiatives did we want to have? I would frequently take calls from Members of Congress that were not pleased with something that our Bureaus were doing, and work with the leadership in those Bureaus to address the issue.

Storey: Every Bureau thinks it's underfunded.

Bach: Oh yes.

Storey: But my experience, watching the Park Service over the years is the Congress continually gives them new areas, does not increase their staffing level, does not increase their budget, in spite of the fact that they're giving them new areas. (Bach: Um-hmm.) Did you become involved in any of that?

Issues Regarding Funding and New Areas at the National Park Service

Bach: Um-hmm, Steamtown. We didn't always agree with Members of Congress about the areas that they had given us, and the kind of monies that they expected us to operate on. Yeah, the reason why we put forward a budget that allowed for additions to the Park Service but set out criteria for what we thought was National Park Service status. We did that in conjunction with a program to address the operations and maintenance of the Parks. We did that in concert, because we did think that there were jewels out there that were not part of the park system, but did meet the criteria for a National Park status. And that in the long run, it was in the public interest to bring those parcels into the Park System. So we did set up a land acquisition account in the Department of the Interior, and we did have a deliberative selection process. We did put forward a land acquisition budget, the Land and Water Conservation Fund. We sent up to The Hill specific areas each year that we saw as priority for acquisition. And the Congress responded. They didn't always agree, and in some cases they did agree. And there were active debates about those Parks that we would support acquisition on, and we

said to the Congress that we would stay firm with approving or not approving—supporting or not supporting—legislative initiatives on *their* part, if they did not support our land acquisition program. The addition to Santa Monica [Mountains National Recreation Area] was another initiative of ours. There were several land acquisition (unclear) that we did.

Storey: As I recall, Blennerhassett Island might have been a big issue about that time.

Bach: I don't recall that particular

Storey: The island in the Ohio River where Aaron Burr had involvement. But it doesn't matter.

Bach: It may have been, but it wasn't an issue that I recall a controversy on.

Storey: Well, I would like to continue, but unfortunately we've used up our two hours. I'd like to ask you again if it is all right for people in Reclamation and from outside Reclamation to use the tapes and resulting transcripts from this interview.

Bach: Yes, they may.

Storey: Thank you.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. APRIL 16, 1994.

BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 1. MARCH 3, 1995.

This is Brit Allan Storey, Senior Historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Maryanne Bach, the Assistant Regional Director of the Great Plains Region of the Bureau of Reclamation, in the Denver Office on March the 3rd, 1995, at about nine o'clock in the morning. This is Tape 1.

Issues Related to Reclamation That Came up While Deputy Assistant Secretary

Storey: Miss Bach, when you were Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, I was wondering if any issues related to Reclamation came up.

Bach: An issue I would note would be the wetlands policy. That was a very timely issue when I was D-A-S for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks. And what the relevance for Reclamation was [was] what role they wanted to play in wetlands restoration. We do do wetlands restoration on Reclamation Projects, and it was an initiative where Reclamation could demonstrate its abilities in the environmental area. We formulated a wetlands task force, and the first wetlands budget that we ever had for all of the Bureaus. We tied each of the Bureau efforts together and presented it as one cohesive Departmental budget initiative, while I was D-A-S.

Storey: Um-hmm. And how did Reclamation respond to that initiative?

Bach: Quite well, actually. They were very excited by the opportunity. They went out and formed partnerships with BLM and Trouts Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited, as I recall,

gave them an opportunity to branch out to some of the interest groups that were interested in the issue, that had some expertise that they wanted to use in the field. So they were quite excited by the opportunity. Dennis Underwood was Commissioner at the time, and he was very supportive of it.

Reclamation's Grand Canyon Environmental Statement

The other issue that was timely when I was D-A-S was the Grand Canyon issue: Grand Canyon EIS [environmental impact statement] is what developed out of it, but there was the issue that Park Service identified that the visibility impairment at the Grand Canyon was associated with powerplants that were connected with some Reclamation Projects—Salt River, particularly. And the resultant product was the requirement to do an EIS on the operations of Glen Canyon Dam and the water flows, etcetera. And that's become an issue that's more current in this last year. I'm not involved in it, but it did begin when I was a D-A-S.

Storey: I don't remember whether I asked you in our previous interviews to explain where the boundaries are between the Agencies and the Assistant Secretaries and the Secretary. How's it determined who's responsible for what?

Delegations of Authority in the Department of the Interior

Bach: Oh, I don't recall that we did cover that. There are delegations of authority that are delineated on paper to what authorities of the Secretary are assigned to the Assistant Secretary, and then further to the Directors of both Fish and Wildlife and the Park Service. Congress has written some additional authority specifically *for* the Directors of those two Bureaus. But a good portion of the authority comes from the Secretary. And those delegations can be revisited from one Administration to another, and even within the context of an Administration. It's not infrequent for many of the delegations to be brought up to the Assistant Secretary level and then subsequently over time delegated out—a very typical one would be the approval to hire at the GS-13 and above level, whether or not that requires Assistant Secretary sign-off. It's not uncommon. We just saw that with the Commissioner, where that authority was brought back up to the Assistant Secretary level for the first year of the new Administration. And then over time the Commissioner and the Assistant Secretary have lightened up on that delegation, and so now it's back out to the field. Well, programmatic oversight can involve the same course too.

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and How it Ran

Storey: Okay. Now, when you were Deputy Assistant Secretary, how large was the office for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks? Do you remember?

Bach: Staff-wise, I believe it was fourteen people.

Storey: About fourteen. Were all of them political appointees?

Bach: No, a few, just a few. Maybe, I'm going to guesstimate, maybe five or six.

Storey: Out of the fourteen or so?

How Bureaus Were Used to Staff the Office of the Assistant Secretary

Bach: Yeah. What we do is—and this is pretty standard— that the Bureaus will detail people up to the hallway, or may have an assignment of individuals from each of the Bureaus to the Assistant Secretary hallway for maybe a year or two years, a particular timeframe—or maybe for an undesignated amount of time. And they help to provide the continuity in the office. The Deputy Assistant Secretaries are generally political. There may be a few special assistants. In the time that I was there we had *a* special assistant for Fish and Wildlife, and a special assistant for Park Service. And then there may have been, from time-to-time, one, two, or three, possibly, additional special assistants who were put on special projects, or helped us get the mail out or a whole host of . . . Generally, they were assigned to initiatives that came from the Secretary's Office.

Storey: And so typically they would come over from the Agencies, and then they would go back?

Bach: Yeah, for instance, let's see, there was . . . Well, there was one person who was originally from Fish and Wildlife Service who did a lot of the staff work on the hallway with the special assistant, with the political special assistant, on all the fish and wildlife issues. And when there was need for the Deputy Assistant to be involved, they were involved, but many of the day-to-day activities of getting material through the Assistant Secretary's Office were handled by those two people. And similarly we had a career person on our hallway that helped staff *me* for the National Park Service Advisory Board meetings. That hallway also handled all the historic designations, National Historic Designations. They go to the Secretary, and the National Park Service Advisory Board has a role on landmark designations. We had one particular person that handled all that. There is a whole host of advisory boards for each of the individual parks, and recommendations for filling those positions on the advisory boards all came through the hallway, and that forced them to also handle all that work.

Storey: Oh, okay, and there were secretaries?

Bach: Yeah, there were—we had, I think, three secretaries, and they were all career.

Storey: So now, if I'm getting the picture correctly, there would be about three secretaries that would probably be F-T-Es [full-time equivalents]⁸ for the Secretary's Office, or the Assistant Secretary's Office.

Bach: Yeah, the Assistant Secretary's budget is considered a part of the Office of the Secretary, yes.

Storey: Right. And then there would be maybe three or four more political appointees who

8. Full time equivalent—referring to the way the Federal Government calculates the total number of employees in an office.

would be F-T-Es⁹ of the Secretary's Office.

Bach: All the staff on the Assistant Secretaries' hallways were paid out of the budget of the Office of the Secretary—none of them were on the budgets of the Bureaus.

Storey: Of the Agencies; of the Bureaus?

Bach: Yes. Even if they were detailed, it was a reimbursable detail.

Storey: Okay, I see. But you had flexibility in who was going to be on the staff at any give time, because they were details.

Bach: They could be details, or they could be assignments for a particular amount of time.

Storey: Yeah, okay.

Bach: It was understood that many people *did* like to have an opportunity to go back to a Bureau. Some people stayed there for a couple of years or more.

Storey: And did they stay across Administrations, for instance?

Bach: Oh yeah, sure.

Storey: Across from a Republican to a Democratic or vice versa, do you know?

Each Assistant Secretary Has a Career SES Staffer Who Handles Personnel and Budget Issues for the Office and the Bureaus

Bach: I don't know. I can think of a few people who are in the Assistant Secretary's hallway now. Oh yeah, actually yeah. There is a—I don't remember the gentleman's title—but each of the Assistant Secretaries' hallways has an SES [Senior Executive Service] career person who handles all the personnel, all the budgets for the Bureaus, and the Assistant Secretary's Office. All of the audits that occur [from] for the O-I-G [Office of the Inspector General] and G-A-O [General Accounting Office], the Management Control Systems—all the various systems that run the different Bureaus, there is a senior SES person, and the individual for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks is Joe Doddridge and he's been there through a number of Administrations.

Storey: Okay, good. Now when you were talking about the wetlands issue, do you happen to remember any Reclamation individuals other than Mr. Underwood who were involved in that initiative?

Bach: Yes, and I'm not thinking of the gentleman's name. He is on the Washington staff of Reclamation now, and he was at the time. If I saw a directory, I'd remember his name.

Storey: Bruce Brown maybe?

9. For an explanation of why this acronym is hyphenated, see the footnote on page 27.

- Bach: It wasn't Bruce. (Storey: No.) Kind of quiet fellow. Hm. I could identify . . .
- Storey: It doesn't matter that much. You were there, I believe, in '89?
- Bach: Yes.
- Storey: Did we talk about why Lujan selected you for that position? Or *did* he select you for that position?
- Bach: Yes, he did select me for that position. Yeah, we did talk about it.
- Storey: Okay, good. Now, you mentioned before that you converted from political over to nonpolitical in Reclamation . . .
- Bach: No, I was nonpolitical and converted to political and then converted back.
- Storey: To nonpolitical?
- Bach: Right. I was hired as career, converted to political, to the D-A-S position, and then converted back. It's called "reinstatement."
- Storey: Was it critical that you had to have been hired as nonpolitical first?
- Bach: No.
- Storey: How did all of this work in terms of your relationships with people and so on?
- Bach: We did cover this too.
- Storey: Did we? Okay, I'm sorry.
- Bach: That's okay.
- Storey: Let's see now, you came to Reclamation, became the Director of the Office of Policy Analysis?
- Bach: No, that was a Departmental position.
- Storey: Oh, it was?
- Bach: Yeah, the Director of Policy Analysis was Bill McDonald for Reclamation.

Director, Office of Management and Organizational Analysis

- Storey: So we're talking about the Director for the Office of Management and Organizational Analysis?
- Bach: That was at Reclamation.

Storey: Was it Reclamation?

Bach: That's right.

Storey: With Joe Hall and Don Glaser, (Bach: Right.) working with them at that time. (Bach: Yes.) What was that office all about?

Provided Staff Support for Reclamation's Executive Staff

Bach: That office had three different functions: it served as the staff support to the Executive Leadership, E-L-B—is that what they call it now?

Storey: The management group.

Bach: Yeah, the senior management group. It served as staff support basically to the SESers in the organization: Regional Directors and the senior management in Denver and Washington, too. I think they call themselves the E-L-C, Executive Leadership Committee. I think that's what the *Blueprint*¹⁰ calls them. They've had a few different names.

Storey: Yeah, it keeps changing on us.

Was Audit Liaison Coordinator and Management Control Coordinator

Bach: E-F-C, E-L-C, yeah. It also serves as the audit liaison coordinator and the management control coordinator for the Bureau. It's a Bureau-wide responsibility that comes as a result of the C-F-O [Chief Financial Officer] Act and the Federal Managers Financial Improvement Act, F-M-F-I-A they call it. And in that capacity, what I was responsible for doing was to insure that whenever there was an I-G or a G-A-O investigation of Reclamation activity, we served as the first point of contact for that. We set up the entrance reviews, entrance interviews that G-A-O and the I-G conducted. We would arrange for the appropriate senior management staff for those meetings, and then we would turn those auditors *over* to the appropriate program people. We also insured that, in our response to G-A-O and the I-G on any recommendations ~~that~~, they put in their reports, that we had a formal response from Reclamation which was signed off on by the Assistant Secretary for Water and Science. There is in the Departmental Manual a very formal process for dealing with all of the I-G and G-A-O activities, and we have timelines and obligations to meet when there are recommendations. There is an office in the Department that serves as the trackers and enforcers of the Bureaus and I was the contact to that office, as well as to the Assistant Secretary's Office of Water and Science. And typically, what I would do, we have a lot of G-A-O and I-G—more I-G—reviews in Reclamation. Of all of the Interior Bureaus, we are right up there in terms of our number of reports, mostly because we are such a revenue-collecting organization. There are a lot of financial aspects to our business, and our contracts and

10. Reclamation published Commissioner Daniel P. Beard's *Blueprint for Reform: The Commissioner's Plan for Reinventing Reclamation* in 1993 as one of the vehicles for his reorganization of Reclamation in 1993-1994. Another of the vehicles was the "Commissioner's CPORT team report—"Report of the Commissioner's Program and Organization Review Team" which Reclamation also published in 1993.

repayment mechanisms: whether or not we charge interest, whether we don't charge interest, whether it's market interest, whether it's at a reduced rate, whatever. This is of *great* interest to the auditors, so they spend quite a bit of time with Reclamation.

Then under the C-F-O Act [Chief Financial Officer Act],¹¹ we have a responsibility to do our *own* self-audits: As Program Managers, we are required to do our own analyses, in house, as to whether or not the monies that we expended on a program met the program purposes, and did we achieve our accomplishments. So the Management Control Process is the mechanism that the Department sets out by which we conduct our own audits. So my office coordinated the subjects that we were going to review in any given year, and the process for conducting those reviews. And then, those reviews have to signed off by the Commissioner, and they go to the Department, and they are reviewed by the Department. They are also accessible by the I-G, and the I-G can take issue with any of our reviews, and they may embark on their own corrective actions for us. We identify our own corrective actions in the organization, and then my office also tracked those corrective actions, and working with the Deputy Commissioner, who is essentially responsible for this program, we would have to ensure that R-Ds [Regional Directors] or Assistant Commissioners, in fact, met the obligations under those corrective actions, because we identified those corrective actions as a result of weaknesses in our system: weaknesses in our programs, weaknesses in achieving program accomplishment, or accurate financial accounting.

Storey: Do you remember any of the audits particularly? Self-audits *and* the outside audits.

Bach: Oh yeah, there were, boy, a number of outside audits that I can think of. We had reviews by the I-G on how we expended recreational money at different Reclamation facilities, and whether appropriated dollars were the correct dollars to spend, or whether our partner at the recreation facility was obligated to spend dollars. We've had . . .

Storey: What was the conclusion?

Bach: The conclusion was that I-G concluded that we had inappropriately spent appropriated dollars, that we had gone beyond what the criteria were for health and safety, that we had *over*built a few of these facilities—this is particularly in the P-N Region [Pacific Northwest Region]—that rather than building a Pontiac, we built a Cadillac. And that the local partner really should have, if that was the standard that *they* wanted to attain, then *they* really should have contributed the money.

Internal Review of Computer Security at Reclamation

Let's see, another issue would be an in-house review that we did was on computer security. In fact *all* Bureaus of [Interior] ~~Reclamation~~ were asked to do a review of computer security, and computer security measures. We fared well on that.

Internal Review of Reclamation Concessions Policy

11. Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-576).

We did another internal review on our concessions policy, and identified where we had need to establish some clearer revenue collection policies with concessions on Reclamation land.

Miscellaneous revenue was a big issue both for an internal review *and* for an I-G review. The I-G has done a number of miscellaneous revenue audits on us.

Our paper system, PAYPERS system– these have been subject to multiple audits, *and* internal reviews too.

Storey: What kind of staff was in this office?

Bach: A small staff. We had one secretary, who also served as backup to the Deputy Commissioner's Office. I had one staff person who worked on audits—only on audits, in fact, he used to work for G-A-O in his previous life. And one staff person who worked on the Management Control System. And then one special assistant who served as a backup to each of those two individuals. So we had a small staff of five people.

Storey: And how long were you in this office?

Provided Staff Support to the Deputy Commissioner and the Director of Operations [for Denver]

Bach: I was in this office for a year-and-a-half. There was one other aspect: I said that the office had three responsibilities; one was to serve as (Storey: Staff support.) staff support; second one was to conduct requirements under those two provisions, those two legal requirements; and the third one was, I personally served as a special assistant role to the Deputy Commissioner, and to the Director of Operations. Those were the two positions that respectively Joe Hall and Don Glaser served in. The Director of Operations was Director of Operations of Denver—that was Don's position. When Joe Hall took retirement, then Don became the Deputy Commissioner.

Heavily Involved in the National Performance Review and the *Blueprint for Reform* Initiatives

And in both capacities, my role as special assistant, I was very heavily involved in N-P-R [National Performance Review], very heavily involved in the drafting of the *Blueprint for Reform*, the Commissioner's *Blueprint*; and for the implementation of the *Blueprint*; for the review of all the Regional implementation plans, Denver Office plan, Washington Office plan. Those were examples of the types of special assignments I would have. If there was a Secretarial initiative in Washington and Reclamation had to staff it in some way, I often would be involved with Washington staff in how the Bureau was going to be involved in a particular initiative. That's how I got involved in N-P-R, ended up serving as, in essence, the N-P-R coordinator for the Denver Office.

Storey: In the reorganization, what were the primary concerns of the management team that you were working with? Maybe I should say "objectives"?

Commissioner Dan Beard's Reorganization

Bach: What were the objectives? Well, they were laid out in the *Blueprint*. The Commissioner [Dan Beard] laid out what his objectives were in the *Blueprint*.

". . . the Organization and Management Analysis Office also was responsible for seeing to it that reorganizations were analyzed for organizational efficiency. . . ."

There is another aspect that occurs to me I didn't note specifically: the Organization and Management Analysis Office also was responsible for seeing to it that reorganizations were analyzed for organizational efficiency.

Wrote the Secretarial Order Which Gave the Authority to Realign Reclamation

And we were also responsible under the reorganization or the realignment of Reclamation, I was also responsible for the Secretarial Order: rewriting all the delegations of the Commissioner's, so that it reflected his *Blueprint*. So the Secretarial Order gave us the authority to realign Reclamation. It was the responsibility of this office to prepare all those background documents. We also tracked all the delegations of authority in the organization. So, we were the office that prepared the Secretarial Order which went to the Washington Office, was signed by Secretary Babbitt. It then gave the Commissioner the go-ahead on realigning Reclamation under the *Blueprint*. But the goals and objectives of the *Blueprint* were the basis by which the managers carried out the realignment.

Storey: Maybe "concerns" really was the right term. What were their concerns in implementing it for the Denver—these folks were mostly concerned with the Denver Office, that you were the special assistant to.

Of Particular Concern in the Dan Beard Reorganization Was Creation of the Reclamation Service Center

Bach: Right. Oh, they were concerned with creating a Reclamation Service Center that did pay for itself, that was on a business plan, that took them off appropriated dollars and into a service-oriented climate, where the customers paid for the service, and that's how all the employees' salaries were paid for. There was quite a bit of concern on how to move an organization into that kind of a mode. And there was a special team that set up that Larry Von Thun and some other people were very heavily involved in.

Commissioner's Program Organization and Review Team

They were set up to establish the business practices in the organization. There was a concern for how to take the policy development and formulation function, which was assigned to several offices out here, most notably to ACRM [Assistant Commissioner - Resources Management], and how to retool that office so that it was more responsive to the Regions, and to the Commissioner, which is not a new argument, but one that resurfaced in the *Blueprint*, resurfaced in CPORT [Commissioner's Program

Organization and Review Team].¹² At the same time, they were also concerned about how to factor in the streamlining efforts that N-P-R¹³ called for, that the Department was interested in.

Coordinating the *Blueprint for Reform* with the National Performance Review Was a Central Concern

When the *Blueprint* came out, it was published prior to all the detailed reports of N-P-R, so we did have a period—one of the issues I worked on heavily was—we had a period of having to review all the N-P-R reports about streamlining personnel, streamlining procurement, consolidation of various services, making ourselves more customer-oriented. We had to review all the objectives, all the goals of those reports, and how we were consistent with them or *not* consistent with them in the *Blueprint*. And it was two trains running on parallel tracks, but they weren't always necessarily going at the same speed. Frankly, the *Blueprint* was ahead of it's time insofar as N-P-R was concerned, and so we were very frequently having to make cross-checks, because what we had planned to do was, for instance, to take Human Resources and make it part of Reclamation Service Center. We were then presented with a streamlining effort at the Department that called for a ratio of 1:100, personnel officers to staff. Well, there had to be some linking-up. There still is a streamlining effort going on in the Department about acquisitions and procurement. So certain objectives of the *Blueprint* were not necessarily complete from the Administration standpoint, because there were some further goals that were out there, and a serious concern of managers was how can we insure . . . They wanted to minimize the need for more than one Reduction in Force. And yet they didn't have all the pieces in hand, because not everything was in their control. So they ran the Reduction in Force with the best information that they had available as to what the Denver Office had to do to cut back, knowing that months down the road the N-P-R streamlining plans might impact the RIF [Reduction in Force] that was already conducted, maybe further reductions might have to be taken. So those were *very* serious concerns on the minds of managers.

Storey: Where are those functions that were in that office located now?

Bach: The human resources functions, the personnel functions, are now a part of the Reclamation Service Center, and they're part of—one of the units within the Reclamation Service Center is Human Resources Office.

Storey: I'm sorry, I didn't ask the question clearly. Where are the functions that were in the Office of Management and Organizational Analysis now? (chuckles)

Bach: Oh, I see. They have been assigned to different offices. That office was abolished. The

12. The "Report of the Commissioner's Program and Organization Review Team" which Reclamation published in 1993 is commonly known as the CPORT (pronounced "see port") report. It was one of two major 1993 documents produced during Commissioner Beard's reorganization of Reclamation. The other document was Commissioner Daniel P. Beard's *Blueprint for Reform: The Commissioner's Plan for Reinventing Reclamation*.

13. The Clinton Administration undertook the National Performance Review in 1993. It was spearheaded by Vice President Al Gore.

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. MARCH 3, 1995.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. MARCH 3, 1995.

During Reorganization in 1994 the Office of Organization and Management Analysis Was Broken up

Bach: The Office of Organization and Management Analysis was abolished under the realignment as a result of the *Blueprint*. It was part of, the Denver Office implementation plan called for the abolishment of that office. And the functions that were in that office were assigned to different parts of the new organization. The management control and audit liaison functions were assigned to the Commissioner's Policy Office, which is Don Glaser's office now. The organizational analysis-type activities and delegation of authority activities were assigned to Human Resources and in the Personnel Office. And the functions that we performed to insure—we had another function that insured that the appropriate policy documents were written and signed and maintained. The maintenance of our Bureau Manual, some of those functions were in our office—that all went to the Management Services Office, which has the archiving functions of the Bureau, and also has the regulatory office, the office that keeps track of internal and external regulations. That's where that function went.

Storey: Were there any discussions about moving the policy staff here in Denver to Washington?

Bach: Yes, to the best of my knowledge there were. To the best of my knowledge there were discussions about moving the function to Washington, but not the staff. And those discussions took place at a level above me.

Storey: So you don't know what the considerations were or anything?

Bach: I would be repeating hearsay or what I believe to have been a discussion, and not first-hand. But those discussions took place.

Moved to Billings as Deputy Regional Director

Storey: Now, in a previous interview when you talked about coming to Reclamation and then going to Billings as the Assistant Regional Director . . .

Bach: Actually, Deputy Regional Director.

Storey: Excuse me, Deputy—it's a different title.

Bach: Correct, it is: different role, different title. Under the implementation plans for four of the five Regional Offices, the multiple Assistant Regional Directors' positions were eliminated, and a single Deputy Regional [Director] position was created. So M-P [Mid-Pacific Region] is the only Region now that operates with multiple Assistant Regional Directors.

Storey: I think they have two now maybe.

Bach: I think that's right, two.

Storey: Yeah. You referred to yourself, I believe, as a new Reclamation recruitment. Could you explain that further, please?

Bach: Um-hmm. My background is environmental science. My experience in the Executive Branch and Legislative Branch is predominantly in the natural resource management arena, particularly with environmental issues. I'm an ecologist by training. I'm a senior manager who happens to be a female. And I come from, I have experience in other Bureaus dealing with other Bureaus of Interior, other resource management Agencies. Those are the factors that I consider, that are on my mind when I say I am a new Reclamation employee.

Storey: So let's see if I can interpolate this: You're a new style of recruit. (Bach: A new breed.) A new breed of recruit, because you have the ecological background? (Bach: Um-hmm.) Because you've worked in other Agencies, which would be unusual in Reclamation—am I understanding correctly?

Bach: Yes, more so than usual. To be in a senior management position, yes, I believe so.

Storey: Okay, good. Let's see, you went up to Billings, last summer was it?

Bach: July.

Storey: July of '94.

Bach: Of '94, um-hmm.

Storey: When you got there, what did you find the major issues are that the Great Plains Region must deal with?

Dealing with 1994 Reorganization Issues in the Great Plains Region

Bach: A major issue for the Region has been the implementation of the *Blueprint*.

Development of the Area Offices

It has been how to meet the intent of the *Blueprint* that calls for the Regional Office to be less of a centralized management scheme, more of a service staff to the Area Managers and Area Offices, and the delegation of authority for a much more increased list of functions to the Area Managers. Some of what I ran into—in some regards, *much* of what I saw when I came up to G-P—was similar to what I had seen going on in the Denver Office in the preceding year, after CPORT.

A key Issue was "how *do* you re-engineer an organization so that your field entities are the ones with . . . increased authority. . . ."

And it was this issue of how *do* you re-engineer an organization so that your field

entities are the ones with the authority, or increased authority. And the other offices that had been where the delegations were carried out, how they become service-oriented— tremendous amount of employee turmoil.

The Great Plains Region Is Still Dealing with the Fact That it Had Two Other Regions Consolidated into the Regional Office in Billings

From an issues standpoint, from a programmatic standpoint, G-P has been dealing *with-still* dealing with—the result of a consolidation of three Regions, since the late '80s, more than fifty percent reduction of staff, and a tripling of the responsibility.

Storey: In terms of having the three Regions, you mean?

Bach: Um-hmm. Nine states, largest geographic area of all Regions, half the staff, half the budget, and three times the geographic region.

Storey: Of the other Regional Offices.

Bach: Um-hmm, or of even each of the individual offices that existed before: Amarillo [Regional] Office, the Denver Regional Office, and Billings [Regional] Office. Those were the three that existed before. We went from three Regions to one Region. Each of those particular Regions represented essentially a third.

"Now you have three times the geographic area, and you've got fifty percent of the staff, *and* now . . . you need to even *further* reduce. . . ."

Now you have three times the geographic area, and you've got fifty percent of the staff, *and* now you're facing targets by N-P-R that say you need to even *further* reduce. Large V-S-I-P [Voluntary Separation Incentive Program] numbers, large number of employees eligible to take the voluntary separation offer.

Storey: The Voluntary Incentive Program is it?

The Region Has Lost Staff Who Accepted Buyouts in the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program

Bach: Correct. We have had approximately 150 staff who will, by '97, be out. We lost eighty-three in the first year. We did not back-fill a majority of those positions. We will back-fill *some* of the people who leave in the next category. But as all of Reclamation is viewing, the budget is going down, and the F-T-Es¹⁴ are going down, and we will all contribute to that reduction. And G-P has not *quite* yet adjusted to all the changes that occurred in the '88 reorganization, as a result of the '88 reorganization.

Indian Assistance Issues in the Great Plains Region

Programmatic issues: one of our significant issues in G-P is that we have sixty-three Indian tribes, different Indian nations, that we work with, and we are seeing, as

14. For an explanation of this acronym see the footnote on page 58, 79.

there is more and more attention that Interior Agencies other than BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs] are being asked to provide to Indian tribes. We are seeing a great interest in Indian tribes wanting our expertise in municipal, rural, and industrial water systems. And to some extent, we are pass-through money for them; but to another extent we are seeing our O-&-M [operations and maintenance] budget *drained* by the financial requirements that we are facing with providing them that assistance. There is an enormous need out there, and we are not budgeted for it.

Title Transfer Is an Issue

We are also engaged in a whole variety of discussions on title transfer. They're at various stages of negotiations. We have a good number of our Projects already—we have already transferred the O-&-M functions—but we have various stages of discussion, even before the *Reinvention of Government II* came up. And even before the last couple of months where the Commissioner has made it *very* clear and firm that he wants us to speed up title transfer.

Transfer of Operation of the Yellowtail Powerhouse to the Crow Indian Tribe Is under Discussion

One of our discussions that are getting underway now, it's been in a informal discussion stage, is that the Yellowtail Dam, the operations and maintenance of Yellowtail Dam, which is on Crow Reservation lands, is a Reclamation facility. And under the Secretary's Order for Bureaus to work closely and consider negotiations to allow Indian tribes to operate Federal facilities that are on their lands, we have begun negotiations with the Crow Tribe. There are a lot of ramifications of that. There is the issue of the stability of the tribes, which the employees at Yellowtail are very concerned about—even the Native American employees are concerned about it. Some tribes have a stronger stability in their governments than others. There are revenues that the U.S. government depends on. There are power productions that the Power Marketing Agencies depend on in the operations of Yellowtail. There are ramifications for Hoover, for Grand Coulee, for other Reclamation facilities on how Yellowtail discussions and negotiations are conducted. So that is a big issue for us in G-P.

Long-term Water Service Contracts Are Coming up for Renewal

We have a number of long-term water service contracts that are coming up for renewal in the next ten years, something on the order of about 120. Because this will be the first time for renewal of long-term contracts, most of them forty-year-old contracts, we are facing for the first time the need to do environmental inventory, environmental assessments, that had not been previously done when the Projects were built. In some cases, there aren't other entities that have been working in these areas, so we may be going out for the first time collecting this information. That's an additional cost to us. It's work that is not new to resource management Agencies, but that effort is something new to G-P. People in California on C-V-P are facing the same issues, but that presents for us an opportunity to work with other Federal Agencies. In fact, this morning, we met with the National Biological Survey to explain to them that contract renewal is a major issue for us, that it's going to present us with needs that we didn't

have previously. There'll be resource management assessments that we need to do before we enter into contract renewal. There's going to be E-I-S [environmental impact statement] work that we have to do. And we don't have the in-house capability, but there are resource Agencies that *do* have that kind of capability.

The Garrison Diversion Is a Major Issue

[The Dakotas Water Resources Act is a new authorization affecting the]¹⁵ Garrison Diversion Project [Garrison Diversion Unit, Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program. That Unit] has been an issue on the political agenda for, what, some ten years now? There are some ramifications there as to whether or not the Federal government will ever have the resources or whether there is a national or local will to ever build that Project. That's just one example of *many*.

Issues Around Repayment, Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, and Whether Unbuilt but Authorized Projects Will Go Forward

There are several Projects in our Region that are part of the Pick-Sloan Project. The Pick-Sloan Project Area is essentially in the G-P Region. And there are a number of Projects that have been authorized and have *not* been built yet, and there are a number of Projects that *have* been authorized and *have* been built. And the issue of whether or not the [Federal] Government will ever recoup the costs of the Pick-Sloan Project is an issue, is the topic of an I-G Report, and it is of interest to this Commissioner, as to whether or not we will ever build those Projects that are authorized and not under construction. But the communities and the states that have those authorized Projects do not want to relinquish the opportunity to build those Projects. But the economics are not there, so that's a very dicey issue for us in G-P. Those Projects are reflective of irrigation desires of local communities, but there are other needs for that water, other contemporary needs.

". . . the question is whether or not we can facilitate a discussion amongst the states that will allow for a reallocation of Pick-Sloan for contemporary use, and not based upon what was looked at back in the '30s. . . ."

And the question is whether or not we can facilitate a discussion amongst the states that will allow for a reallocation of Pick-Sloan for contemporary use, and not based upon what was looked at back in the '30s.

Storey: I assume we're talking about M&I [municipal and industrial] uses.

Bach: Those would be some of the uses. Could be environmental restoration, could be Indian rights. Could be water treatment plants, could be water pollution improvements. There is discussions under the reauthorization of [the] Clean Water Act that could result in contemporary uses of water that were not contemplated back in the '30s under Pick-Sloan.

15. Dakota Water Resources Act of 2000 (DWRA), was signed into law on December 21, 2000, as Title VI of Public Law 106-554—the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2001.. One feature of the act is that it reauthorizes and amends the 1986 Garrison Diversion Reformulation Act.

Storey: You've alluded briefly to this, but I'd like to pursue it further: the Indian issues, the title transfer issues, the operation of Federal facilities by Indian tribes. "Diverting" is not the proper term, but the reallocation of water to non-irrigation uses. All of these are new concepts, new issues.

Bach: Contemporary issues.

Storey: Yeah, contemporary issues that Reclamation has to face. What kinds of reactions are Reclamation employees having to all of this?

How Reclamation Employees Are Reacting to Contemporary Demands on Reclamation's Water Resources

Bach: Many of the Reclamation employees have seen this coming, maybe for as much as a decade. For some of them, for many of them, it's a time of change, which causes some insecurities. It is changing their customer base, which is what this Commissioner is about.

Commissioner Beard "is about recognizing in this organization that our customer base is much broader than perhaps what we have in the past recognized and acknowledged. . . ."

He is about recognizing in this organization that our customer base is much broader than perhaps what we have, in the past, recognized and acknowledged. It's some exciting times for staff, because this is a whole new world. But for a good many of them, they have seen it coming.

Storey: Really?

Bach: Um-hmm.

Storey: And they're adjusting well?

Bach: No. (laughter)

Storey: Okay!

"It's very challenging to *broaden* your customer base. It's threatening for your traditional customers. It can be very hostile for your traditional customers . . ."

Bach: No, no, it's real challenging. It's very challenging to *broaden* your customer base. It's threatening for your traditional customers. It can be very hostile for your traditional customers, who believe that there was and is a commitment that the Federal government made to the irrigation community, to the farmers. And when you begin to talk about contemporary uses, "Does that mean you're going to take my water away? Wait a second, I have a [legal water] *right*." It's a very important issue with the States, because we[, Reclamation,] move the water, we have some rights to store water, we

don't own the water. We do have to work within the context of State water rights.¹⁶ And there are a few very high profile multi-state litigations going on: *Nebraska v. Wyoming*, *Colorado v. Nebraska*. There are states that are at varying degrees of State water rights¹⁷ sophistication. At the same time, there are other rangeland policies that are up for discussion and debate in the western states, and we're not free of the implications of those. The rangeland reform that Secretary Babbitt underwent, we have felt in Reclamation, because of the impact that has had with some of our traditional customers. So the employees are excited on one hand, and feeling that they're walking on a land mine. Sometimes they're called traitors.

Storey: By our traditional customers, you mean?

Bach: By our traditional customers, oh yeah. We have had our water user meetings, which are an annual event in each of the Regions, have been really dicey this past year.

Storey: Let's explore the water user . . . Is there more than one meeting?

Bach: Well, for G-P there are two major water user meetings, and I understand that next year that they will combine. But the Upper Missouri Water Users [Association has] have a set of meetings—they have an annual meeting each year. And those are four states in the Upper Missouri region (Storey: Right.) and then there are four states, the lower. [Missouri] ~~Colorado~~ is common to both of them, so there's actually seven states that are involved. And Four States Irrigation Council is the second group. And I understand that next year all seven states will get together and hold a single annual meeting.

Storey: Well, now, are these Reclamation-sponsored meetings?

Bach: We participate in those meetings, but we are not the primary sponsors. The major irrigation Districts have come together in those seven states and have formed their parent councils. And the purpose of the meetings is for their membership to be updated on contemporary issues impacting their role in the community. And we participate in those meetings. They are important meetings for us, but we are not the primary sponsors of those meetings.

Indian Water Rights Issues

Storey: And of course after the *Winters* case and the recent assertion of the Indians of their water rights, of the "Indian Nations," we have become involved in the negotiations, and that takes water that has not previously been allocated, and allocates it, does it not?

Bach: Could, yeah. I mean, the Indian water right negotiations are a function that is operated by the Secretary's Office. And we provide staff support to those negotiations. There are a number of negotiating teams that are designated by the Secretary and we might have a person that is helping on that team. Our Field Solicitor in Billings is very heavily involved in those water negotiations. But they're not the primary responsibility of the Reclamation Regional Offices, (Storey: Good.) but you do have to be aware of

16. Emphasis added during editing at request of interviewee.

17. Emphasis added during editing at request of interviewee.

what the stage of negotiations *are* in the context of an Indian water rights settlement when you are discussing any other Indian business in the Region.

Storey: Um-hmm. And so all of these pressures—you know, we've got ecological/environmental pressures; we've got the Indian water rights pressures; and all of these other things sort of forming a barricade against our traditional users, I suppose. They might look at it that way, I mean.

Bach: I think that they look on it that way, um-hmm, um-hmm.

Storey: So that causes tensions with Reclamation to rise.

Bach: Um-hmm. Tension and opportunity.

Dealing with Buy Outs

Storey: Now, I understood for the "buy-outs," so called, the V-S-I-P programs, that we were not permitted to hire *any* replacements for people who were given those buy-outs.

Bach: That's right, technically that is correct. We have been provided, through the Department, from O-M-B [Office of Management and Budget], a selected number of additional F-T-E¹⁸ positions. And in G-P, what we have done is to reconfigure the offices and the workloads—redistributed workloads. In fact, we have a requirement in GP that fifty percent of all new hires are entry level. So there are certain redistributions of the positions, and in some cases, a few cases, we may actually *have* to fill the position of a person who took the buy-out. We will have an Area Manager that takes the buy-out this summer. I presume if a Regional Director had taken the buy-out; that they would find a means to fill a Regional Director position. But by and large, I know what we're doing in G-P, and I would figure that the other Regions are doing that too, is that we are redistributing workloads, and then reassessing where positions are still needed, but they're not the precise position that was vacated by the buy-out. We are not filling any positions, period, of any nature, in the Regional Office. We are just redistributing the functions and they either go out to the Area Office or we don't do them, or they're reassigned to an existing staff person. But there will be *no* backfilling, there will be *no* positions filled whatsoever in the Regional Office—whether it's because of buy-out or anything else—we just are not filling positions; we're not filling any vacancies.

Storey: And that's because you're reducing the size of the office?

Bach: Right.

Storey: How far along are your plans for the Region? Are they in final or . . .

Bach: Well, our implementation plan is considered an evolving document, but we are very well along. In fact, you might be interested that the March edition of our newspaper, which we call *Plains Talk*—Great Plains, *Plains Talk*—captures the status of where we

18. See footnote on page 58, 79 for an explanation of this acronym.

are in our realignment. And I consider G-P to be quite far along. We have reduced, I believe it's fourteen managerial positions in the Regional Office. We have gone down to two teams that exist in the Regional office: we have a Support Services Team and a Resource Management Team. Our Area Offices have also reduced their management layers. We have ratios of supervisor to employees that are better than 1:15, almost unanimously throughout the Region. So we have made a tremendous amount of progress.

We are also now discussing and looking at the consolidation of our Personnel Office with BLM up in Billings, Montana. There's a Montana State Office for the Bureau of Land Management, and when the streamlining discussions were occurring in Interior, and wanting to break down the lines between the different Bureaus, we began discussions with the other Interior Bureaus up in Billings about consolidation of personnel functions. And we are now looking at co-locating our personnel staff with BLM staff, and have invited BIA, which may come in at a later time.

Storey: So you currently have a target size for the Region, for instance?

Bach: Yeah, in fact all the Regions have been given their F-T-E targets for up to 1999.

Storey: And how are things coming along there? Are you expecting to do RIFs, or how do you expect to do this?

Bach: No, actually we don't anticipate having to do RIFs. Where we will conduct RIFs is when construction crews have completed work. We may run RIFs in that regard. But for the most part, the buy-out has helped us meet the goals that we're needing to meet on F-T-E levels.

Storey: What size is the Regional Office going to go to?

Bach: Well, when I came up there, there was approximately 820 to 840 F-T-Es, and we will go down to 753.

Storey: This is in the Regional Office itself?

Bach: No, the entire Region. We are the smallest F-T-E¹⁹ Region. (Storey: Um-hmm.) We are the largest geographic, but we have the smallest number of F-T-Es.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. MARCH 3, 1995.

BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. MARCH 3, 1995.

This is an interview by Brit Storey with Maryanne Bach on March the 3rd, 1995.

Storey: You were saying that the Regional staff . . .

Bach: That the Regional staff would—I'm recalling, we were just reviewing that this week—Regional staff, I believe that we are at 211.

19. See footnote on page 58, 79.

Storey: Down substantially?

Bach: Down by, I believe about twenty.

Storey: Since you came?

Bach: Yes, and will go down more, because we have more people going out on VSIP.

Storey: On these buy-outs, yeah.

Bach: Um-hmm. Even we have had people on some positions where people have moved on to other things in life—they've gone on to another Agency, or they've moved on to a different occupation, whatever.

Storey: Did anybody move out to the Area Offices?

Bach: Oh yes, oh yes. We've had a handful of people who've moved out to Area Offices.

Storey: One of the things I'm interested in is this streamlining concept. Why do you think it's logical and feasible to streamline the way Reclamation is doing? Eliminating a lot of management positions, and layers and so on. "Flattening," as it were.

"The logical aspect of it is based on premises that . . . the people who perform the work at the ground level are capable of taking on more responsibility . . ."

Bach: The logical aspect of it is based on premises that we have seen in the private sector also, that the people who perform the work at the ground level are capable of taking on more responsibility: That includes policy-type decisions, maybe additional monetary decisions, that over time we participated in a management style that was a pyramid structure, and with the introduction of management styles like total quality service or total quality management [TQM], that you can accomplish a great deal at a reduced structure and less oversight by self-directed work teams, by team participatory activities, and by allowing the people who do the work to have a greater level of responsibility for the work that they do, and thereby have greater accountability.

Storey: Okay, that's the theory. How's the reality working out from what you can see so far?

Bach: Reality for G-P, I do think it's working quite well. From my perspective, and when you talk with Neil [Stessman], I think that he'll reflect similarly. I haven't been surprised once. I have not been caught off guard as the Deputy or when I've been Acting Regional Director. I really can't think of a sticky situation that I have been caught off guard. Yeah, I may not know all the nitty-gritty stuff that's going on every day in the Regional Office or in the Area Office, but what do I *need* to know? I may have somebody who calls in and is complaining about a particular issue, and I'll say, "The person you really need to talk to is the guy out in the field. Here's the Area Manager's name. Why don't you give that person a call?" And it allows Neil and I to focus on the leadership questions, the policy issues that we are facing in G-P that have significant impact on the way we do business.

The Reorganization Permits the Executives to Get Away from the Day-to-day Activities of the Office

And not on all the day-to-day stuff where there are *ample* people to address the day-to-day stuff. It's allowed us to look at some of the procedures that we followed, some of the reports that we did: Why do we do it? There has been a *great* change in the amount of documents that come in to me to sign. There was stuff coming in to me that was busywork for me. There's no good reason why the supervisor and all the three people or four people below him or her who sign that stuff couldn't sign it. There was really no value being added to [it by] my signature.

Storey: Any specific examples?

Bach: Ah, yeah! I can think of some. Payments of bills, collections. Bills! Finance Officer can sign those. They're the ones that do the work, I don't need to sign it as the Deputy or the Acting Regional Director. That's silly stuff!

Storey: And so it was delegated down?

Bach: Delegated down. Certain informational memos: for instance, maybe there's updates on the VSIP [pronounced "v-sip"] program. The distinction I would make is how Neil and I and the Area Managers want the VSIP program to operate. If we have any particular concerns or a process that we want to put in place, that would be an appropriate memo for Neil or I to sign. But the day-to-day updates, or the week-by-week updates, I don't need to send it out; I don't need to be the person to do that. The personnel officer is quite capable and responsible for doing that. And so a number of the informational type communications go on amongst the program individuals. We've also delegated correspondence to Congressional Members—even tribal. What we have said in the Region is that to the extent that an Area Manager sees a communication that has come into the Region, whether it is addressed to the front office, or to the Area Manager, the Area Manager gets the first opportunity to determine whether that issue is solely within the purview of that Area Office, and doesn't necessarily affect the other Area Offices or the Region per se. And if that's the case, they make their recommendation to the front office that they sign it. If we, for some reason, think that there's a broader issue here, then we will designate ourselves as the signator. If we've got particular issues that we think we'd like to see covered in the letter, you share that with the Area Manager, say, "When you're doing your letter, we'd like you to cover these things too; we think it's relevant. Go ahead and do it. Inform us afterwards."

Storey: This movement of authority out to the Area Offices is something that interests me. It's an area that's been very tense in Reclamation for a long time. There has been tension between the Denver Office and the Regional Offices, and I understand some tension in at least some of the Regions between the Regions and the new Area Offices. And from what I can tell, this tension arises from the fact that . . . You mentioned the historic preservation nominations a while ago, you're also aware that there are historic preservation *compliance* responsibilities for the Federal Agencies. (Bach: Um-hmm.) Let's use *that* one as an example. In the case of the Commissioner's office with the Federal Preservation Officer, the Regional Office with the regional cultural resources

staff, and the Area Offices: you have the Commissioner's office with certain policy responsibilities, you have the Regional Office with the on-the-ground staff, and you have the Area Offices in most instances with *no* staff (chuckles) devoted to cultural resources. There seems to be a lot of tension about the fact that the Area Office is given the responsibility, but they don't have the staff that knows what the requirements are, and so you have a tension there, just the way you have a tension between the Area staff, who's saying, "Well, we're the ones who own the properties, 'own the Region,' as it were, and the Federal Preservation Officer shouldn't have any say in our business." How do you respond to this concern? And you know, it isn't just CRM, it's endangered species, and it's clean water, and it's clean air, and all of those things. (Bach: Um-hmm.) How do you respond to how that *is* working and how it *should* work?

Bach: I actually think in G-P it is not without pain, but I think that we are working ourselves through the predicament. Historic preservation is probably not *our* best example, because we do have people in the Area Offices that have on-the-ground experience.

Storey: There are some, yeah.

Bach: And our Regional staff, frankly, we have so much work to be done, we don't have a lack of work to do in historic preservation. We have more work than we have people to do it. And so, we are actually looking at whether or not we want to try to access other Bureaus, like B-L-M or B-I-A, that might have people available to help us. But we do have other areas where . . . Well, I'll take contracts and renewal (Storey: Okay, fine.) where we have some very highly-specialized, experienced people in the Regional Office, who are sought after by the Denver Office, by the Washington Office, by other Regions, and we have quite a work load ourselves. We have some people in the Area Offices that have the expertise, and the question that we have had Area Managers pose is: certain contract renewals are still the authority of the R-D [Regional Director], he still is the signator on that. Some of the smaller issues we have delegated to the Area Managers. But those people need the staffing, they need access to the Solicitor's Office, and how do they get that? Do the contract and renewal staff in the Regional Office work for the R-D? Do they work for the Area Manager? That distinction, that question, can cause some discomfort for the person who is head of Contracts and Renewal, who didn't have this question before. He [or she] did *not* work for the Area Manager, he *did* work for the R-D. And what we are developing in G-P is a priority for the Region. We want timely contract renewal. There are a number of policy issues to be debated. Yes, you do have the policy knowledge, but it's also necessary for the Area Offices to develop the policy knowledge too, and you *are* staff to them, and yes you are staff to us. And if there is a conflict perhaps that might develop, if you are concerned that an Area Office is taking a position that may be inconsistent with where the Regional Director wants to go, it is the responsibility of the Area Manager to inform, and to keep informed. The accountability is with the Area Manager. You can bring it up—I mean, it's not unusual, we've had circumstances where the contracting staff will come in and say, "Oh, boy, I don't think this is what we want to do." That's fine, that's information sharing, but we view it that the burden is on the Area Manager, we hold the Area Manager accountable for insuring that whatever policy direction he or she is carrying out, they understand that they are carrying it out on behalf of Reclamation, on behalf of the G-P Region, in their particular area. They *do* have accountability, and

therefore *they* have an obligation to keep us informed and involved, and it's their judgement that we depend on. And by and large, I think when you talk with Neil next week, you'll find out that by and large it's working pretty darned well, more to our surprise. Now, we do meet approximately once a month with all the Area Managers and one representative from the Service Group in the Regional Office, and the Resource Management Group. We call that group the Regional Leadership Board. And we do discuss policy issues, and we do discuss accountability, and we do discuss what it means to be empowered, and what it doesn't mean. And some of our philosophies on particular policy issues. We talk to "big picture," and sometimes we talk specific policies. But surprisingly, it's working pretty well. We do have pretty competent Area Managers, but they've gone through a stage of uncertainty of what does it really mean to be empowered?; what does it feel like?; how much do you like the fact that it rests on your shoulders and you can't delegate up?. You know, delegate back up. You don't run under the coattails of the Regional Director. I think it's really built character amongst the leadership level in the Region. It's been challenging for Division Chiefs in the Regional Office who *were* in control of the programs. They're going through an adjustment—it's not easy, by any means—because the power is shifting, the authority shifted. And there is an important role that they play, in terms of keeping an eye on consistency where consistency is appropriate, maybe bird-dogging an issue. They oftentimes have been asked to represent the Bureau, or to represent the Region in Bureau discussions or similarly we have asked Area Managers to represent the Region—not their area of the Region, but "the Region." We have delegated a number of problem-solving issues in the Region to the Area Managers, and they will meet as a team. They frequently meet before the Regional Leadership Board meets, and we'll assign issues to them.

We have an issue with them right now: our Regional Safety Officer took a VSIP. How do we want to accomplish the safety issues in this Region? We have that issue assigned to the Area Managers. It is very important to Neil and I that we maintain our high standard of employee safety and occupational safety. We have a situation where the Regional Safety Officer *was* located in the Regional Office, *did* report to the Regional Director. We are not filling that position. How do we handle those functions and still maintain the high standard? We had an excellent record in the Region on safety. But there are a lot of issues out there on employee safety and occupational safety, industrial health, and it's been fascinating.

Storey: And it sounds to me as if you have a very good impression of what's going on, and you're very upbeat about the shift this way.

Bach: Um-hmm, and understanding that we have had some very tough, difficult situations to work through. But I am very optimistic, *very* optimistic.

Storey: What are the areas that need work in this new relationship?

People Issues in the Reorganization

Bach: Trusting between individuals, trusting that the individuals at the management level and leadership level are acting in the interests of the entire organization and not from their

own ego. Trusting that when you delegate an issue, that people understand what accountability means and what communication means, and when to keep people informed, and when it's not necessary. There's a tremendous *amount* of individual trust that does not come overnight. And for people who have been in the Region for a while, they have seen Regional Office staff be the enforcers, and there's a question of trust that they can change. There's concern that Regional Office staff have that Area Managers aren't up to the job, that the Area Office staff aren't up to the job, that they can't handle the job: *Can* they handle the job? *How* can they handle the job? So I would say much of the challenges are at the personal—it's at the people level. It's the people relating to the people. It's individuals wondering where their opportunities in the organization are. It used to be very clear in Reclamation. If you were an engineer, and you were the head of a Project, or you were the design engineer on a particular Project, and then you worked up to multiple Projects, I mean, you could see a path to the Regional Director's office. Where are the paths anymore?! The good jobs are the Area Office jobs. That's real different. People aren't accustomed to that. You know, you used to be hot if you were in the Regional Office. Well, gee, what value am I in this Region anymore? You know? Do Area Offices think I can contribute anything? Does anyone care the work that I do? I think what I do is real important to this organization. Do I feel undervalued? I don't supervise anymore—wait a second! I was a supervisor, now I've been taken out of supervision! Am I important anymore?! Where do I go, where are my opportunities? It's really, I think the most challenging issues are the people issues. How committed is this organization to me? Used to think we were a family. Are we still a family? (Storey: Yeah.) Does anybody care about me in this organization? Is the organization out for my job? Is that what this is all about? Isn't that what N-P-R²⁰ means? Doesn't N-P-R mean that they just want to cut Federal jobs, period, it doesn't matter what we do? That's all the questions that are going around.

Storey: I can see that there would be a tremendous challenge for the Regional Office too: If you're *not* going to fill-in any positions behind . . . And for instance, the Safety Officer issue. How are you dealing with those kinds of issues?

Dealing with Safety Issues in the Region with the Regional Safety Officer Gone

Bach: Well, that was a very lengthy discussion yesterday when our Regional Leadership Board met. What we asked was for the Area Managers and the Support Services Group, who we have asked to take on—we have asked those two groups to get together—and take on the development of an options paper and some recommendations to Neil and I on how to take the functions that were assigned to the Regional Safety Officer, ensure that the same level of attention is met, and how do we meet them? We also have industrial hygiene requirements: how do we meet those? And originally, the team came back and said, "We think we *ought* to fill the Regional [Safety Officer] position, *but* we don't think that it needs to be a regional *manager*, because we think that each of the offices can *manage* the safety issues themselves—we're really doing it now. So a manager is not what we need, but we *do* need a coordinator. We need somebody who can serve as a point of contact, can be in touch with OSHA [Occupational Safety and Health Administration] and with Denver and with the Department safety people and with new technology, can get that information out. If we have to send somebody to a

20. See footnote on page 64.

meeting, that would be the person. We really need somebody who can provide some leadership to us." Well, they came back yesterday and they said, "You know what? We think the leadership aspect is our responsibility. We think the Regional Leadership Board, all of us have the role of providing leadership in all of our offices for safety. *But*, we do think we need a coordinator, but we think it should be collateral duties. We don't think we should have one person who all that that person does is coordinate—it should be collateral duty. And we think it should be somebody on the resource management side of the organization who understands powerplants, understands distribution systems, understands some of the things that our foremen and our dam tenders are involved in, some of the construction work that we're involved in, and can help keep the Area Safety Officers vitalized and in the loop, etcetera. And maybe we need to take a look at what we do in industrial hygiene. Maybe those services are available someplace else, or maybe we still want to keep a technical person in the Regional Office doing that." So they're going to take the opportunity to look at all these issues. They've asked the Area Safety Officers to get with the person who we have—we have just one staff person left in the Regional Office—we had three in safety and now we're down to one. We're going to ask that team of people to address these issues, to come back to the Area Managers with their recommendations on what the needs are of this Region. Our first indications are the Area Office safety people want to take on more responsibility. And that's a risk for Neil and I—that's risky. [By the way, when I came back as RD I filled and hired a Regional Safety Officer.]

Storey: Especially if your safety record drops.

"From time-to-time we use this expression in G-P: 'Risks Are Us.' . . ."

Bach: Right, we have an excellent safety record. But we're willing to give it a try. From time-to-time we use this expression in G-P: "Risks Are Us."

Storey: (laughs) "Risks Are Us"!

Bach: "Risks Are Us." We have a very active CASU [Cooperative Administrative Support Units]²¹ up in Billings, and the person who has done a lot of the CASU work had coined that, because we *have* taken a number of risks. But I think we feel that each one of them has been worth it. You know, people *want* to do a good job, people *want* to be successful. And I think when we encourage that instinct in people, that desire in people, when we give people an opportunity and say, "We trust in you enough that if you feel that you are willing as an Area Safety Manager to take on more, and to communicate and translate to our employees and to our managers how important safety is, if you're willing to do that, why would we want to discourage that?" But do we catch our breath in the Regional Office? Oh, absolutely. Neil and I are always catching our breath, saying, "Oh boy, you know, I'm *trusting* you, I just hope I can

21. The CASU Program is an interagency network that provides a full range of support services to Federal Agencies on a cost reimbursable basis. Located throughout the United States, the network meets Agency needs by providing high quality, low cost services, with quick turn-around. The Network is national in scope and can deliver services to Federal government offices and posts of duty anywhere in the country. The CASU Program is sponsored by the Interagency Council on Administrative Management with oversight by a national board of directors, chaired by a GSA official. Information abstracted from the CASU website at http://www.casu.gov/about_casu.asp on October 16, 2008, at 5:45 p.m.

count on you!" (chuckles)

Storey: Creating a new world is sometimes trying.

Bach: Um-hmm. And it also calls on Neil and I to be comfortable with saying, "I don't know. The person you have to ask is So-and-So." We lived in an era where the Front Office was supposed to be able to answer everything. Or we'll sit in discussions where an Area Manager has a difference of opinion with the Personnel Officer, and who do they look to? Neil and I. And Neil and I will say, "*You two* need to talk to each other. Don't you come to us yet. You work this out amongst yourselves." And in the *old* organization, they would each come to the Regional Director and say, "Solve my problem."

Storey: Yes. I ran into this in another Region where I was talking to somebody, and this would have been about a year ago now, and they said, "Well, you know, the Regional Director is empowering the Area Managers. The Area Managers are scared to death, because they've never had the power before, they've never had the responsibility before, and so they could always say, 'Well, it isn't *our* fault, we didn't have the power, we didn't have the money.' So our Regional Director gave them the power. And they came back and they said, 'Well, that's very nice, but you didn't give us the money.' And the Regional Director said, 'Here's the money. What else do you need?'" (laughs) And now this person felt they were shaking in their boots. How do you think the Area Managers are responding? Of course it's an era of transition.

"You know, there is an obligation that the Regional Directors have and Deputies have, when you give this delegation, to be supportive too: to provide the guidance, to provide the leadership. You don't just set these people loose. . . ."

Bach: Um-hmm. Oh, they've been evolving. You know, there is an obligation that the Regional Directors have and Deputies have, when you give this delegation, to be supportive too: to provide the guidance, to provide the leadership. You don't just set these people loose. You don't just open the gates and say, "Go for it, do whatever you want, and forever hold your peace and we won't talk about it again." I mean, Neil and I spend a great amount of time *interacting* with the next level of management, and the next level beyond that, to *whom* these additional responsibilities have been provided. It *is* our responsibility to provide guidance and overall direction and coaching and mentoring, and we do that. You don't just send your kid out to the grocery store for the very first time and not help them make a list and not give them some idea of how much money to take and give them a sense that there's different products out there, and you don't want to take the first one you see on the shelf, and there's different qualities. You know, you work with them.

Storey: Yeah. And if you were thinking about where we are in the transition from beginning to work with the Area Managers—and beginning to give them power and responsibility and money and so on—to where you think the end product is going to be, and we're *finally* reorganized: Where do you think we are in the process?

Bach: Well, I can only speak for G-P, and I have a perception that we are further along than other Regions. I would say that we are at sixty-five percent.

Storey: And moving along fast, it sounds like.

Bach: Moving along pretty well.

Storey: Now, one of the things—you mentioned "*the* enforcer." That had to do with one of my earlier questions, I think: the issue about who knows what needs to be done and who doesn't and that kind of thing. Am I getting an image that the way you're thinking about this is that eventually there doesn't need to be "*the* enforcer"?

Accountability and Oversight

Bach: There needs to be accountability. (Storey: Um-hmm.) Whether or not there needs to be an enforcer depends on how good your accountability is, I think.

There Are Some Functions Where We Have Statutory Enforcement Responsibilities

There are some functions that we perform that do seem to be in the enforcer mode— for instance, on RRA [Reclamation Reform Act]. We do have enforcement, statutory enforcement responsibilities. And if you listen to the contemporary thoughts of the Commissioner, who was *very* involved in the writing of that statute, even *he* is questioning the effectiveness of that Act. And acknowledging that the issue is *less* how many acres someone is farming—the issue is that . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 2. MARCH 3, 1995.

BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2. MARCH 3, 1995.

Storey: That the issue is the efficiency.

Bach: The issue is efficiency. The issue is water conservation.

Storey: Rather than acreage.

Bach: Rather than acreage. That shift in thinking may occur in a number of areas in Reclamation where we had an enforcement approach and are now looking for, or redefine what the issue really is, what the problem is, and are looking for a different type of accountability.

"They [the Administration's NPR office] say that [enforcement] grew out of a mentality that distrusted the Federal employee, that distrusted the manager, and therefore you set up all these mechanisms to try to *prevent* the manager from mismanaging or misusing. It was built out of the fraud and abuse approach. . . ."

The term "enforcer" has taken on a very negative connotation and N-P-R spoke to that. It is a category of occupation that they are looking to reduce. They say that it

grew out of a mentality that distrusted the Federal employee, that distrusted the manager, and therefore you set up all these mechanisms to try to *prevent* the manager from mismanaging or misusing. It was built out of the fraud and abuse approach. That is not a popular thought, and it's not consistent with the concept of empowering the employee.

A Strong Sense of Accountability Is Necessary

But I could never imagine a day where we didn't have accountability and a strong sense of accountability. But you can build all the enforcement that you want, it's not going to correct an employee that intentionally, willingly, and knowingly, and wantingly wants to do something that's illegal, inappropriate, unethical. Or a contractor: no matter what you do to build in enforcement mechanisms, you can never enforce enough that's going to produce a hundred percent of the response that you want. (Storey: Sure.) So I think it's a shifting of mentality, a shifting of viewing the individual, viewing the employee, viewing the contractor. It's not jeopardizing, it's not in any way an effort to jeopardize the expenditure or the responsiveness, the responsibility, but rather a different approach towards insuring that responsibility.

Waterspreading in the Great Plains Region

Storey: I'm wondering what kind of an issue waterspreading is in G-P Region? Big one? Medium one?

Bach: Hm, medium to minor. And I feel less prepared to talk about that today than maybe I would at another date, because it is an issue that I am still getting up to speed on. It's not of the magnitude that exists in P-N or other Regions.

Storey: What about water conservation as an issue in the Region?

Customer Concerns about Water Conservation Guidance of Reclamation

Bach: Tough issue, from what I understand. We talked about this in the last two days with our Area Managers. Tough issue insofar as the guidance that has gone out. Our customers are responding and saying, "You may have called this guidance, but this is not just guidance. And what you really want to do is have *us* conserve *our* water so a junior water [user] can get the appropriations. Why would we want to do that?" You know, built back into the pages, you're really trying to *enforce* certain changes and this is not strictly guidance. So it's a dicey issue for us in G-P. We do recognize that under contracts, we already have certain authorities for water conservation, but we haven't necessarily, in this Bureau, exercised those.

". . . we also . . . have the reality that some water users may not see it to their advantage to conserve, because it just provides water to a junior appropriator. . .

"

But we also, on the other hand, have the reality that some water users may not see it to their advantage to conserve, because it just provides water to a junior appropriator. So

we are still working ourselves through the issue. Also, there's been a number of cautions that have come to all of the managers about *how* to talk about this, and *who* to talk to about it. And our Area Managers are feeling, to some extent, that they got a false start, that they were told to get out there and talk about it, and now they're being pulled back. It's a really dicey political issue. But if you just looked at it from a conceptual standpoint, why wouldn't we want to be promoting water conservation? Very logical.

Storey: Yeah, but then when the realities come into it . . .

Bach: Um-hmm, it becomes a difficult one.

Storey: Okay. I think one last question: Roger Patterson, as Regional Director, and Neil as his successor, have developed quite a reputation as environmental Regional Directors. How well is that going now, and is the fact that power and responsibility is moving to the Area Offices changing that?

Bach: May be premature to say. Some of our Area Managers appear to be quite consistent with Neil and Roger, I think the tone that Neil and Roger set. Others may find it challenging and a bit confrontational with the traditional water users than they are still comfortable with. I think by and large it's more in line with, consistent with Roger and Neil, and it may be because our ~~Area officers, our~~ Area Managers, a good number of them are pretty recent appointments. Maybe if you were asking the question before some of the replacements occurred, the answer would be different. I think some of the individuals who have chosen to retire found it difficult.

Storey: They were uncomfortable.

"No NEPA Neil"

Bach: Um-hmm. You know, when you talk to Neil, you might want to pursue where he got the nickname, "No NEPA Neil."

Storey: "No NEPA Neil," huh?

Bach: "No NEPA Neil." He'll blush at it. (Storey chuckles.) He *is* environmentally conscious and contemporary, but he has an interesting history of having been nicknamed "No NEPA Neil," which the Commissioner reminds him of from time-to-time.

Storey: (chuckles) Okay.

Bach: Neil and I have been very supportive; we've talked to the Commissioner about it. We've talked to Area Managers about it. We've had discussions within the Regional Office about it. We are very interested in some time being taken with the Area Managers to address what the environmental ethic is in Reclamation, because we do think that there is a need for that, and there may be some inconsistencies in application of it. We also would like to delegate more authority under the Endangered Species Act

and under NEPA to the Area Managers, and would like to have some baseline of awareness and training and consistency in philosophy when we do delegate that authority, and see that it would benefit all Area Managers to have that kind of a discussion. So we're optimistic; we're hopeful that the Area Managers will take this up in one of their Area Manager meetings.

Storey: You mean Reclamation-wide?

Bach: Reclamation-wide. We will do it at some point in our own Region, but we would like to see it Reclamation-wide

Storey: Now, how many areas are there in the Great Plains Region?

Bach: Six.

Storey: Six out of sixteen, I believe it is.

Bach: No, six out of I believe twenty-six now.

Storey: Oh, is it? Okay.

Bach: Some of them are very small and physically still located in the Regional Offices of some of the Regions. But there are twenty-six, possibly twenty-eight. I think the number is twenty-six.

Storey: Is there anything that I haven't asked you that I should have asked you, or that you would like to talk about?

Bach: Nothing comes to mind.

Storey: Okay. Well, there'll be more opportunities down the road. Well, I certainly appreciate your getting in contact with me and arranging this meeting today, and I'd like to ask you again if it's alright for researchers from inside and outside Reclamation to use the tapes and any resulting transcripts.

Bach: Um-hmm, that'd be fine.

Storey: Great, thank you very much.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. MARCH 3, 1995.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 1. OCTOBER 13, 2009.

Storey: This is Brit Allan Storey, Senior Historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Maryanne Bach, former Regional Director of the Great Plains Region of the Bureau of Reclamation, now retired. This is October the 13th, 2009. We are in Building 67 on the Denver Federal Center, and this is tape one.

Well, Miss Bach, I think the last time we talked was when you were still

Assistant Regional Director in Billings?

Serving as Assistant Regional Director and Deputy Regional Director in Billings

Bach: Or perhaps Deputy Regional Director in Billings?

Storey: Yes. Oh, I'm . . .

Bach: Um-hmm.

Storey: Excuse me. Yeah.

Bach: Yes.

Storey: I'm sure it was Deputy. That was what you held throughout, right?

Bach: It started as Assistant Regional Director.

Storey: Oh, did it?

Bach: And then Neil went to Deputy.

Storey: I've forgotten the exact date when we—it was November of '95 was the last time we talked.

Bach: Goodness.

Storey: So, we only have fifteen years to catch up on.

Bach: Goodness. We'll be here for a bit. (Laughter) November of '95?

Storey: Tell me about the major issues you remember from that era of your career.

Contract Renewal in the Great Plains Region

Bach: The one outstanding issue that predominated my time, it did begin to come to the surface when I was Deputy, it was quite ripe when I was Regional Director, and that was contract renewal. It was long-term water service contracts with the, particularly with the water users in Nebraska and in Kansas. However, the schedule for contract renewal also began to expand and include other states. (Storey: Um-hmm.) And for Reclamation, it was a time in which no one on the staff would have been present for the original negotiations. These were forty-year water service contracts. In contrast to some of the other Regions the Great Plains Region operated under contracts and authority that were not in perpetuity.

“. . . these contracts had provisions that the staff themselves had not seen or had to reconsider . . . both for the staff in Denver in the policy office, and for the staff in the Regions, it was a time of preparing to come to the table on provisions that

had long been in place, and clearly given the era of Commissioner Beard there were changes to those provisions. . . .”

So, these contracts had provisions that the staff themselves had not seen or had to reconsider and certainly were never at the table at the time. So, both for the staff in Denver in the Policy Office, and for the staff in the Regions, it was a time of preparing to come to the table on provisions that had long been in place, and clearly given the era of Commissioner Beard there *were* changes to those provisions. So, it was preparing to be a challenging time.

“ . . . we began the negotiations, we began the preparations for the negotiations under Dan and we concluded the negotiations under Eluid. . . .”

And, we began the negotiations, we began the preparations for the negotiations under Dan and we concluded the negotiations under Eluid. And, it *was* a time in which I will want to recognize and commend Eluid Martinez, Commissioner Martinez, for his ability to hear all sides of the story and for him to be able to future-pace the consequences of some of the provisions.

“ . . . a cause of . . . friction for California, when . . . the M-P [Mid-Pacific] Region then came in a few years later. And, provisions that were successfully negotiated by the water users in Great Plains Region were not the provisions that the California environment was going to be able to allow. . . .”

So, whereas there was a certain logic in what Commissioner Beard was proposing for limitations on certain aspects of the contract, the long-term investments that the farmers in the irrigation Districts are going to need to make required some reconsideration of the contract provisions. So it was an *exciting* time. It was a *dynamic* time. And, it was a very important priority for the Region, and in many *regards* it ended up to be a cause of some delicate friction for California, when California came in, when the M-P [Mid-Pacific] Region then came in a few years later. And, provisions that were successfully negotiated by the water users in Great Plains Region were not the provisions that the California environment was going to be able to allow. So, we had water users in California who saw great provisions in our contracts and they weren't going to be able to get them in *their* contracts, and very, very, very interesting inter-regional dynamics. (Storey: Um-hmm.)

Clarification: would you like for us carry the, cover the time as Deputy Regional Director as well as Regional Director? Because if we haven't spoken since 1995, that certainly includes my time—then we haven't covered much.

Storey: Well, let's do the Deputy, the Assistant-Deputy period, and then we've got to come to Denver, (Bach: Yes.) then we've got to go back to Billings?

Bach: Go back to Billings. Then we come back to Denver. (Laugh) (Storey: Yes.) Then we go back. (Laugh) No, perhaps we don't go back to Billings. (Storey: Well . . .) Yeah, so that one, that issue really does come to mind. It comes to the surface.

Human Resources Issues in Great Plains Region

The other issue that comes to the surface is preparing for the human resources ramifications, for the turnover that was going to be occurring in the next several years with the departure of our senior staff. So, the statistics regarding retirement eligibility, and the pervasive turnover that was beginning to happen, and the need to recruit in some areas that the Agency hadn't previously recruited, or needed to recruit in for several years. So that was another very significant issue that we handled.

The Title Transfer Initiative

The third one that I would highlight is under Dan Beard.

“ . . . we did have some interest in the Great Plains Region . . . individuals and Districts who were watching carefully whether they would prefer to have title transfer . . . rather than to negotiate contract renewals. . . .”

He had, certainly had his initiative for promoting title transfer and we did have some interest in the Great Plains Region in that, particularly individuals and Districts who were watching carefully whether they would prefer to have title transfer to take over the title of these Projects, rather than to negotiate contract renewals. (Storey: Um-hmm.) And so the . . . impact of working in tandem on whether your strategy is a strategy for long-term contract renewal, or your strategy is for transfer of a Project.

Storey: Well, tell me about the contract renewal. Dan Beard, of course, did, as I understand it, didn't like forty-year contracts?

Bach: That's right.

Storey: He wanted shorter-term contracts. And then you're in the middle of the process and Eluid comes in, and Eluid tended to be—and Eluid came in. He tended to be much more traditional in his view of water rights, and water issues, and water contracting, I think. What kind of evolution happened there as you had this change in the Commissioners?

Evolution of the Commissioner's Thinking When Eluid Martinez Succeeded Dan Beard

Bach: Significant evolution. Dan's concepts had their place in certain parts of the country. What happened for Great Plains Region is we began negotiating on contracts in an area of the country that was perhaps the antithesis of, say, California.

“ . . . Dan . . . very heavily influenced by the California models and perspectives on environmental issues and on water management issues and the dynamics of population expansion and change of use. . . .”

Dan had a lot of experience, not that Dan's experience was not nationwide or west wide, however Dan had just the nature of, having worked for Congressman Miller, being very heavily influenced by the California models and perspectives on

environmental issues and on water management issues and the dynamics of population expansion and change of use.

“ . . . M-&-I contracts . . . desire for change of use from agriculture to M-&-I . . . very relevant in California. . . . Nebraska and Kansas were still living in a timeframe in which use and population very much reflected, . . . the time that the contracts were first put in place . . . ”

The heavily sought after M-&-I [municipal & industrial] contracts or desire for change of use from agriculture to M-&-I, those were all dynamics that were very hot and very relevant in California. That was a very different world in Nebraska and Kansas. Nebraska and Kansas were still living in a timeframe in which use and population very much reflected, frankly, the world prior to the forty years. So, there was not anywhere *near* the extreme of condition changes from the time that the contracts were first put in place to the time that they were up for renewal.

“ . . . a number of his [Dan Beard’s] provisions including, and I would say leading, with the term of the contract raised financial investment uncertainties for the farming community in Nebraska and Kansas. . . . ”

So, a number of his provisions including, and I would say leading, with the term of the contract raised financial investment uncertainties for the farming community in Nebraska and Kansas. Because, their banks, their financial guarantees were based upon the prior model and there was a reported hesitancy for a certain kind of loaning to occur, if in fact these contracts were going to change and be considerably shortened. So, that was one of the first issues out of the hopper, so to speak, that we had to deal with. (Storey: Um-hmm.)

“ . . . the burden of describing these changes and discussing the ramifications of these changes did rest on . . . Neil Stessman, as Regional Director . . . friction did develop. . . . the water users chose to . . . seek out a consultant . . . and the person that they hired was Joe Hall. . . . ”

Now, the burden of describing these changes and discussing the ramifications of these changes did rest on Neil, Neil Stessman, as Regional Director. And it was taken very hard^{ly} by the water users. In fact, friction did develop. And, what the water users chose to do [was] ~~is~~ to seek out a consultant to help lead their charge for the maintenance of as many of the existing provisions as possible, and the person that they hired was Joe Hall.

“ . . . a very interesting dynamic of having a sitting Regional Director operating under a present Commissioner’s policies, which were Dan Beard’s . . . in front of water users whose representation and coaching was coming from Joe Hall, who was a former Regional Director . . . and whose departure from the Agency was very dynamically associated with a difference of opinion from the Commissioner. . . . ”

So, we had a very interesting dynamic of having a sitting Regional Director operating

under a present Commissioner's policies, which were Dan Beard's, which were considerably different, in front of water users whose representation and coaching was coming from Joe Hall, who was a former Regional Director of [part of] this Region when ~~the Region was much larger, when~~ it was Upper Missouri [and Lower Missouri Region and the Southwest Region], and whose departure from the Agency was very dynamically associated with a difference of opinion [with] ~~from the~~ Commissioner [Beard]. So, for *me*, as the Deputy Regional Director, it was a fascinating lesson in personalities, in perspectives on western water, on history. Quite educational. (Storey: Um-hmm.) And, I did a lot of observing, having not negotiated contracts previously myself, and also having the background of having studied a lot of psychology. (Laugh) I use that more often than one might expect. It became a very important tool for me to listen very carefully and to understand what was the motivation and what were some of the factors behind, what were some of the emotional factors behind the facts, and how could we perhaps approach the facts in a way that kept the dialog as fruitful as possible?

“They pretty much went on with their business as usual and were waiting the clock out until Dan left. . . .”

To move the clock forward, the water users strategized with Joe and it was a successful strategy, to not go on record as to whether they were going to renew their contracts or not. They pretty much went on with their business as usual and were waiting the clock out until Dan left. Truly.

Reclamation Was Trying to Develop the Basis of Negotiations

In the meantime, the staff were preparing the "basis of negotiations" [BON], and preparing the issues, and interviewing the irrigation Districts, and trying to ascertain what were going to be some of the more challenging parts of the negotiations so as to be able to lay out the basis.

“It was, when Eluid . . . stepped in as the Commissioner, that the Districts were willing to move forward. . . .”

It was, when Eluid took over, when he stepped in as the Commissioner, that the Districts were willing to move forward.

“. . . it was a more difficult transition for the staff and for the management of the Region, because, years had been spent preparing for how to negotiate under the criteria of Dan. Once Eluid took office it was deemed that all bars off . . .”

And in, to some extent . . . it was a, perhaps it was a more difficult transition for the staff and for the management of the Region, because, years had been spent preparing for how to negotiate under the criteria of Dan. Once Eluid took office, it was deemed that "all bars [were] off," you know, then the water users could really push hard for the issues that they felt strongest.

“. . . because Neil had gone on record to be the communicator of the criteria that

**Dan had set out, there was a . . . lack of trust in wanting to negotiate with Neil. . . .
I stepped in. . . .”**

And, in the meantime I would say what happened for me as Deputy was, because Neil had gone on record to be the communicator of the criteria that Dan had set out, there was a, sadly there was an issue of judgement and a lack of trust in wanting to negotiate with Neil. Not that Neil was going to be the person at the table, because generally what you do is you, you identify a negotiating team. It is your, it’s your staff in the Regional Office who have the contract background, and it is some key leadership in the Area Office. And I, at that point Neil and I discussed the fruitfulness of my stepping in and being the person who then, when significant policy issues were raised, and it was going to be a requirement to go back to Eluid to reconsider, rather than Neil being the person to interface with the water Districts I stepped in.

“. . . I think it’s really important to understand that Joe played a very productive role. . . . They were in such a panic for their future that Joe had a mannerism that readied them to hear . . . me out, and he also did a very good job of staffing their issues before me”

And, I can remember vividly my trip to Nebraska that Joe [Hall] had arranged—and actually I want to say for the record, too, I think it’s really important to understand that Joe played a very productive role. Some people were bothered by prior Regional Directors coming back on the scene. There was a beauty to having Joe in this position, because he was able to speak with a level of credibility that even though this, I was coming speaking what Neil and I agreed to, there was so much heartburn and hard feelings toward the changes that Dan had put in place, that Joe prepared them well. They were in such a panic for their future, that Joe had a mannerism that readied them to hear, to hear me out, and he also did a very good job of staffing their issues before me, I would say, of tipping me towards some very key points that they were going to be making that *if* I was in a position to *even* be neutral on them or to *even* convey that we were willing to think about it, then the level of anxiety and . . . perhaps suspiciousness, would be subdued. And so, this first meeting that I went to of the collection of Districts—let me give you a little bit of history about how these Districts chose to present themselves.

The Irrigation Districts Formed a Coalition to Approach Contract Renewal

Not all of their contracts, Republican River contracts, Solomon River contracts, not all of those basin contracts were coming due at the same time. There was a staggering. There was one group and then to be a second group, and then the Middle Loup²² contracts, another area. They all chose to form a coalition. They formed an “irrigation coalition.” It was a very good strategy on their part.

22. The Middle Loup Division of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program “Includes Farwell and Sargent Units in operation. Supersedes Middle Loup Unit, Missouri Basin Project, and part of Lower Platte River Basin. Formerly included Lees Park and Middle Loup Units.” Source: United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, *Active NAMES OF RECLAMATION PROJECTS AND MAJOR STRUCTURES*, November 1998, Denver, p. GP29.

Great Plains Region Felt it Needed to Educate the Irrigators about the Ramifications of Provisions of the Contracts

Joe and Neil and I talked about the importance, that there were many aspects that even the people sitting at the table, from the Districts, were not educated on some of the provisions of the contracts. So, it was the desire of the Great Plains Region to *go* to the table with people who actually knew the ramifications of the provisions. And so, there was going to need to be this education process. So, the staff prepared for that and how to prepare the Districts. And so, we agreed before we go into any negotiations that essentially *they* prepare a “basis of negotiation.” So, here they had a former Regional Director, who was pretty darn familiar with a “basis of negotiation,” and he had explained to them that *we* were going to be preparing a *revised* “basis of negotiation,” because now we had a new Commissioner. And so, perhaps we could even *encourage*, they could even encourage Reclamation to prepare a revised [BON]. So perhaps, we wouldn’t be so locked *into* certain provisions under the Dan Beard policies that were going to be, in their view, very deleterious to their business.

Very, very interesting strategy because through that process they [the Districts] identified lists of issues that they wanted the staff ~~to come, the staff~~ from Reclamation to come and brief them [on.] And, we were very careful on when we just allowed the staff and when we had a representative of senior management. And, that was also a very interesting dynamic, because, the staff might be, in fact, the same staff that were at the table with the Area Manager, or in my case the Deputy Regional Director, at the points of the *toughest* negotiations or the most delicate topics. There was just a level of comfort that we would allow the staff to be in their presence, to address some areas that they truly were unfamiliar with.

So, again, for me, it was a very interesting dynamic in human psychology, because being sensitive to their level of unfamiliarity, or what they might call their ignorance, you know, these were individuals that maybe had taken over the Districts from a father, a grandfather, perhaps somebody, the next door, the next farm next door who bought the other farm, and even in some cases they were able to go back to the older representatives of the community but in many cases those people were gone too or what the recollection was was minimal because they were taken care of by the Bureau.

In the past Reclamation had held the water users’ hand “And, Joe was a really important interface in explaining to them, ‘Those days are over. And, rather than lamenting let me explain why that’s a good thing that those days are over. Sometimes it’s just fine that the past is behind us, because it’s important for you people to be responsible for what you’re going to be signing.’ . . .”

The Bureau really held their hand as they explained, and they started off wanting the same relationship. “Hold our hand. You’re going to take care of us.” And, Joe was a really important interface in explaining to them, “Those days are over. And, rather than lamenting let me explain why that’s a good thing that those days are over. Sometimes it’s just fine that the past is behind us, because it’s important for you people to be responsible for what you’re going to be signing.”

“There were a few times where Eluid pushed, had to push back. Frankly, the Administration had *not* changed, it’s that the Commissioner had changed. So, there were some topics that were still too delicate. . . .”

So, *that* explains some of what we went through from Dan Beard to Eluid. There were a few times where Eluid pushed, had to push back. Frankly, the Administration had *not* changed, it’s that the Commissioner had changed. So, there were some topics that were still too delicate. We ended up coming back to some of those issues a few years later after Eluid had been Commissioner, and were able to push harder on those.

“. . . there is one piece of the contract that was really novel to the Great Plains Region, which we were all quite proud about, and that was to allow them to set up a much healthier O-&-M fund. . . .”

And, we ended up, there is one piece of the contract that was really novel to the Great Plains Region, which we were all quite proud about, and that was to allow them to set up a much healthier O-&-M [operation and maintenance] fund. Now, these Districts did not have what in Reclamation tradition has been the “ability to pay.” The “ability to pay” on your mortgage part of—let me explain the contracts a little bit.

The negotiation of the contract is not just for what you owe on the mortgage of the Project, so to speak.

Storey: The repayment (Bach: Correct.) responsibility?

Bach: The repayment responsibility. But, it was also an opportunity to talk about the strategy for being able to maintain a healthy Project. So, what was the O-&-M?

“. . . *in the formula* that Reclamation used to calculate ability to pay, these Districts did not have an ability to pay. So, we were negotiating a willingness to pay. . . .”

And, *in the formula* that Reclamation used to calculate “ability to pay,” these Districts did not have an “ability to pay.” So, we were negotiating a willingness to pay. And, I had a very strong feeling. This is something that I would say I particularly pushed. I did have some staff who felt strongly too. But, it was something that I was willing to take on as a charge . . . and I will say that Neil and Eluid were supportive. And, even though they had an ability or a willingness to pay, they would have to express some kind of a willingness to pay. It was very important that they have a “reserve fund,” that they not find themselves forty years from now with a worse infrastructure. “What is it that we could do at the table that could maximize them making contemporary improvements on their Project by having the ability to put resources into *that* fund, perhaps in deference to their repayment?” That was a very controversial or extraordinary position to be taking in contracts. Because, we did have O-M-B [Office of Management and Budget] looking—becoming more interested and looking over our shoulders in what we were doing to either allow the, or to help the Federal budget deficit remain neutral, certainly not to increase it.

Repayment Was at a Lower Rate So That the O&M Fund Could Be Built up

And, if you consider a repayment contract that has a lower rate or a lower, yes a lower rate of payment on your mortgage while you are able to put more funds in your replacement, your O-&-M account, then in fact you are affecting the deficit for the Federal Government. Needless to say, we were successful and we were all really thrilled by it. They, the Districts were shocked that we would even push, that we would even consider it no less that we would really take it on as a charge. But, these are Districts that are in very traditional parts of the country, and as I said this is not the lucrateness of California. They had some of the same water and drought problems as California.

“ . . . we, in the end, reduce their repayment obligation in the next forty years in order to allow them to build up a reserve that would give them a *chance* at modernizing their practices, and that we were able to accomplish under Eluid . . . ”

They didn't have the same kind of crops. They *were* paying attention to cropping changes that were going on elsewhere in the country. So, they were open to transferring to more lucrative crops. To do that, they would even need to have some kind of resources. So, *again* it was a matter that we, in the end, reduced their repayment obligation in the next forty years in order to allow them to build up a reserve that would give them a *chance* at modernizing their practices, and that we were able to accomplish [this] under Eluid, and that was a very important and successful, I believe, successful turn around in our whole relationships with them.

Storey: So, I'm hearing you indicate that they reacted well to this change?

Bach: They did. They reacted extremely well. Some of them never stopped being very guarded towards us, in part being nervous that Eluid might leave—what would happen with the next election. But on the whole, the whole tenor of their discussions with us and of our discussions with them turned around. And, I would say that the formation of the Irrigation District Coalition and bringing back somebody who they had a lot of trust for, and who had traditional values in the context of Reclamation law, to be a bridge, was a very successful strategy, and then our willingness to be very free and open about educating. We went through many topics in terms of education, including educating them how, on the “ability to pay” how that's done, the willingness to pay, the economics behind those principles, the . . . those are probably at the top of the list.

There are a number of other provisions. Even the concept of how they were, *how* they were handling O-&-M versus how they might handle O-&-M. We brought them in touch with Districts who were negotiating elsewhere. We really did make an effort to be as open as we could, well beyond even what the Agency was ever comfortable with, that they, that . . . a “basis of negotiation” is a private, internal document. It's not FOIable.²³ Under the Freedom of Information Act you cannot . . .

END OF SIDE 1, TAPE 1. OCTOBER 13, 2009.

23. Meaning that a member of the public cannot request, in accordance with provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. § 552, Public Law 89-554), to obtain a copy of the document.

BEGINNING OF SIDE 2, TAPE 1. OCTOBER 13, 2009.

Storey: The general public cannot get to a document? Right.

Bach: Correct. They can't get to a document, but of course they had great fascination and curiosity. The more you can't have something the more, the more curious it becomes to you, the more you want it. Right? (Laugh) (Storey: Yeah.) So, the strategy of Joe saying, "Well, hypothetically speaking, how about if *we* do a 'basis of negotiation'?" And, you know, and he had a, he had enough respect for the process inside the Agency to not, to not disclose what he presumed to be in our "basis of negotiation." But, he took them through a process that was a very credible, not complete mirror image, but pretty darn good preparatory for a "basis of negotiation," which then became their letter to the Agency. They actually went ~~on~~ public to the Agency and transmitted that document to us, that this is what we want, which was quite interesting because they're playing their hand in negotiating.

“ . . . by the time it got down to the negotiations, the negotiations went very fast. . . ”

And, you know, in the end our, by the time it got down to the negotiations, the negotiations went very fast. So, we up-fronted education, and we, therefore, had the payoff in terms of a very smooth negotiation.

“ . . . the Middle Loup Irrigation District, who observed through this entire process and chose title transfer and were successful . . . are very proud to be running their own Project now. . . . ”

And, they just were thrilled to have quite the celebration on their negotiations. and we did, however, have one District, the Middle Loup Irrigation District, who observed through this entire process and chose title transfer and were successful. And, they did go through [with] legislation and we worked with them, and they are very proud to be running their own Project now.

Storey: And they were willing to take the liabilities?

The Middle Loup Irrigation District Did Not Understand How Much the Denver Staff Did for Their Project Facilities and They Ultimately Asked the Technical Service Center to Provide Some Expertise to Them

Bach: Yes, they were. Yes, they were. And, that also became quite an education for everyone, because they did not have quite the appreciation for how much the Denver engineers here were watching over that facility, and the *history* that was in Buildings 56 and 67 with regard to that Project. And this, the other Districts, nearly a dozen, also did not appreciate what the organization, at large, was doing to keep those Projects safe. (Storey: Um-hmm.) So they therefore, after taking title, came back and *discussed* with the TSC [Technical Services Center] what services they may be able to *hire*, on expertise they sure as heck didn't have, in order to be sure that they had no vulnerabilities on that facility. And so, that whole title transfer process was very

involved and a learning curve for the Agency, quite a learning curve.

Storey: What kinds of issues came up?

Flooding of Basements in the Middle Loup Project Area

Bach: There had been seepage on that Project, that the community attributed to the—well, let me say it another way. There was flooding in that community, in the basements of homes, that the neighborhoods attributed to the Project. And so, this whole question of liability and how far does it go, and what were they going to ask Reclamation to do prior to, versus what were they willing to take on in assuming responsibility, that became quite the public relations matter for the District. Because the view of the neighborhood was, “Pockets are deeper in the Federal Government. Why would we want this to go to you?”

Endangered Species Issues

There were endangered species issues that were being negotiated on the Platte concurrently with the culmination of the title transfer legislation that raised the issue of what the contributions were [from] ~~of~~ some of those tributaries on the Middle Loup Project to endangered species on the Platte. And so, that surfaced another very interesting figure in Reclamation history, Roger Patterson was the sitting Director of Nebraska’s engineer’s office at the time, and he was a representative to the Platte River negotiations. So, that would have been the, he was a member of the Governance Committee for the Platte River [Recovery Program] ~~EIS [environmental impact statement]~~ for the negotiations on the program.

I, at that time then, [was] ~~became~~ the Regional Director, and here we have a Project in the same general vicinity that is wanting to take title transfer and, “Goodness. Do they have any contributions here? Ought they have some provisions regarding some of the endangered species [recovery program on the Platte River]?”

So, Roger, and I, and our staff, had to become quite creative in how this District, who had been considered a Federal District, a District working under, or an irrigation District working with the Federal Government, how were they now going to be part of the greater community of irrigation Districts within the state of Nebraska who had no federal relationship, financial relationship? So, that was another very interesting dynamic.

And then there were O-&-M issues that the District had chosen to handle in a particular way that didn’t quite meet the standards that we identify in our inspection reports. And so, negotiating with them on what it means to take a Project “as-is.” And then, also, for us to protect the taxpayer, how we chose to document the entire history we had on the Project. It really surfaced, for me it surfaced the importance, and I believe also for all of those that were involved in Reclamation, it surfaced the importance of the process that Reclamation has in place where . . . the facilities are reviewed. So, these annual O-&-M reviews, the more detailed three-year reviews, it really surfaced this whole process and what the contributions were of that process.

Because, we had a whole library of references on the facility that we could bring to bear. And so, when we were writing the legislation, how to assure that there wasn't, we weren't leaving any loopholes, as well as that if something was still on our clock ~~what our~~, what we were going to take on in terms of our responsibility to complete that process versus what they wanted to take on.

So, there were many, many more issues on Middle Loup. Those are some of the ones that come to the surface for me.

Storey: So, did they have to pay for it?

“ . . . they had a much reduced amount that I recall that they paid. It was a very good business decision on their part. . . . ”

Bach: That is an interesting question. In the end, they had a much reduced amount that I recall that they paid. It was a very good business decision on their part. I don't recall the exact figures. There even became a question, at one point, as to whether they were going to pay because of the way in which you can depreciate a Project. So, the whole realm of economics and, again, intense involvement, behind the scenes, of O-M-B in how we were discounting certain economic factors.

Storey: So, was this a Project that had been repaid?

Bach: That's an interesting question. No, I don't believe that they had repaid, in full.

Storey: So, was this payment the remainder of the repayment responsibility?

Bach: I believe . . .

Storey: Or is this a sum in addition?

Bach: I believe that it was neither. At least my recollection, and my recollection now, we have to understand, is several years down the road. My recollection is that it was neither of those, because there are discount factors that you can account for, and depreciation factors in economics which you can legitimately account for, that are above and beyond what you calculate when you're doing repayment. So, in the end it did become a very smart business decision. And, they had a very dynamic, energetic irrigation District director, (Storey: Um-hmm.) and he grew tremendously in this process. Tommy Knudson was his name. And, his understanding of government probably grew exponentially. *And*, he also did utilize Joe in much of his process.

Storey: So, Joe was consulting with them also?

Bach: Yes, Joe was.

Storey: Were they part of this Consortium?

Bach: Yes, they were. They joined the Consortium. It's very interesting. They joined the

Consortium because they had their eyes on both processes. They were not tipping [their hand] one way or the other, initially; and, as it came closer to coming to the table on the contract negotiations, they concluded they wanted title transfer. And, it was very, it was a very prideful, honorable, value system that they were working with. It was, my recollection is that Tommy Knudson negotiated his salary and his incentives, so to speak, his bonuses, with the District based upon what he felt he could do if they owned the Project themselves. And so, he did *stake* his reputation on the title transfer. And, I would say that he had quite a lot of enthusiasm and it was a very significant, historical mark for him that the District would be able to, that he would, that he could bring around long-term members of that District even into considering that they could do this themselves. It was a very sort of traditional American pride that, “We can do it ourselves. We’re homegrown.” As he was coming *closer* and *closer* to the *final days* and hearing more and more about the fantastic expertise that’s here in Reclamation, it was, he was getting nervous. I thought that was quite apparent.

Issues Involved in Providing Technical Service Center Assistance to Projects Where Title Had Transferred Away from the Federal Government

And, he was sharp enough to say, “If I really needed you folks, could I hire you?” (Laughter)

“ . . . that became a very important question for the TSC . . . we were, at the same time, negotiating another title transfer down . . . in Texas . . . less of a desire on the part of Reclamation to maintain any longer-term relationship with that District. It had had far too many adversarial occasions and there was a concern in the organization Reclamation-wide that persisting in a relationship with the District in Texas could really increase Reclamation’s liability . . . ”

And, that became a very important question for the TSC, because we were, at the same time, negotiating another title transfer down south, in Texas, and there was less of a desire on the part of Reclamation to maintain any longer-term relationship with that District. It had had far too many adversarial occasions and there was a concern in the organization [Reclamation-wide] that persisting in a relationship with [the District in Texas] ~~them~~ could really increase Reclamation’s liability, because their tenor was one of . . . looking for the . . .

Storey: Is this Palmetto Bend, by chance?

Bach: Yes. Yes. (Laugh) Looking for the place to point their finger. It was a very unfortunate—some very talented people, again, but there, the initiative on Palmetto Bend began, as I understood, and it certainly seemed to play itself out in letters, it began with an estranged employee of Reclamation, who left to become the District manager, and then became a senior person on the staff, and another manager stepped in, and it was a sourness. So, here’s the contrast of a former—in both cases we had a former Reclamation individuals heavily involved, and in one case it just was magic. It really was magic how we came from much apprehension, concern, fear, that we would *not* be willing to negotiate, to renew contracts to a *wonderful* relationship with this whole basin.

“ . . . in part, it’s the cultural differences of the parts of the countries too. Texas has a very different view of the Federal Government, almost from a very embryonic stage. . . .”

And, the other contrast is, an individual who had adversarial, and historical unpleasant relationships when he was, in fact, an employee and that whole tone perpetuated, and regardless we were—I think, in part, it’s the cultural differences of the parts of the countries too. Texas has a very different view of the Federal Government, almost from a very embryonic stage. (Storey: Um-hmm.) Are they part of the Union? Question? (Laugh) You know, that came out to play. And so, a sense of “We do it better, regardless,” and—and so, for the, internal to the Agency there was a excitement, a willingness, an appreciation that we had Middle Loup Irrigation District that recognized that there was the wonderful expertise, highly dedicated individuals here who truly went to bed at night thinking about that Sherman Reservoir and its laterals, and its canals, and whether it had any issues, and monitor it as if they had, they were monitoring their infant, and the contrast with Palmetto, that they couldn’t wait for us to get out of their way, so to speak. And, they *were very interested* in the technical expertise, but there was going to be a more measured and, measured approach and perhaps even a declining of the work. (Storey: Um-hmm.) Sending them to maybe another state that could help them.

Storey: Um-hmm. Middle Loup, did it have major features? Or, is this one where the liability for major features isn’t so important?

Bach: No, you know, actually Middle Loup was not what the Agency was calling a “low-hanging fruit.” In fact, we didn’t get so many of those low-hanging fruits in Great Plains. We had a handful of Districts interested in title transfer, but it seemed that we didn’t get low-hanging fruit. (Storey: Um-hmm.) We had a situation where the state was not real thrilled for us—well, one aspect of the state. I would say the state engineer’s office was remaining neutral. A bit nervous. Knew what we were offering. Knew that we were a sure thing, Reclamation was a sure thing. And, was concerned about some of the history at this location. But the, the Fish and Wildlife and Recreation part of the state government was *not* thrilled at all. They were not. They had had some very bad experiences with individuals up there that were on the board of this District, and maybe some history that—no, in fact, I’m now bringing in another. It wasn’t Sherman Reservoir. *North* of Sherman we had another irrigation District that wanted title transfer, and that’s where the complication became. And, in fact, we just had to put that one on hold.

But still, there were these long-term community flooding issues, and at the time, you know, Nebraska had a lot on its plate. The [State] engineer’s office had *plenty* of irons in the fire, and if Middle Loup could have been held off a few more years it would have made their, their workload better, because in fact they were going to then be stepping in [as the oversight agency].

State of Nebraska Agreed to Take on Inspection Responsibilities for the Middle Loup Project

You know, we did negotiate an understanding, a “memorandum of understanding” with the State government that we were not going to be inspecting [Middle Loup], therefore we had no absolutely no liability, no place. We were not going to be feeding them information, putting them on notice of anything that we found at the reservoir. *They*, in fact, were going to have to step in. And, that was going to be a new responsibility for them. They were, at the time, involved in two Supreme Court lawsuits. They were dealing with *Nebraska v. Wyoming*; they were dealing with *Nebraska v. Kansas*. And, they sure didn’t need to complicate their lives much more.

Worked with Jack Garner and the National Water Resources Association on a Working Group on Title Transfer

And, when we did our, we had this interesting working group with the National Water Resources Association that I served on the committee as the—well, Jack Garner²⁴ and I were the two major representatives. We were the invitees to their meetings, and NWRA [National Water Resources Association] formed a working group on title transfer. This began when I was a Deputy [Regional Director], and then continued actually when I came to Denver—~~into the~~ back to the Policy Office. And, it was what we could do to facilitate, [i.e.,] to move title transfers along faster, so that it wasn’t taking quite the time that Districts were seeing. And so, we put together, we helped them put together a document, and James Hess was a very important staff person for us within Reclamation. And, we put together a document in which we set out certain principles and we came up with the criteria for “low-hanging fruit.” (Laugh) And, it is, there, it was somewhat amusing, because it seemed like the ones that we, in Reclamation, thought were low-hanging fruits did not turn out to be the places where the Districts had much interest in title transfer.

So no, Middle Loup had a whole series of issues, and I do want to make sure that I clarify that the tension with the, with a board member and the state fish and game folks was for another Project north of Middle Loup, but Middle Loup had plenty of issues to work through.

Storey: Um-hmm. Tell me about the kinds of issues you ran into managing the Great Plains Region from Billings.

Bach: Good question.

Storey: I’ve already gotten sort of a hint about a difference in cultures.

“The south, in the Region, is *very different* from the north. . . . Texas and Oklahoma have a very different approach. Their styles are different. Nebraska and Kansas are more the home, the heartland of the country, and it’s, it takes a different style to communicate and interact. . . . similar to Montana and even North and South Dakota. And then there’s a dynamic in Colorado that has more analogies to California. Colorado surfaced as the first state in the Great Plains Region whose water issues were maturing at a much faster rate, and where the analogy I would draw is to California. . . .”

24. Reclamation’s oral history program includes interviews with Jack Garner.

Bach: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. The south, in the Region, is *very different* from the north. There's, from my perspective, no debate about that. Texas and Oklahoma have a very different approach. Their styles are different. Nebraska and Kansas are more the home, the heartland of the country, and it's, it takes a different style to communicate and interact, more similar to Montana and even North and South Dakota. And then there's a dynamic in Colorado that has more analogies to California. Colorado surfaced as the first state in the Great Plains Region whose water issues were maturing at a much faster rate, and where the analogy I would draw is to California. So, the population increasing in Colorado, the long-term planning that Colorado is notorious for, presented a much different dynamic than the more northern states. Political dimensions, political relationships, dynamics, very different throughout the Region.

State Relationships to Indian Tribes in the Great Plains Region

A bit more similar in the northern Great Plains, with the exception of those states that were ahead of the times in dealing with Indian water rights. So, when it comes to state relationships with Indian tribes, state relationships with the Federal Government on water issues, in that realm I would say that of the northern Great Plains states North Dakota and South Dakota were ahead of the game. Montana was then next in line, with Kansas and Nebraska following. Colorado, no present tribes. There were issues of historical remains, but not of [Indian] nations within a state.

Population Issues in the Various States

And, the population issue played in Oklahoma and Texas, but even in a different way than it played in Colorado. So, there were desires to use irrigation reservoirs and to have re-allocations, more water for M&I, or, for instance, the problem that Wichita was having where the population around Wichita was expanding and the [better] quality water was in the reservoir not in the groundwater, and what could be done to incorporate that Project in. There was a need in Texas for water and interesting cooing (Laugh) and courting of Oklahoma and, to see whether Oklahoma would be willing to allocate water to Texas. And so, you get this historical rivalry between Texas and Oklahoma. Those are all very different dynamics than what you found up north.

“ . . . I particularly found Texas to be the most challenging in terms of their straightforwardness, very, very, crafty. . . . ”

But, to come back to the simple question; different kinds of people, different styles, and a different way to communicate. And, I found, I particularly found Texas to be the most challenging, in terms of their straightforwardness; very, very, crafty. What you may conclude [w]as a[n] understanding is not necessarily an understanding.

“When you shook hands in the northern part of the Region . . . you had . . . an agreement, and that was not necessarily the case down in Texas. You were very careful what you shook hands on, because it always seemed to have another life. . . less of a respect for the history of Reclamation and for the talent. . . the Texas

folks were, very, very prideful . . .”

When you shook hands in the northern part of the Region and you had a gentleman’s or a gentlewoman’s agreement, you had an agreement. And, that was not necessarily the case down in Texas. You were very careful what you shook hands on, because it always seemed to have another life, and not much of a—I think I would say, less of a respect for the history of Reclamation and for the talent. Very prideful, the Texas folks were, very, very prideful, but very much, “We do it better than anybody,” and I think that that’s not uncommon in terms of how Texas views itself in other areas.

There Was Constant Travel to Meet on the Ground

So, a strategy for managing from Billings was that we offered an awful lot of meetings on their ground. So, it meant that the ~~Director and the Regional Director did a,~~ and the Regional Director and the Deputy Regional Director traveled a lot. And for me, my time as Deputy Regional Director, I was on the road fairly constantly.

During Her First Year in Billings She Was Constantly on the Road, Taking Some of the Travel from the Regional Director

Certainly in my first year, because Neil still had his youngest son, Haven was still in school and he was a senior in high school, and we did have an understanding that [Neil] ~~he, he~~ really wanted to be able to be present for as much of Haven’s athletic activities and extracurricular, and I could really appreciate that. It was their last child and I thought it was a good example to set, that we would prioritize for family. Neil is a person who transferred all around the world, all around the *West* for Reclamation, and Judy, his wife, and the family took it very, very well. But, it was a, it was certainly an understandable agreement that we had, that he and I had, that I would travel so that he could maximize his time at home. And then after that period he did pick up [traveling more].

Neil Stessman Maintained His Travel for Canadian Activities

He certainly maintained his Canadian interactions, because that Regional Director position also has a very fascinating set of duties in terms of serving and chairing a joint Canadian-U.S. committee that deals with the apportionment and the quality of water on the border. And so, that was something that he maintained, would have maintained I think regardless because it was the stature of the Regional Director that was appropriate to be in that location. But . . .

END OF SIDE 2, TAPE 1. OCTOBER 13, 2009.
BEGINNING OF SIDE 1, TAPE 2. OCTOBER 13, 2009.

Storey: This is tape two of an interview by Brit Storey with Maryanne Bach on October the 13th, 2009.

The other concession you made?

There Were a Lot of Meetings in Denver

Bach: The other concession and, I think, the other reality, it was just a necessary business practice, was that we held many meetings with our Districts in Denver, whether it was the Denver airport or whether it was facilities out here, or near, hotels near the Denver airport, we . . . Frankly, it was very expensive and time consuming for our customers, who were in Colorado or south, to come up to Billings, very unreasonable.

“ . . . led to a very important personal decision on *my part* to never sell my home in Evergreen. I rented it out intermittently, several times, to family, and I spent many a weekend in Evergreen . . . ”

And so, I, frankly, it led to a very important personal decision on *my part* to never sell my home in Evergreen[, Colorado]. I rented it out intermittently, several times, to family, and I spent many a weekend in Evergreen, because I would end up in contract negotiations, customer meetings, (Storey: Here in Denver?) here in Denver. Um-hmm. So, you did have to make accommodations, because this wasn't, you don't have the circumstances of the Mid-Pacific Region.

“ . . . it was amazing to me the *frequency* with which, it was just a *daily* occasion that customers came into the Regional Office [in Sacramento]. It was *rare, rare* in the Regional Office in Billings. . . . ”

You know, I did have an opportunity to spend some time, when Roger was Regional Director I went out and served, I believe it was about a month, as the Deputy Regional Director there [in Sacramento] *before* I became a Deputy Regional Director [in Billings]. And, it was amazing to me the *frequency* with which, it was just a *daily* occasion that customers came into the Regional Office. It was *rare, rare* in the Regional Office in Billings.

“ . . . Billings was a wonderful place to recruit very talented people to. It was a *great* community to raise your children. It was a fine quality of life for a very affordable amount of money and a Federal salary did very well in Billings. It was a very comfortable life for many people, even our lower-graded employees . . . ”

And, on the one hand Billings was a wonderful place to recruit very talented people to. It was a *great* community to raise your children. It was a fine quality of life, for a very affordable amount of money, and a Federal salary did very well in Billings. It was a very comfortable life for many people, even [for] our lower-graded employees it was doable.

“ . . . it would have been much harder to *imagine* moving the Region, but from a business perspective, from a business relationship perspective, the way to make it work was to make a lot of accommodations, and so that meant that the front office was on the road a lot . . . ”

Very—it would have been much harder to *imagine* moving the Region, but from a business perspective, from a business relationship perspective, the way to make it work

was to make a lot of accommodations, and so that meant that the Front Office was on the road a lot, and it led to the reinstating of the Assistant R-D [Regional Director] position, which is something that I did when I was Regional Director.

Reinstated the Assistant Regional Director Position in Billings in Order to Have a Day-to-day Manager in the Office

I wanted a day-to-day manager of the Region, because as long as the Regional Office was going to be in Billings it was a given that the suitcases were packed.

“ . . . one of the *insightful* pieces of advice that I got from a former Regional Director of the Great Plains Region, was to ‘Go to Samsonite, get two pieces of luggage that are absolutely identical, pack both of them, and keep one at the door at home and one in the office,’ . . . ”

And, one of the *insightful* pieces of advice that I got from a former Regional Director of the Great Plains Region, was to “Go to Samsonite, get two pieces of luggage that are absolutely identical, pack both of them, and keep one at the door at home and one in the office,” and I pretty much followed that rule. Because, you never know when, never knew when the phone was going to ring and it was that a piece of legislation of yours was going to be moving in Washington and you were on a plane and transferring through Minneapolis into D.C., or that something was breaking out in Texas and you were going to be on a plane down to Texas.

“ . . . another interesting dynamic I would point out, when I was Regional Director, the President was from Texas, the Secretary was from Colorado, the Vice President was from Wyoming, and all three of those states were in my . . . Region. So, I had a healthy interest in water issues from the Washington Office. . . . ”

Now, another interesting dynamic I would point out, when I *was* Regional Director, the President was from Texas, the Secretary was from Colorado, the Vice President was from Wyoming, and all three of those states were in my District, or in my Region. (Storey: Um-hmm.) All of those were in my Region. So, I had a healthy interest in water issues from the Washington Office. I’ll put it that way. (Laugh) Another way to put it is that many of my policy issues and many of my *regional* issues were under a microscope.

“ . . . reinstating the Assistant R-D . . . very necessary morale issue as well as a logical way to manage a Region that is so geographically dispersed, in which I could have somebody who basically was duty-stationed and . . . rarely traveled. . . . ”

And so, the concept of reinstating the Assistant R-D, to me, was a natural factor. It was a very necessary morale issue, as well as a logical way to manage a Region that is so geographically dispersed, in which I could have somebody who basically was duty-stationed and didn’t move from that desk, rarely traveled. Traveled when there were significant O-&-M issues, because I made that person *responsible* for the day-to-day management and operations of that Region. Not the policy.

“The Deputy and I maintained the large policy issues . . .”

The Deputy and I maintained the large policy issues, but from the standpoint of significant day-to-day operations of that Region, a Region that had a lot of aging infrastructure, I wanted to be sure that I had a person [so] ~~to whom~~ the Regional Office staff knew who they reported to and that any Area Manager and any one in the field could get answers to their questions and they did not have to wait for a Regional Director to come back to make the decision. And so, technology helped us too. Phone conferencing, teleconferencing, email, text messaging, (Laugh) (Storey: Um-hmm.) all of that, when by the time I was the Regional Director, became essential to be able to move, to continually move, that Region in a direction and to continually be making decisions.

Storey: Um-hmm. Let’s talk about the recruiting issue that you mentioned earlier.

Recruiting Staff and Encouraging Diversity in Billings

Bach: The recruiting issue was perhaps one of my favorite administrative issues. So I’m, I’m at heart, a policy wonk. I love policy issues. The more involved and complicated they are, the juicier they are for me the more fascinating they are for me. Keeps me going. Certainly did when I was in the job, in the various jobs.

“ . . . premier issue for me is having people in the right place and the right jobs, to be able to ascertain what someone’s strengths are, what their talents are, and where to place them, and that included the future planning for the Agency. . . .”

The equally premier issue for me is having people in the right place and the right jobs, to be able to ascertain what someone’s strengths are, what their talents are, and where to place them. And, that included the future planning for the Agency. It’s, from my perspective, the equal responsibility of anybody in management and in leadership to make sure that you are not only selecting and placing people properly, but that you’re also watching the avenues for opportunities for new employees and how to transfer knowledge, how to do the mentoring.

So, what became a very popular program and exemplary program in Great Plains Region was the student cooperative program. It’s gone by a lot of names over time. It happened to be an acronym in the Great Plains Region, that was SCEP [pronounced “skep”–Student Career Employment Program], S-C-E-P. In former years, it was the “student co-op program.” It is a fabulous, fabulous program, and we set aside funds each year to be able to hire students who were in their last few years [of college] that had demonstrated a commitment to a particular profession that they had a subject matter, clearly defined and identified subject matter interest. And we had SCEP students in the environmental sciences and engineering, different areas of engineering, in economics, in . . . even some administrative fields that we knew were going to be taxed by the departure [of employees]. Through that I can say that I have watched the career of a number of people who are doing very, very well in Reclamation. In the time frame that I was with the Region, between my time as Deputy and as the Regional Director, we were certainly in excess of 150 people who had come in through the

program. So, that is eight or nine years, close to ten years, so ten, you know, somewhere in that period. (Storey: Um-hmm.) That's pretty modest, really, when you think of it, given the turnover.

Great Plains Region, [in] ~~from~~ the time frame I was there, had anywhere from 650 employees to, tops, 800, but the statistics were very powerful. In fact, my understanding is that come this December, for Great Plains Region, 150 people are eligible to retire, I think, in approximately a 750-person Region, and we were seeing those kind of numbers coming online. And so, it [SCEP] became one strategy. It wasn't the only strategy. It was a very exciting initiative, because it is really stimulating to have young, bright, energetic, sponges [of knowledge] coming in from schools all over the West.

The other program, the other initiative that we had was we created a number of tech assistant, tech, tech positions, in which—and this was predominately in the Regional Office—in which a number of our secretaries who had been working years with the technical branches, were able to apply [for tech positions], where it wasn't the secretarial work. It was more data management, and report writing, and assembling of equipment, and managing of the reviews that we were doing of facilities. And so, so in that regard we had a number of opportunities for people who had gained knowledge on the job, and for them to move up into still junior GS [General Schedule] positions, but beyond a GS-4 or 5 secretary, so they could be grade banded. I was a big fan of grade banding positions. We also instituted, as did some of the other Regions too, it's pretty comprehensive now to have an Assistant or a Deputy Area Manager, but those positions weren't on record prior. So, we were able to do that. We also made some pretty hard decisions about when to fill positions and when to bring in an understudy. And so, we had several—and you know, the H-R [Human Resources] aspect of the Region, certainly when I was Deputy, that was a portfolio that was under the position of a Deputy. So, handling these HR initiatives became an assignment that I, that I took on in addition to some other significant policy issues, and I loved it. I loved it. It's just something I have a very strong feeling about. So, we try to maximize the strategies to open up doors and opportunities for people within the organization, as well as outside the organization.

Supported Education for Staff Members That Was Beneficial to Reclamation

The other piece that we did is I pushed an education initiative. For me, I felt it was important that, in addition, to these opportunities for students to come aboard and work with us, and then have very nice initial offers to be permanently with us, that we ought to consider using our training dollars not just for training that's offered within the government, but why not at our local schools? Why not college credits? Why not, if we have a secretary or if we have a middle-graded GS person who could take a college course, and we felt that it could benefit the Agency, why not? So, we had an education initiative, which I thought—and, as you can tell from my resume I'm, I love education and I think it's an important factor in keeping people very vibrant and vital. (Storey: Um-hmm.)

So we worked with, it was a Bureau-wide activity to identify what occupations

were most in need of recruiting. So, in that regard, we worked with the other Regions and we worked with the H-R Office here. However, it was preceded and it was also enhanced by a lot of our *own* desire to address the concerns that we were seeing in Great Plains. Diversity was an interesting issue. It's not the desire of certain cultures to live in the North. It's a very Anglo-Saxon place to live. And so, it was a real effort to recruit black and Hispanics to Billings, Montana. And, at one point I went down to the YMCA and talked to the guys that played basketball during the middle of the day, who I think were the only black people who lived in Billings, Montana, and I said, "What do we do? What do I do? How do I attract them?" And, they offered to be mentors. They offered to be points of contact, because they said, "It's going to be hard for these people to be away from home, and they need a community." And so, you know, we were able to open up a whole avenue of relationships that—and it just happened to be that I was at the Y, I used to belong to the Y. They have a fabulous Y in Billings. It's a whole block. And, I noticed, one day I was working out and it was early in the morning, but I happened to have caught somebody who, ethnically, was quite different to the Billings area, and I said, "This is what my concern is. Can you help me?" He says, "Yeah, come back at lunchtime." (Laugh) So, I then hooked him up with my HR person and I said, you know, "Pursue this, because obviously there is a community here but you just don't see much of it."

We, with regard to some Hispanic opportunities we realized that we were going to have [to] offer two positions in order for Hispanic females to feel comfortable being away for the summer in a very remote place, so far away from any family, and yet with no buddy system. And so, we began considering where we might have two opportunities and not just one. And so, very interesting dynamics. (Storey: Um-hmm.)

Then to take a Native American, if we had a student who was Native American and you place them in an area where there is no community similar, you know, you have to consider what the circumstances are. I mean, these are still young adults that have family, and personal, and social needs, and come from traditions of community, and you have to really reconcile that, in terms of, if you want to have successful recruiting. So. Fun, really fun. I loved it.

Storey: I think I've heard that HR was one of your assigned responsibilities. Another was being the front person in some of the contract negotiations?

Bach: Yes.

Storey: What were some of the other areas that were assigned specifically to you?

Working with Washington, D.C., and The Hill

Bach: The interfacing with Washington on legislation. Our strategy . . .

Storey: A natural?

Bach: A natural for me. Right. (Laugh) I had many years at it. So, the negotiating with The Hill, the . . . tracking of legislation, the rewriting of legislation, working with the

Solicitor's Office on the ramifications of legislation. So that, and in fact other initiatives in the Washington Office. So, so with the exception of the Canadian and International, which Neil did maintain, and understandably so, although I was an understudy of his in that regard. And, I had had international experience, but there were nuances that made it very significant for him to remain in that regard.

Worked with Great Plains Region's Regional Liaison

But, much of the caring and taking of the training of the Regional Liaison. So, that person, who is a Great Plains employee, who is duty-stationed in Washington D.C., and is staffing all of the requirements, or the needs, and the requests that are coming from the Commissioner's Office, or the Secretary's Office, or the preparation when the Secretary is going to be, or the President is going to be in your Region, much of that fell to my oversight. (Storey: Um-hmm.) And, the strategy, you know, strategizing on legislation and the movement of legislation, and that, that did also. And, not surprising.

Storey: How involved does Reclamation get with, in your experience, with legislation, rewriting legislation, talking to the legislators, and so on?

Found coordination with the Congress ". . . to be a very weak point of the Agency . . ."

Bach: I found it to be a very weak point of the Agency, frankly, something that Dan Beard and I would talk about. Ups and downs for the Agency. It seemed that the Agency had a consistency in its Washington Office congressional affairs for a while. And then, as some of those individuals retired, just tremendous turnover. And, I resurrected, in Great Plains, the overview book. I felt that we had—and it still remains a concern of mine, even though we have Internet, and there's the web page, and there's lots of web pages now, the public relations slash congressional education area was notably weak when I was a Deputy. So, I did spend a fair amount of time on that also.

I would say the exception was Mid-Pacific, who had a lot of practice and time spent in, more in the public relations, but their congressional relations had to pick up too.

". . . overall I would say an area that was on the weak side was the educating of the congressional and the care and feeding of the congressional relationship. . ."

But, overall I would say an area that was on the weak side was the educating of the Congressional and the care and feeding of the Congressional relationship.

The exception I would make is in the budget area and that is where the budget office took the responsibility of keeping the appropriators informed.

But, in terms of the authorizers, it was a weakness, I felt. At the time that James Hess came on board and Charlene Daugherty came on board, and Dana Cooper came on board, these are all people that Dan Beard brought in, people who had had Hill

experience, significant improvement. But, the Agency as itself was just slow, it seemed slow and somewhat resistant to pick up on it, slow to respond and the education process was significant, but it was a natural of mine. Not, you know, it seemed, it just seemed standard in my experience in government that you had your seasons where you were before the legislators, and you were briefing them on matters.

And, I was very familiar, having been in the Department and running the Policy Office there, with the vast amount of legislation that was being reviewed. So, the legislation that was introduced on The Hill, *referred* to the Department of the Interior because it had something to do with the Department of the Interior, it impacted one Bureau or all Bureaus, and there is a whole process by which that information is sent out to the Bureaus and feedback is requested. And, that loop mechanism was *very* broken down in Reclamation, and *very* disturbing. There could be pieces of legislation that impacted Reclamation, but because it wasn't a specific water project and it wasn't *solely* about Reclamation, it never came out to the Regions. Often, the Washington staff would, "No comment," of just handle it there but not educate the field that it was actually in existence. And, you don't really have time to be tracking all of this when you're a Deputy R-D, (Laugh) (Storey: Yeah.) you know. It was the communication in both directions. It was communicating out. It was taking feedback in. And, much of it came to the Policy Office in Denver. There was, you recall that the Policy Office in this period of time had some staff on the Washington hallway, as well as staff in Denver, and so the likelihood is that *those* individuals would see the flow of legislation. But, if it wasn't specifically a piece of legislation introduced for a water right matter between Tribe A and the Federal Government involving a Reclamation Project, you weren't likely to see it.

In terms of writing legislation, there's a reason why the Agency and many Federal Agencies choose not to write their legislation but rather to respond, *or* it happens to be that an association puts forward a piece of legislation that affects the entire Agency. And that is because it, an Agency, would have to do a legislative E-I-S if they were to propose legislation. And, you have to do some kind of environmental review. And so, there's less of a tendency to put forward language, unless it's in the appropriations bill, unless it has something to do with the expenditure of dollars, and then, in that process, it goes in with the President's budget; it is forwarded up to the appropriators, and it is outlined as a requirement to expend dollars. So, it doesn't have to follow. But, if it's a programmatic matter, then a legislative E-I-S is the legal requirement. And, so most Agencies steer away from that. But however, to respond to legislation, to propose alternatives[,] ~~that~~; that got much better in the time that I was in Reclamation.

Storey: So, this would normally be done through the Department?

Bach: The Department handles the Department, and the Washington hallway [of Reclamation] ought to be handling the process within the Agency. So, there is a, there is a place where all legislation comes to. It's in the Congressional Affairs and Legislative Affairs Office of the Department. So, in the Department of the Interior there is an office in the Secretary's Office that has attorneys and has policy people, but it's predominately—let me explain it this way. There are people who are skilled in congressional affairs, so it's

called the Congressional Affairs and Legislative Affairs Office. So, individuals that are skilled with relationships on The Hill, *and* skilled with reviewing legislation, and they are attorneys, that is in addition to the Solicitor's Office, who is serving as the lawyers on very specific matters or on preparing the response of the Agency when it's under litigation.

And, there *isn't* that kind of an equivalent in the Bureau of Reclamation, yet there is in other Bureaus. So, there is a Congressional Affairs Office in Reclamation, in the Washington hallway. Usually, generally what happens is it's the Deputy Commissioner for External Affairs who has Congressional and Legislative Affairs underneath him, (Storey: Um-hmm.) and it's a very sparse, sparsely-staffed office. And, they have very much improved on the congressional level. But, in terms of the circulating of legislation for feedback and what have you, that's weaker, and sometimes I think they feel the need to handle it from the Washington Office to not burden the Regions. But, in some regards, there's important things to communicate about what is happening and what could happen to the Agency. (Storey: Um-hmm.)

I do think that there's improvement in terms of the Policy Office here reviewing things. So, you know, you could have a, you could have an initiative, for instance let me just take one example. You could have a major reform on ESA occurring, an Endangered Species Act, and it's important that if legislation is being introduced and it could affect all Agencies, that Reclamation policy makers' policy people who are carrying out policy are aware of that. Now you, of course you would want to use your environmental staff in the Policy Office in Denver, so that they can save time and point out some of the issues, but that process, I would say that that process was really quite weak when I came to Reclamation, and it's only had opportunities to improve. And, it has. But, it was another set of duties that I had.

Worked with the Area Managers While Deputy Regional Director in Billings

The other, the other responsibilities that I had that, that the—it began that the Area Managers reported to the Regional Director when I was in Great Plains, but as time went on I had, functionally speaking, the Area Manager's dealt a whole lot more with me. So, on paper they reported to the Regional Director, and in part, to some extent, that was traditional, but on a day-to-day basis the Area Managers reported to the Deputy Regional Director. And so, in that regard I, that's how a lot of the policy issues, significant policy issues, that were in each of these Area Offices, were on my plate.

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BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2. OCTOBER 13, 2009.

Bach: . . . just the Deputy R-D. (Storey: Yeah.) So, one arrangement that Neil and I consciously worked out was how to allow Neil's time to be maximized on some of the very hot topics, in some cases controversial, and some cases, not, but where certainly the R-D's presence has to be consistent. And then, how would division of labor work out so that my portfolio picked up the other aspects that were needing of equal attention. So, I did have the day-to-day operations of the Region, because we did not

have an Assistant R-D. So that would have also included the major initiatives, like H-R, of which Neil had very strong feelings about. He had really great ideas too, and very interested in. And so, we talked about the congressional legislative activities. We talked about title transfer. (Storey: Um-hmm.)

“Neil handled Garrison and Canadian relationships. And, Garrison, there was the whole reformulation of Garrison into the North Dakota water Projects, and there was a very significant body of legislation that was presiding, was sitting in Congress getting worked on. . . .”

Neil handled Garrison and Canadian relationships. And, Garrison, there was the whole reformulation of Garrison into the North Dakota Water Project, and there was a very significant body of legislation that was presiding, was sitting in Congress getting worked on. And so, it was quite time consuming and it did fit quite well with all the history that Neil had and all the details that Neil had on the history of *that* particular Project. And, I came in on selected topics, knew generally and overall what he was working on and what *was* going on, but there was *so* much history and so many different factions watching and moving on that one. So, it became the division of labor matter, and it also gave me the opportunity to work with my counterparts in the other five Regions.

Creation of a Peer Group for the Deputy Regional Directors—the MLC (Middle Level Committee)

We concluded, it was mostly a conversation that began with Rick Gold and I. We were both the Deputies at the time, Rick being in Upper Colorado Region and myself in Great Plains, and I said, “Where is our peer group? You know, the executives get together. The Regional Directors have their periodic meetings and the Area Managers have their periodic meetings, but where’s ours?” So, we came up with an acronym, M-L-C [Middle Level Committee].

Internally the Members’ Real Name for the MLC Was “Misery Loves Compay”

And, if you haven’t come across that in your interviews with Rick, then *for the record* I’ll disclose finally, because we kept it quite confidentially. (Laugh) We, auspiciously we called it Middle Level Committee, but it was really “Misery Loves Company.” (Laughter) That was our real name. So, we had the closet name that only the Deputies could know, and then publically we were the Middle Level Committee.

“. . . we got tasked to review the grade levels of the Area Managers, a terribly *thankless* and *painful* job to do . . .”

So, that was our little joke, because we got tasked to review the grade levels of the Area Managers, a terribly *thankless* and *painful* job to do, because when Dan had made his various management changes and elevated the position of the Area Manager there were selective hard feelings amongst the Regional Directors of having lost a bit of edge on the position of the Regional Director and what that person did versus what Area Managers were doing. And, Area Managers were clambering for a bit of a distinction

from the Regional Office staff in the five Regions, and so they felt that their grade level should be requisite with this newly-found, appointed set of responsibilities to be more out there and more in the traffic of the policy makers, etcetera.

“ . . . the Regional Directors *loved* the idea that we had an M-L-C, because they began conjuring up all these wonderful, what I might call ‘crappy,’ assignments that we were all going to have. It was all of the issues that, of course, no executive really wants to deal with . . . ”

So, when Rick and I began assessing the different tasks—by the way the Regional Directors *loved* the idea that we had an M-L-C, because they began conjuring up all these wonderful, what I might call “crappy,” assignments (Laughter) that we were all going to have. It was all of the issues that, of course, no executive really wants to deal with but, “Oh hey! The Deputies will deal with it.” And, we were a very responsible group.

We took it very seriously, and we even reached out to, at the time, Wayne Deason,²⁵ who was here in the Policy Office. And since we’re doing this interview here in Denver, I wanted to note that we thought it would be a good extension of the arm of friendship to include Wayne. Now, there were some issues that we didn’t confide in Wayne that we wouldn’t bring him into, that they were very much the nuances of Regions and he would be very happy if we didn’t bring him into them. So, we did not bring him into the whole area, the whole Area Manager grade level. However, we did consult with him on the grade levels of the people here in Denver. But, it was a desire of the Area Managers *across* Reclamation to be recognized in grade, being very well aware of the grade levels in Denver and being very well aware of the grade levels in the Regional Office, which was reflective of the history of the Agency. So, we used to carry around our packages of information, that was the way in which H-R classified each of these positions, and we held it *very* close to our chests, and never to be left anywhere, and to be burned when we left our jobs. (Laughter) And, it was an interesting, an interesting time. Fun, fun group of people and, you know, a nice way for me to build a community of peers. So, but that is the truth of the M-L-C, “Misery Loves Company.” (Laugh)

Storey: But, what were the issues with Area Managers’ grades? Did you end up with two or three different grades for Area Managers, or did they all come in at one grade, or how did this work?

Pacific Northwest Region Elevated the Area Managers Before the Other Regions Did and That Complicated the MLC’s Task of Looking at the Grade Structure for Area Managers

Bach: (Sigh) Well, we received the assignment at a time where one Region had already stepped forward on grades. And, this was the strategy of the Pacific Northwest Region, with Mr. Keys. (Storey: Um-hmm.) It had been considered an understanding amongst the Regional Directors. This is at least how I understood the culture. That it was at least a courtesy and an understanding that the Regional Directors would consult each

25. Reclamation’s oral history program includes interviews with Wayne Deason.

other, and particularly on the matters of grade levels of the Area Managers and in the Regional Office. And so, Charley Calhoun and Roger Patterson, and Neil Stessman, and at the time it would have been down in LC [Lower Colorado].

Storey: Larry, maybe?

Bach: Prior to . . .

Storey: The construction engineer, what was his name?

Bach: I can see him so well. I can see him. A delightful person. A very nice man.²⁶ (Storey: Hmm.) So, it was the Regional Director prior to Commissioner, prior to Bob Johnson. It's who Bob Johnson worked for.

Storey: That was Larry Hancock.

Bach: Larry was in M-P [Mid-Pacific]. No, it wasn't Larry. It was after Larry.

Storey: After Larry?

Bach: Larry had his little time at—so, it will come to me. Right now I'm not seeing it. But, it was an understanding amongst all of them, with the exception of our Regional Director in P-N [Pacific Northwest] just forgot, (Laugh) just decided that in response to Dan's interactions—so, let me get more specific here. I think that it was viewed that there was a bit of snubbing of the Regional Directors, under Dan, and a[n] empowerment and lighting the torches of the Area Managers. And, as a result, John's [Keys'] strategy was to make all of them fifteens, except for the Portland office, and but to make sure they all knew who they reported to. And, we did have a very, very frank conversation with him, which he relayed to us. I can remember over here at Simm's Landing, in Denver, just across Sixth Avenue, the meeting convened by Steve Magnussen, who was then the Deputy in Washington, with the Regional Directors, who reported to him, and with the Deputy R-Ds, who were getting this charming assignment. (Laugh)

And, it was a tense meeting, because there were some hard feelings around the table as to the predicament that the other four Regions were in, as a result of one Region going at it on their own. And, the assignment that the M-L-C received was how to rectify this, in the presence of some very strong opinions of the Regional Directors on what steps it took in your career to be a fifteen, and how some of the positions and the individuals filling the positions, but particularly the positions, how some of the positions in P-N did not fit that billet in the minds of the other four. And so, it was Rick, and I, and Bob Johnson who, particularly there was turnover in M-P at the time on the Deputy R-D. There was not a, Roger had not named a permanent one at the time, so he was rotating through people at that time, bringing people in from the Regional Office and from Area Offices. And, then in P-N Region, that person, that Deputy,²⁷ was in a very difficult situation, since his Regional Director had already made the decision.

26. Robert J. Towles. An oral history interview with Towles is included in Reclamation's oral history program.

27. Ken Pedde. Reclamation's oral history program includes interviews with Ken Pedde.

Storey: Yeah. That's, ummm . . .

Bach: I see him vividly. He handled the salmon issues out there.

Storey: Yeah. He handled all the salmon issues.

Bach: Um-hmm. Well, he was very helpful and empathetic. He certainly could appreciate the predicament, but was able to also say, you know, "John's John." (Laugh)

Storey: Ken Pedde?

Bach: Ken Pedde. (Storey: Yeah.) Yeah, so Ken Pedde.

Storey: In P-N.

Bach: So, Rick Gold, and Bob Johnson, and Ken Pedde, and I formed the core of the M-L-C, with the various transitions that went on in M-P Region until, until Kirk [Rodgers]²⁸ came into that job, (Storey: Um-hmm.) and we had really, really rich discussions. Really tearing apart issues, getting down to the core of issues, not sparing bluntness, or frankness, or reflections. Very, very, very dynamic. And, Rick particularly was a great organizer. He's "Mr. Planner" in the group, and we always had agendas and they were very complete, and I think to some extent—I know this was expressed by some of the Regional Directors—they sort of envied the deliberations that we had. And so, that happened to be one topic. And where we came out was we did concur that it was both a logical recognition of some of the jobs that not all Area Manager positions were created equal, and that some were far more complicated than others. There was, of course, a desire on the part of one down in L-C Region, hoping that that would be a Senior Executive position, but that didn't ever. We considered, looked at it, and didn't feel that with what was happening with C-A-P [Central Arizona Project] that it would warrant the Senior Executive position. And frankly, about the time that we were looking at it was a time in which functions were going to be turned over to the water users. So, it was nearly through with the construction, heavy construction phase. Maybe, had that question come five years earlier, it may have been a different conclusion. But . . .

Storey: Well, Dennis Schroeder *was* S-E-S [Senior Executive Service], if I'm not incorrect. He was the *only* one that wasn't included in (Bach: When Dennis . . .) the meetings [of the other executives].

Bach: When Dennis was SES . . . I know we did not make that decision. I think we concluded that that, that it wasn't an SES position. (Storey: Uh huh.) But, we concluded that you could consider an SES position *in* the Region if it was assigned to the Regional Director with some broader responsibilities than the Area Manager. Because, just being Area Manager in and of itself (Storey: Yeah.) put you into a geographic limitation that would automatically keep you out of SES. But, (Storey: Um-hmm.) there were certainly romanticizing and fantasizing going on well beyond. And, with the departure of that position, when Dennis vacated that it would return to a fifteen.

28. Reclamation's oral history program includes interviews with Kirk Rodgers.

(Storey: Right.) And, there had to be a reconsideration of duties as they were distributed to the Deputy, and then they also went to an Assistant R-D too.

Storey: Yeah. I may, I may not be remembering correctly, but I don't remember very much.

Bach: And, I'm pulling the strings of memory also. So, where we came out . . .

Storey: I've interviewed Dennis, so it's down on the record. (Laugh)

Bach: It's on the record. So, where we came to was that there are certainly positions that were thirteen entry, thirteen/fourteen, and then clearly fourteens, and clearly fifteens. And that before there was any reconsideration of an SES at the Area Manager position that you would really have to consider broader duties than simply an Area Office. (Storey: Um-hmm.) Not that the complexity of the policy matters didn't have the factor, weren't weighted in, they certainly were, but you had a Deputy [R-D] and you had a Regional Director who were inherently responsible for the broad policy implications. So, we didn't make every Area Manager happy and we also didn't release the confidential papers that went into their grading system. (Laugh) But, we reviewed, and we had each of the H-R directors in before us to explain how they, how they did the desk audits, and how they considered the grade levels. And a very, very interesting process. (Storey: Um-hmm.) You have to see the guts of an Agency when you really get down to the grade level. (Laugh)

Storey: And who's going to get it and who's not?

Bach: Who's going to get it. Who's not. Um-hmm.

Storey: And everything (Bach: Um-hmm.) like that?

Various Regional Directors Had Strong Feelings about How One Could Become a GS-14 or GS-15

Bach: And there are some very strong opinions of Charley Calhoun about, about whether the Area Manager position in Colorado—see, we had the Front Range of Colorado, that Area Manager position, was dealing with very, very complicated matters, and that was different than the Western Colorado Area Manager position. But, Charley had some very strong feelings about, about whether Neil and I would consider a grade raise of the Eastern Colorado Area Manager when he had the other side of the Continental Divide. So, very fascinating nuances. And, Roger had a very strong feeling about the need to bring an individual up through the grade levels, into the Regional Office, and back out to an Area Manager's position. That, you might be able to have somebody come in at a thirteen, move into a fourteen, then come into the Regional Office, get that experience, move into a fifteen. And, that if they hadn't been in the Regional Office, then that was a factor that would affect his selection of a Area Manager for a fifteen position. And, I happen to have agreed quite strongly with Roger on that. I was pleased to hear him articulate it, but it was in a setting at Simm's Landing where the Deputies didn't *dare* speak up. (Laugh) Didn't *dare* speak up. It was the first time that we were *ever* invited to a Regional Director meeting. So, we filed away our thoughts. We went off

and had our meeting, and Neil and Roger tended to look at the world similarly in that regard, and Charley too, and then they were dealing with this dynamic that they, you know, they liked their, they liked their counterpart as a friend but they were not appreciative of the autonomy exercised by one of the Regional Directors.

“ . . . Steve Magnussen . . . was in the precarious situation of having been named the Deputy Commissioner, and realizing that he had . . . a Regional Director who took off and made some decisions that impacted the entire Agency. It really threw the Agency into quite a quandary . . . ”

And, then you had Steve Magnussen, who was in the precarious situation of having been named the ~~Deputy RD, or~~ Deputy Commissioner[,] rather, and realizing that he had an area, or rather he had a Regional Director who took off and made some decisions that impacted the entire Agency. It really threw the Agency into quite a quandary, to which John seemed to have taken a certain degree of pleasure about. Because, of course, he was on the winning side of the equation. (Laugh) However, he was very clear that, and I heard it from his Area Managers, that he made it upmost clear to them that *while* the Commissioner was elevating their prominence they better not *ever* forget who they report to. And so, his management style didn't really change. They had much more contact with the Commissioner than prior Area Managers would have, but they darn [well] knew when to pick up the phone and talk to their Regional Director, which I said had a certain, a certain tone of Catholics going to confession. (Laughter) ~~So, I got a few eyes out of John over that. Um-hmm.~~

Storey: Well, that topic is similar to a question I'm interested in, and that is, when you get up to that level in the organization, of course you're operating in the Region, but then there are all of these things that come in from outside that are Reclamationwide issues, Reclamationwide types of committees, and task forces, whatever you want to call them. What kinds of things did you get involved [in] outside the *Region*, while you were Assistant/deputy?

Bach: What kind of . . .

Storey: What kinds of special assignments?

“ . . . I always had, it seemed to me no matter where I went in the Agency, I always had a healthy list of other assignments, 'other duties as assigned.' . . . ”

Bach: Oh yeah. Well, I always had, it seemed to me no matter where I went in the Agency, I always had a healthy list of other assignments, “other duties as assigned.” (Laughter) So, I had mentioned that one of them was the title transfer initiative, Title transfer initiative. And so, I, (Storey: Uh . . .) that was where . . .

Storey: When did you mention that?

Bach: Oh, earlier in our interview. I believe . . .

Storey: I missed it, I guess.

Working with the National Water Resources Association

Bach: Okay, so let me say that I had mentioned that the National Water Resources Association had formed a working group.

Storey: Oh yeah. Yeah, I remember.

Bach: Yes. And, they asked for a, they asked for a senior management representative from Reclamation (Storey: Right.) and that was where Jack Garner and I took on (Storey: Right.) the role of—and then we similarly, we similarly created a working group within Reclamation so that we could draw upon from all of the Area Offices and Regions as to what their experiences were. So, that would be one issue.

Served on the Budget Review Committee for Reclamation

The other, you know, it's a very important assignment to receive, the B-R-C [Budget Review Committee]. My first year as the Deputy Regional Director was the year that they assigned a Deputy Regional Director to the B-R-C, that position. Because the position, first off, because the Deputy Regional Director hadn't been a position utilized by Reclamation, obviously the B-R-C didn't have that spot. With the change in involvement of Area Managers, Dan was promoting the—and so was, so was Austin Burke, and for good reasons—to include Area Managers. So, it began a process of every year the Budget Review Committee, which formulated the recommended budget, it did at least the first draft, the first very serious draft of the budget proposal for the Agency. It would then include two Area Managers. And when the Deputy positions became unanimous across the Regions, then it included a Deputy R-D. So, the first year that that occurred, I believe it was 1998, and, maybe it was '97, I came in as regional, as Deputy Regional Director in '96, so it may have taken the formulation of the FY [Fiscal Year] '98 budget, that is the distinction, and so it was my first year as Deputy but it was for the FY '98 budget formulation process. And so, I was named a member, and that was the year that John Keys was the chair of the B-R-C. So, that was a very interesting and important assignment.

“I similarly had the assignment of putting the budget together for the Region, so that was a somewhat daunting task to be in your first year of a new job and you're doing both. . . .”

I similarly had the assignment of putting the budget together for the Region, so that was a somewhat daunting task to be in your first year of a new job and you're doing both. So, I had to certainly appreciate delegating to my Regional Office staff to help me with the workload.

Subject Matter Coordination Across Reclamation

Some other assignments? There was this whole topic that was troubling the Agency, of subject matter coordination across the Agency. So ~~when~~, there was a point in time where there was, here in Denver, an O-&-M position that was very key about coordinating O-&-M, and in fact was predating Beard, and so had very much of a

responsibility for directing O-&-M activity. And, there was the chief planner. There was the senior planner, and the senior environmental position, which Wayne was the previous occupant of. And so, when you changed the management structure of the Agency and the Denver office became less of the arm of the Commissioner to direct policy, and you delegate authority further out to the field, there became this process, there became this reality that the left hand of the organization didn't know what the right hand of the organization was doing, and you didn't really know who to go to as the point person to say, "Hey, I'm seeing these corporate issues being applied and considered a different way and our water users are smart enough to be picking it up. Had I known, I may have done something differently." And, I would really commend Rick [Gold] with being the person who did the white paper that really captured this matter.

Storey: Rick Gold?

Bach: Rick Gold. Yes. Rick Gold. And part of it was this planning tendency of his, you know, to be able to—I can relate to it as an ecologist, but Rick, as a planner, I would say that Rick and I had a very close, really close working relationship, the closest of, in my view, the closest of all the Deputies were Rick and I. And, I think that it was from our training. I point out that I was raised by an engineer, so my vocabulary was very comfortable around an engineer, but I was educated as an ecologist. (Storey: Um-hmm.) Rick is an engineer, who spent much of his time, his early career as a planner. And so, this ability to see things broadly, to see what is happening, I call it the "landscape." So, your Agency's the landscape and you begin to see these different pieces of the landscape sticking out, taking on a certain depth of color. Your attention's drawn to that landscape. But, it's clear that it really doesn't quite fit in with the rest of the landscape. It's becoming too accentuated. It's not blending in. And, this is something that Rick wrote a paper on, a white paper. To this day I treasure it, because I think that he really *grasped* the *challenges* that the Agency was having.

Involvement in Reorganization of Reclamation under Dan Beard

It's one thing to rewrite position descriptions, and to write a[n] executive order that reorganizes—a Secretarial Order, excuse me, which actually was another assignment of mine. I was heavily involved in the Secretarial Order that Dan needed to reorganize Reclamation. And, it is a very different thing to then implement that and to—so, I was on a handful of committees that looked at how to move from delegation to implementation. And, that included discussions with Wayne as to how to nurture the relationship of the Policy Office, vis-a-vis the Regions, because you could over-interpret this delegation to be a free-wielding, have it any way you want, and where's the balance between some consistency in an organization, and where is the individuality and the recognition that all these Projects, for the most part, have their own authorizations. So, so that was another set of—the subject matter was generically how you move from a delegation to an implementation, but it took its form in the subject matter. So, what to do about planning, what to do about O-&-M, what to do about other policy issues.

So, those are some of the assignments. There were many, and I'm not recalling

all of them. (Laugh) They just seemed to be constant. I seem to have that way of finding myself onto a number of different working groups, inner Agency (Storey: Um-hmm.) working groups. Yeah.

Storey: Tell me about this Secretarial Order. What had to be done and how were you involved?

Developing the Secretarial Order for Reorganization of Reclamation

Bach: Yes, well there is something called the “Department Manual” (Laugh) that many politicals may or may not realize exists. Dan is smart enough, Dan was smart enough in government to have known that it existed. A Commissioner can declare something to be so. It is important that there are people behind the scenes that then know how to put that into some type of a permanence, to codify, what I would call “codify,” the actions, and the decisions.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. OCTOBER 13, 2009.

BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 3. OCTOBER 13, 2009.

Storey: This is tape three of an interview by Brit Storey, with Maryanne Bach, on October 13, 2009.

So, when you’re going to reorganize and delegate?

Bach: Right. So, when you’re going to reorganize, even if you’re going to organize and delegate, whether it’s reorganizing or not, if you’re going to organize and delegate that has to be captured in an official document. And when you’re going to reorganize an Agency that requires a Secretarial approval. And so, I happened to have known that process quite well, having been the Secretary’s Policy Director for a number of years, before I came to Reclamation. It was the assignment that I had prior, when I was in the Department. And so that, and the, there was an office that reported, in Denver, to the Deputy Commissioner duty stationed out here in Denver.

So, if you recall, at the time that Dan came in I was here in Denver, in the policy, well actually reporting to the Deputy Commissioner, and there was a Deputy Commissioner in Washington. So, the operations and then there was the position out here. We also had access to the human resources here, office, and the Human Resources Office knew very well that delegations have to be codified. And so, the Secretarial Order had to be written that laid out the decisions. And, that was something that I wrote the master document for, and I worked with the person in the Department of the Interior who was the caretaker of the Department Manual. (Storey: Um-hmm.) So, you write the Secretarial Order and then you have to codify it in the Department Manual. And then there are delegations that—those same delegations then need to be reflected in the Reclamation Manual. You might remember the Reclamation Manual? (Storey: Um-hmm.) And, so that was one of the things that I did.

And, I do recall, in some of my early meetings with Eluid [Martinez], his sensitivity to Reclamation Instructions, Reclamation Manual. If you recall, it was Dan who *quite deliberately* and very strategically eliminated those Reclamation

Instructions. And so, I found myself on a team that looked at what instructions, you know chairing a team, looking at what instructions stay, what instructions don't stay, and how to put in process capturing all of that. (Storey: Um-hmm.) I frequently was the, was one of the Deputies, or Regional Directors appointed to a, to serve as liaison to a National Water Resources Association topic, [too]. We were never, legally we were never able to be *members* of their committees, but we would be the Reclamation liaison.

Working on the *Blueprint* for Reform

So, ~~when~~, let me bring it to some of my later, you know, just prior to my leaving Reclamation, when we were doing [Managing for Excellence.] ~~the *Blueprint* for the future, when we were, *Blueprint for Reform*,~~²⁹ I was, I, with Rick Gold and . . . Larry Todd, [and] I [were] ~~was~~ the contacts to NWRA and I was also one of the core authors of the documents that were internal to Reclamation. (Storey: Um-hmm.)

So, being on teams was a very active part of my job, no matter where I was in the Agency. And, I think my own reflection on that was, it helped to have been the Director of Policy in the Department. It, perhaps, put a larger tag on me to be asked to take on certain corporate issues, and it was fascinating. For me, it introduced me and exposed me to many, many more people in the Agency than perhaps I would have met, being that I didn't start my Federal career in the Agency. So, I had very wide circulation.

Storey: Um-hmm. What else happened while you were Deputy Regional Director?

Assisting the Research Office to Reach out to the Regions

Bach: What happened was the time . . . the Research Office here in Denver was looking for a way to broaden the involvement of the Regions in the decisions of where the research dollars went to, which was a very touchy topic for the TSC, because there were researchers in the TSC who had become quite accustomed to being allocated money from the Research Office. And, the Research Office was looking to respond to some of the contemporary issues that were facing the Agency, realizing that many of those issues were ripe on Projects, that they were a matter of operational aspects of the Projects. It may be the environmental consequences of the operations of the Projects, or how to remedy certain basin-wide matters.

And so, there was a task underway to broaden the understanding of the Research Office, as well as using the forum—it became a “board of directors” for the Research Office and I served as the representative from the Great Plains Region. And, I loved it because I came out of research. I have a very, very strong feeling about research and about the importance of, of any organization that is technically based. If it wants to be progressive, then it really has an obligation to itself to invest in research as the seed for spurring innovation and cutting-edge. And, that does not dismiss an engineering organization. There are many new discoveries in the field of engineering

29. Daniel P. Beard, “Blueprint for Reform: The Commissioner’s Plan for Reinventing Reclamation,” November 1, 1993.

and in the management of resources that require an acknowledgment of some seed money to spur and to cut through unknowns. And so, it was an assignment that I treasured, frankly, and one in which I realized that it was not as prominent a thought on the Agency's mind, on leadership, to be investing in research. It was, in some regards, I felt it was an unhealthy aspect of the Agency that that money was viewed as money that could go to the Regions rather than going to an office here in Denver, when where that money was really going out to was a transition of bringing researchers in the TSC in alignment and into collaboration with those in the field that were coming up against these challenges.

“ . . . it would be accurate to capture that I felt that Reclamation's view towards research was quite arcane for being a technical, a highly technical organization. . . . ”

And so, it would be accurate to capture that I felt that Reclamation's view towards research was quite arcane for being a technical, a highly technical organization. It was a shocking aspect for me, a shocking discovery, (Storey: Um-hmm.) that it was, it took—and so for that reason, for having seen—so we've, so when we've spoken before, Brit, we talked about the history that I had in Congress on the Science Committee, and I dealt with *most* of the non-Defense Agencies that the government invests money in in Research and Development. So, I had an amazing opportunity to be in the presence of Nobel laureates from all over the world on a regular basis, and the President's Science Advisor, and head of academic institutions, and chairs of various engineering and [university] scientific departments. And, I interacted with the [National] Academy [of Sciences] all the time. So, having been given that backdrop and having been trained as a scientist, and having been in the field of environmental science where—environmental science was essentially carved out of civil engineering. It became a further fine-tuning of civil engineering. It *shocked me* in Reclamation. It was a, really a source of sadness for me that [investing in research] it was an afterthought. It wasn't an afterthought for the people here in Denver, whether they be the Research Office or the TSC. And, at the time that I first served on the Board of Advisors for the Research Office, it was Stan Ponce who was the Director. And, you know, Stan stayed in Reclamation for some time and then, you know, he's moved over. He's now, he moved into Washington and now he is the USGS [United States Geological Survey] Regional Director here in Denver, and he came out of the Park Service. I had known him years back and so it was really a shock to me. I thought it was a weakness in the armor (Storey: Um-hmm.) of Reclamation. So, that was another assignment.

Let's see. There is another assignment that had both classified and unclassified functions, and it wasn't as a Deputy, so maybe you want to hold that conversation for when I'm Regional Director. (Storey: Okay.) It's a very fascinating function that I served in, and now of course I can speak about the unclassified functions (Storey: Um-hmm.) when it comes time. So . . .

Storey: Well, why don't you tell me about your transition from Billings back into Denver, as I recall?

Wanted to Work with Austin Burke Before He Retired

Bach: Yes. So, I had a real interest in spending time with Austin Burke before he retired. It was a very hard decision, because I savored my time with Neil Stessman.

“Neil was a fabulous mentor . . . and we . . . complimented each other very, very well as Regional Director and Deputy. . . .”

Neil was a fabulous mentor, absolutely fabulous mentor, and we, I thought, complimented each other very, very well as Regional Director and Deputy. His management style offered, for me, some real insights into how to bring the best out of individuals. Neil may have seemed mild mannered to most people. Having come from the earlier career activities he had with working with underprivileged children when he was at the (Storey: Job Corp centers?) Job Corp centers. He cultivated such a knack for relating to people. It synchronized very well, for me, with the time that I was spending *outside* of the office.

Training in Communication, Hypnotherapy, and Psychology

So, let’s talk about a bit of the hard-driven personality that I was also going to school this whole time. So, before I went up to the Great Plains Region, I was in school, on the side, to train in hypnotherapy. So, I was taking psychology courses, and doing a lot of clinical type work. When I was *in* Great Plains Region, I continued taking training, take training in communications, and in linguistics, and in the use of wording, and how you relate to people, and it was training that was offered in the context of the government and then people, certainly in all walks of life took that. But, I was very, very drawn to this way in which people communicate and the effectiveness of communications.

“Neil’s style of communications, in the presence of all sorts of factors, was really fascinating to me. . . . he was very willing to allow me to enter into the thoughts that were going through his mind. He was very open in that regard, and so that was quite helpful . . .”

And so, Neil’s style of communications, in the presence of all sorts of factors, was really fascinating to me. And so, that would explain a bit of when I say that he was an excellent mentor, he was very willing to allow me to enter into the thoughts that were going through his mind. He was very open in that regard, and so that was quite helpful, because we had many evening discussions about the culture of Reclamation and the changes that were going on, and the *result*, the cultural turmoil of delegating *authority* when you don’t have all the *implementing* of all that process in place. Those were the trying days of Reclamation after the Secretarial Order, you know. You have to actually make it work. And, it raises all sorts of issues for people. Regional office people wonder if they’re important anymore. People in Denver wonder if people ever realized what they were doing to take care of the safety of these facilities. Individuals who aren’t used to having delegation of authority are feeling quite empowered and stumbling all over themselves, (Laugh) in some regards, and *overstating* their authority. So, those aspects Neil and I talked about very fluidly.

“So, it wasn’t easy to leave working with Neil. It was such a pleasure. In some regards, I would say my *best job* in Reclamation was Deputy Regional Director . . .”

So, it wasn’t easy to leave working with Neil. It was such a pleasure. In some regards, I would say my *best job* in Reclamation was Deputy Regional Director, and I think an important factor in that was the openness and the willingness of the senior management and the rich discussions that we had as a team, and then the rich discussions that we had around the table with the leadership in Great Plains Region, and just really wonderful employees, really hardworking, wonderful employees, just a great place [in] of the country to be.

“ . . . I had this gut feeling that Austin wasn’t going to be around much longer, and . . . in Denver, when I first came to Reclamation . . . was not sufficient to get a real handle on all the various policies of Reclamation. . . . When you come in from the outside it is rather daunting to look at the blue books, to see this collection of statutes, and to know that behind those statutes are a whole series of Reclamation Instructions, Reclamation Manual, and then all these policies. . . .”

However, I had this gut feeling that Austin wasn’t going to be around much longer, and my time initially in Denver, when I first came to Reclamation, in some regard for me, was not sufficient to get a real handle on all the various policies of Reclamation.

When you come in from the outside, it is rather daunting to look at the “blue books,”³⁰ to see this collection of statutes, and to know that behind those statutes are a whole series of Reclamation Instructions, Reclamation Manual, and then all these policies. And I, being the ecologist as *I am*, I was looking for how to put this all together.

“ . . . I got a number of my questions answered in very general ways in the two years that I was working with Neil. I knew that there was this other perspective and other piece of the picture that I could get from Austin, and . . . there was something about his personality that I just sensed his time was limited. . . .”

And, I got a number of my questions answered in very general ways in the two years that I was working with Neil. I knew that there was this other perspective and other piece of the picture that I could get from Austin, and I knew Austin, there was something about his personality that I just sensed his time was limited. And, I said to Neil, “This is a really hard decision.” But, you know from a career development perspective, and perhaps because of my prior training in government, what gave me an anchor, as I was seeing it, what gave me an anchor was to be able to see the broader perspective of all the policy. So, it was to really know and understand what was in those “blue books” and then to understand the policy framework behind it. And so, that

30. Referring to eight volumes of books, edited by various people and bound in blue which contain the various laws affecting Reclamation and bearing various titles: *Federal Reclamation and Related laws Annotated, Reclamation Reform Act Compilation, 1982-1988*; *Federal Reclamation and Related laws Annotated, Supplement I, 1967-1982*; *Federal Reclamation and Related laws Annotated, Supplement II, 1983-1998 Supplement to Volumes 1-IV, Index*; and volumes 1 to 5 of *Federal Reclamation and Related Laws Annotated* covering to 1998.

was really what drew me back to ~~Washington, or rather back to~~ Denver to the Policy Office. And, as it turned out, I had about a year with Austin, and he took retirement, (Storey: Um-hmm.) and it was a very, very fruitful year because he was also as equally engaging in policy deliberation and contemporary issues going on in Reclamation.

You know, a number, a number of Regional Directors used to wander in to Austin's office. Maybe people don't realize that. But, Austin was a draw, because you could have very dynamic, intense conversations, very open, deliberative conversations as you were trying to puzzle through a tough issue in your Region, and you had the confidence that it would go nowhere, that he would give you his insight, and if you needed to pick up the phone or if you needed to come by again, just come on by. So, to some extent it was a bit of being, it was like being in a postdoc, doctoral environment.

“... I saw all sorts of issues. And, he [Austin] understood why I was coming. It did ruffle the feathers of some of the managers here. They were very bothered by it, very intimidated, felt a bit ... uncomfortable, insecure that a Deputy R-D was coming into the office. ...”

So, I saw all sorts of issues. And, he understood why I was coming. It did ruffle the feathers of some of the managers here. They were very bothered by it, very intimidated, felt a bit ... uncomfortable, insecure that a Deputy R-D was coming into the office. “Gosh, what was I doing? Was I going to take over their portfolio? Was I going to direct their policy?” or what have you. And, well we dealt with that. He had a good sense of humor about that.

Storey: Well, now what position did you come to?

Became the Assistant Director of Policy

Bach: He had to create a position, and Wayne was his Deputy Director of Policy, and I became the Assistant Policy Director. Assistant Director of Policy, I believe, is what the name we gave it. (Storey: Um-hmm.) But, it was clear we were going to have to give some name to it, but I wasn't Terry Lynott, you know. I wasn't the Terry Lynott of the future, of the past, and I wasn't the Quigley, not, oh the other fellow who was here. Not—he used to be the Area Manager or the Project Manager in Loveland, Ray . . .

Storey: Ray Willms.

“... you have the personality of Austin who, in some cases, would feed a rumor just to see who was going to (Laugh) lose their cool about it, and then he'd tell me afterwards. ...”

Bach: Ray Willms. I wasn't the Ray Willms. So, “Who was I and what was I doing? And, what was happening? Why was I, why was a Deputy [RD] coming in here? And what else was I going to do [beyond what] with Dan Beard had done to the organization?” Oh gosh, it was just, and it was just a time in which people were just really thrown off guard here in the Policy Office. And, fortunately, you have the personality of Austin

who, in some cases, would feed a rumor just to see who was going to (Laugh) lose their cool about it, and then he'd tell me afterwards. Because, I would come in and say, "Oh gosh, Austin, there's now *another* rumor that I'm going to be taking over this and that," and he said, "Yeah, I started that rumor," you know. (Laughter) So, I both enjoyed his . . . levity toward some very serious subjects, as well as his insight, and he did have quite a bit of insight.

When Austin Burke Retired, Margaret Sibley Became Director in His Place

“. . . it was a very trying time for Wayne and I because Margaret’s M-S [Multiple Sclerosis] was quite serious, much, much, much more serious than the Agency realized, and it was very challenging and painful to watch her in the position. . . .”

And then, when he moved on, when he chose retirement, that was when Margaret Sibley came on as the Director of Policy, and obviously it was a very trying time for Wayne and I because Margaret’s M-S [Multiple Sclerosis] was quite serious, much, much, much more serious than the Agency realized. And it was very challenging and painful to watch her in the position, because, she had aspired to the position for years. And when she thought she was going to move into that position, it was Bill McDonald who was selected.

“. . . really, really challenging for Wayne and I. Because, part of that disease affects the memory and the motor coordination, and some of the critical thinking processes. And yet, what also is a part of that disease is a fighting of the self. . . .”

And, part of being in that position for Margaret was assuring herself that she was still well enough and still capable of doing that job, and it became *really, really* challenging for Wayne and I. Because, part of that disease affects the memory and the motor coordination, and some of the critical thinking processes. And yet, what also is a part of that disease is a fighting of the self. One really is at turmoil internally because there’s all of these chemical processes going on that are uncustomary of the body, and where you feel out of control, and you can physically be out of control but neurologically you’re also feeling this out of control. So, we were daily, behind the scenes, dealing with the *ramifications* of her feeling out of control. So, it was quite the roller coaster. Because, in some cases when we were compensating and picking up an assignment that was given to the office but we didn’t know about it, which happened multiple times a day, where the assignment would come to her from the Commissioner’s office or from a Region, and the concept of the front office was that you would bring either the Deputy or the Assistant in for these meetings, but that challenged her feeling of control. So, sometimes she would be making these assignments, and somebody on the staff would have it, or we didn’t know that they had it, and then at times, when she became hospitalized, we had a heck of a time finding out all of what we were responsible for.

“. . . it really grew the relationship between Wayne and I, because frankly Wayne was . . . very threatened . . . when I came to work with Austin. . . .”

And, it really grew the relationship between Wayne and I, because frankly Wayne was somebody who was very threatened when I came into the office, when I came to work with Austin. He really felt quite threatened. And, the beauty of how that all evolved was that Wayne and I got to be pretty close. (Storey: Um-hmm.) When we were faced with how to maintain the dignity of the office in the presence of the executive who was having heartbreaking medical circumstances that sometimes would lead us into very tense situations where—and really, it takes a lot to, I spent time to understand the disease because it could have wrecked that office, truly. There were times that we were accused of things that we had no knowledge of, you know. Accused of taking papers and doing something counter, and all of this is part of the challenge of the individual who has M-S, has in terms of maintaining a sense of recollection, of intuitive thinking, of communication, of control over one’s own biological factors as well as one’s external factors.

And the, one of the fears that Margaret always had was of having to take medical, medical retirement. And, fortunately, fortunately for the Agency, as the time went on—I’m referring back to the time that she was, she and I were still in the same office, but then, you know, as I moved on to be Regional Director and she was still the Director of the office, and Wayne, a very stressful situation for Wayne to handle, to continue to handle on his own.

“ . . . thank goodness that it happened to be John Keys that came in as the Commissioner. Because, John was the person who had to *talk* to Margaret. And the other person who was able to talk to Margaret, to it being time to move on, was Bill McDonald. . . . ”

Then Liz came in as Deputy and thank goodness that it happened to be John Keys that came in as the ~~Regional Director, I mean, excuse me, as~~ Commissioner. Because, John was the person who had to *talk* to Margaret. And the other person who was able to talk to Margaret, to it being time to move on, was Bill McDonald. And somehow it was that she had a particular gentle, gentility towards, or acceptance of their gentility. Gentility from the rest of us was a hard thing for her to accept.

Margaret Sibley Worked for Her When She Was in the Department of the Interior Policy Office

And, it was particularly . . . it was a particularly observant time for me because Margaret actually was an employee of mine when I was in the Department Policy Office. And I, it was on the early time of her disease, of her diagnosis, she ran my Energy Division out here in Denver, but reported, she was my division Director reporting to [me,as] the Director of Policy in the Department. And so, to have seen a person so vibrant, and intelligent, and active, and then to see what happens over time with that disease, it does call upon you—the other, the other aspects of being an executive, or being in senior management, there is a place for altruism and compassion, that is sometimes more than you even wonder if you have. Because, you don’t always understand the actions of the individual, and yet you, you know, I was at least able to resort back to having known this person early in their career, and knowing how very talented.

“ . . . Margaret was **very generous with me when I came into the Agency. . . .**”

And, Margaret, Margaret was *very* generous with me when I came into the Agency. Margaret having *also* come into the Agency from outside, was somebody who really lent her hand in wanting to help me understand how to assimilate into Reclamation. So, you know, to then be years later, and to watch the disease and what it was doing to such a bright, bright person was just another aspect that isn't transparent to other people in an organization. It certainly isn't transparent outside of the organization.

Recognizing the Situation and Assisting Other Executives in Time of Stress

Reclamation has, in my time in Reclamation it has a way of stepping in. It's sort of an unspoken understanding, and it's important in leadership. I think it's important in management. But, how to step in and how to bridge or how to bolster one in your immediate group who is perhaps having a very difficult time, I think that there are—we knew how to reach out to each other on technical matters and on policy matters. It's something that we were set up to do. There's a whole other level of reaching out, when you are recognizing that someone has a very personal matter that they're dealing with. (Storey: Um-hmm.) And, I think to capture the Agency in these history, oral history reviews, interviews, I think it's important to capture that. It's important to realize that we all saw a time when someone in our executive group was unduly stressed. We may not have known all the personal aspects behind it, but we knew something. We knew somehow it was time to step in and somehow to compensate, to carry, and that was the foundation of the friendship that . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 3. OCTOBER 13, 2009.

BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 3. OCTOBER 13, 2009.

Storey: You were talking about stepping in when people ~~was~~ [were] showing signs of stress, (Bach: Yes.) and so on. That leads me to an issue I'm sort of interested in that I've observed over the years, and that was that when Dan Beard reorganized Reclamation we went in the Regions, for instance, from having maybe the Regional Director and two, three, I think in one case, four Assistant Regional Directors, and a fairly large group of Division Chiefs, maybe eight or ten, to a Regional Director, and a Deputy Regional Director, and maybe four Division Chiefs. And, it meant that there were fewer people who could make the decisions—the big decisions. And, as a result everybody was traveling more and, *my* observation, was more stressed. And, I'm wondering what it looked like from your side?

How the Downsizing and Flattening of Reclamation's Organizational Structure Played Out

Bach: There is an attribute in growing the maturity level of the field, who is sitting in front of the customer, who is getting first-hand information, and the importance of that first-hand information and that interaction, that relationship, that face-to-face relationship, in decisionmaking. It was very, very useful information. You do not grow delegation of authority overnight. And so, there was this tumultuous period in Reclamation's history

where, as you describe, your description would fit. It was a very stressful time, and the amount of travel reflected it.

There were many times when the M-L-C acknowledged for each other the stress that we were all feeling. I mean, it did become a sounding board, and a confidential sounding board, for us, that we watched the Regional Directors constantly on the road. And then as Regional Directors, because it happened to me, look at the group of M-L-C, three of us then moved on to be Regional Directors, of, happened to be those same three Regions. For me, I had the Policy Office in between, you know, my time with Austin in between.

Reacted to the Stress of Travel and the Reorganization under Dan Beard by Appointing an Assistant Regional Director to Be in the Office and Handle the Day-to-day Routine Decisionmaking

And, it was very challenging. What I described, my action in Great Plains, as the then Regional Director was to appoint the person whose glue was on the seat of his butt to stay in the chair, in the Region, to handle the day-to-day, and also to highlight when we were at a critical point for a policy decision, which I as Regional Director had to make. And, I think each of the other Regional Directors had to make similar accommodations. And you had to be accessible.

“ . . . technology became a really important part of your job, to be accessible. . . .”

So, technology became a really important part of your job, to be accessible.

“The other position that became, I think, even more elevated and more stressful, was the Regional Liaison. Because . . . They lived in the world of all the issues coming in from the Region, and they lived in the world of everything trickling down in the Washington environment. . . .”

The other position that became, I think, even more elevated and more stressful, was the Regional Liaison. Because, that was an “other” place. So, again, it’s the position that is duty stationed in Washington, it reports to the Regional Director, but organizationally it was in the Deputy Commissioner’s line of authority because it, the budget officer actually had that person. That’s just the way it worked out. It could have been, it could have been organized another way. But, you had this person who lived in two worlds. They lived in the world of all the issues coming in from the Region, and they lived in the world of everything trickling down in the Washington environment.

“ . . . there was also the dynamic of what decisions Area Managers were making and whether they were . . . feeling enthusiastic about their empowerment and perhaps *not* utilizing the skills and the experience of the Regional Office . . . Denver . . . the Policy Office here or . . . the technical people here. . . . it took constant attention to relationships and to respecting the talents that people had. . . . It didn’t come easily. . . .”

And, there was also the dynamic of what decisions Area Managers were making and whether they were utilizing the expertise in the Regional Offices, or whether they were feeling enthusiastic about their empowerment and perhaps *not* utilizing the skills and the experience of the Regional Office. Similar with Denver. Similar whether it be the Policy Office here or it be the technical people here. And so, decisions could be made on the functioning of Projects, on the day-to-day operations of the Projects, or big decisions on the Projects. And so, it took constant attention to relationships and to respecting the talents that people had. It didn't come overnight. It didn't come easily.

“There were people in the field who felt both enamored, excited, and capable of making decisions, and in many cases their decisions would affect all their counterparts, and would affect the Agency, and yet they were *willing* . . . I think it called upon a very mature ego . . . to realize the value of collaboration, the value of coordinating. . . . it rubbed some of my Area Managers [the wrong way] that I wouldn't allow decisions to go forward until they were coordinated, communicated . . .”

There were people in the field who felt both enamored, excited, and capable of making decisions, and in many cases their decisions would affect all their counterparts, and would affect the Agency, and yet they were *willing* to take on the responsibility, *wanting* to take on the responsibility quite, in some regards, I think that there were a handful that really had a sense of the impact. But, I think it called upon a very mature ego, very mature ego, to realize the value of collaboration, the value of coordinating. It happened to be one of my *own* tenets as Regional Director, and I think it rubbed some of my Area Managers [the wrong way] that I wouldn't allow decisions to go forward until they were coordinated, communicated with Denver or with other Regions and counterparts, where I felt that from a policy perspective there were going to be ramifications. If for nothing else is to inform. If for nothing else is to cover your bases.

“. . . I saw the world through being the Director of Policy in a Department that had many Bureaus that all wanted to go their own way. And where a portion of the Secretary's challenges were the outside world pointing to the inconsistencies . . .”

But again, I saw the world through being the Director of Policy in a Department that had many Bureaus that all wanted to go their own way. (Laugh) (Storey: Um-hmm.) And where a portion of the Secretary's challenges were the outside world pointing to the inconsistencies that if, if only they were in, if only they didn't have to deal with the Fish and Wildlife Service, but they could deal with the Bureau of Reclamation. Or, but if only they could be in the Forest Service, in Agriculture, and not in the Park Service. You know so I think I lived from the perspective of having seen what happens when you can utilize your delegation of authority to the exclusion of others.

It does go back to, your question goes back to the advice that I had gotten from a former Regional Director, of keeping two bags packed. (Storey: Um-hmm.) I think it was very frustrating, very frustrating for employees, in the Regional Office and in the

field, and it, and thus for *me* what worked was to have an Assistant R-D who rarely traveled. Traveled when it was to the benefit of seeing something operational in order to enhance a decision, but otherwise that person had to be the, to some extent, a significant player in the orchestration of the calendar of the ~~Agency, I mean of the~~ Region, of how the scheduling of decisionmaking, and we had to put some processes in place, and other Regions had to do the same thing. You know, we had certain decisionmaking databases that we maintained Bureau-wide that highlighted when Department-wide, or Washington-wide decisions were going to be made, but you had to do it similarly in your Regions. You had to have *something* that kept you organized. (Storey: Um-hmm.)

“ . . . I do think it also became a time of . . . travel that took its wear and tear on the Agency. . . . ”

And so, I do think it also became a time of . . . travel that took its wear and tear on the Agency.

Storey: What did you do when you were the Assistant Director and working for Austin? What were the kinds of things that were being assigned to you?

Working for Austin Burke in the policy office, “I tended . . . to get untenable topics . . . hard to resolve . . . Area Offices were . . . going in different directions, and the customers were pointing it out. . . . different approaches to title transfer. . . . ”

Bach: I tended, in that position to get untenable topics, topics that were hard to resolve, where multiple Area Offices were having, were going in different directions, and the customers were pointing [it] out. You know, one that comes to mind is different approaches to title transfer. That was a time frame that relates to my relationship with National Water Resources Association, because we were having different decisions made about environmental impact statements being the document that needed to be done versus environmental assessments. Different decisions on how to handle recreation at one place versus another. I did have some functional parts of the organization reporting to me.

“I did have public relations reporting to me and I did also pick up the congressional coordination. . . . ”

I did have public relations reporting to me and I did also pick up the congressional coordination. So, the staff that were doing legislative reviews I sort of, you know, naturally picked up that part of the office. And, I picked up, let’s see if I remember some other matters.

“I had . . . all of the Office of Inspector General activities . . . ”

I had the, all of the Office of Inspector General activities, all of the examinations that, that the inspector general was doing on our programs. That all came under my purview when I was here. (Storey: Um-hmm.) So, that often was a vulnerability, where the vulnerabilities of the Agencies, of the Agency was programmatically, or perhaps there

was a disgruntled customer, or set of customers, that wanted an aspect of our organization looked at. And so, I had all of that activity.

Storey: This would be the kind of stuff Luis Maez was doing?

Bach: Yes, Luis. Correct, Luis reported to me when I was here. Yes. There are additional, there was additional functions, because I had a whole staff of folks, and it's not all coming to mind. But, you know, Elaine Simonson, for instance, she reported to me. (Storey: Right.) And so, how to use public affairs in communicating the role and mission of the Agency.

“ . . . I had . . . a number of special issues that were thorny and complicated policy matters . . . ”

And then I had, again I had, you know, a number of special issues that were thorny and complicated policy matters that I had the pleasure of, (Laugh) handling.

Storey: Trying to tame? (Laugh)

“They were always involving several Area Managers that needed to have a policy be flexible enough to allow for decisions on the local level, reflective of each of their Project authorizations. . . .”

Bach: Yes. They were always involving several Area Managers that needed to have a policy be flexible enough to allow for decisions on the local level, reflective of each of their Project authorizations. So. (Storey: Um-hmm.) It just was such an opportunity.

Started Using Teleconferencing to Present Policy Issues and Expected Ramifications

I recall that we started doing teleconferences, call-in conferences, that when this was something that Austin made me responsible for, that when we were moving towards a draft policy, an interim policy, a final policy, it would be my responsibility to set up—in part I came up with the idea so he said, “Great. You're responsible for it.” (Laughter) (Storey: Yeah.)—where you set up the call in. Where you can do, you know, twenty-five places in the organization that can call in and you can have a networking opportunity to hear what the ramifications are of this interim policy, this final policy. So, (Storey: Um-hmm.) I had that responsibility to make sure we understood the ramifications before we went forward with something.

Storey: So did the job stay pretty much the same when Margaret became the Assistant Commissioner, Margaret Sibley?

Was Responsible for Tracking Some of the NGOs—“ . . . we always kept our eyes and ears out on the N-G-O community and what ramifications it had. . . . ”

Bach: I think on paper it stayed the same. I don't believe that my position description changed at all. Oh, the other, the other aspect of the job is I—that's true—I tracked, very

carefully, some of the large organizations, the N-G-Os [non-governmental organizations] that we had interactions with. So, I tracked National Governors Association, Western Governors Association, N-W-R-A.

Wayne had the environmental groups before, but I took over all of those. So, all of the conservation groups, all of the environmental groups. And, while Darrell Cauley didn't report to me, Darrell was sort of my eyes and ears behind the scenes on that. But the purpose was that I would be mindful of the issues that were on their radar screen, that were important to these organizations, and what nexus it had to Reclamation where they were after a particular issue that they either wanted to see Reclamation conform to, or change to, or adopt, or what have you. So, we always kept our eyes and ears out on the N-G-O community and what ramifications it had.

Changes When Margaret Sibley Took over the Office upon Austin Burke's Retirement

And, that did stay pretty much consistent when Margaret took over as the Director of the Office.

“ . . . there was a whole other level of responsibility and that was that Wayne and I tracked my, took care of basically watching over her shoulder. . . . ”

It was just a matter that there was a whole other level of responsibility and that was that Wayne and I tracked my, took care of basically watching over her shoulder. (Storey: Um-hmm.) And, when she took on assignments herself we often divvied out, split between the two of us, our interface with the staff that were going to be helping her with this issue. And, frankly behind the scenes we managed all of that. So, we had our own internal tracking system of the office that we coordinated with her Executive Assistant on to do the best that we could to know what we were, what deadlines we had, what we were responsible for.

Storey: I can imagine it must have been very difficult for Wayne and Liz Harrison when she decided the job should be in Washington?

Bach: I have some recollection.

Storey: Or somebody (Laugh) (Bach: Yeah, I have . . .) decided?

Margaret Sibley Moved Her Office to Washington, D.C.

Bach: Right. Well, Margaret, Margaret had a desire to, I think Margaret was—well, let me finish—a desire to be in Washington, and I think that she had a personal need to be in Washington. But, I also think that she had concerns that with some of the further changes of the organization that it was a strategic decision. But, from a personal perspective, Margaret was having a very hard time with the passing of her father, and from a family perspective she needed more infrastructure support than her husband could provide. He was a, he was a remarkable person that worked for the State of Colorado, and it did get to a point where he really did have a full-time job and that was

Margaret's physical needs.

Storey: Yeah.

Bach: Yeah. And, I don't have full recollection that all that went on for Wayne and for Liz. I'm sure that will be captured in oral history from Liz and, you know, Wayne, (Storey: Um-hmm.) we have his finished. It was an interesting time for the Agency, because how many senior executives do you want and need in Washington versus here?

Storey: Yeah. Well, rather than start into your regional directorship, (Bach: All right.) why don't we stop now, and we can resume with a later interview. I'd like to ask you if you're willing for the information on these tapes and the resulting transcripts to be used by researchers inside and outside Reclamation?

Bach: Absolutely. Yes.

Storey: Great. Thank you.

Bach: Yes.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 3. OCTOBER 13, 2009.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 1. APRIL 26, 2011.

Storey: This is Brit Allan Storey, senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Maryanne Bach, retired from the Bureau of Reclamation, on April 26th, 2011, at her home in Evergreen, Colorado, at about 10:00 in the morning. This is tape 1.

So, why don't we talk about your going to Billings as the Assistant Regional Director? (Bach: Yeah.) You had been in, what was it, P-A-O,³¹ at that time for a while?

Bach: I do think they called themselves P-A-O at that time.

Storey: Program Analysis Office.

Becoming Assistant and Then Deputy Regional Director in Billings

Bach: Correct. And there was also a downsizing going on at the Federal Center for Reclamation, and I recall a few of the senior managers, including Neil [Stessman] encouraging me to consider the Assistant R-D position in Billings. Hadn't been considering moving at all. I had purchased this house when I first came here, and, goodness, it seems to me that it was no more than about nine months after I had left D.C., settled into Colorado, and then was the wave of activity at the Federal Center in terms of possible reductions in force, etcetera, and Neil also was wanting to have diversity in his selection pool in his consideration and felt that his Region was replete of Washington experience, and would I consider it? And so I did consider it. It did put my name in for the position. And, as it turned out, I was selected.

31. Program Analysis Office.

Storey: And this would have been when?

Bach: This would have been, it seems about 1994. I believe my timeframe in Billings, first the Assistant and then the title became Deputy, hmm, it seems to me it was 1994 to 1996. However, that may be worth checking because it may have been '96 to '98. Let's see. No, I believe it was '94 to '96. Then I came back to Denver from '96 to '98; went *back up* as Regional Director in '98 til some time around 2004, 2005. (Storey: Um-hmm.) Yes, so it was a two year timeframe that I was the Assistant and then the Deputy.

When I arrived in Billings, Dan Lauber [phonetic] was Deputy, and then he, within, perhaps, three to four months, took retirement, and at that time Dan Beard was working with Regional Directors for some uniformity or consistency in streamlining Regions and rather than there being either multiple Deputies or multiple Assistants there was a single, and my timeframe in the Deputy job was very focused on streamlining the Regional Office.

“There were quite a number of managers at the time—first line managers—and we experienced a compression of several of those positions. . . .”

There were quite a number of managers at the time—first line managers—and we experienced a compression of several of those positions. There was a Regional Leadership Board which the Regional Office managers used to serve on, and that was eliminated.

“ . . . focus was on . . . pushing the decisionmaking out to the Area Offices. So, it was a very trying time for many of those managers in the Regional Office . . . ”

They participated with the Area Managers, and, as you know, down here, the focus was on decisionmaking—pushing the decisionmaking out to the offices. So, it was a very trying time for many of those managers in the Regional Office, and I was really happy I had my psychology background. Not that I advertised it in any way, but goodness it was really challenging to help those in the field that were not accustomed to the deliberative type of decisionmaking that the Regional Office were very familiar with. Nor was it familiar or comfortable for the Regional Office managers who for so many years were accustomed to this process of decisionmaking to let up on it. That was very hard on them. And, you know, in the end, everybody wanted to do the best, but boy it did seem at times that *more* time—more of *my* time was spent on relationship-building—and-patching—and I feel that many of the Deputies at that time felt the same way. That there were plenty of decisions to be made, but we were in an educational or a tutorial role as well as a relationship-building and -rebuilding role.

“ . . . the hard decisions rose to the top, and the Regional Directors were smart enough to push it down and *in the middle* was this set of Deputies that often took on some of the smelliest of the issues that had to be attended to in the organization. . . . ”

And, perhaps I have mentioned before, that the Deputies formed their own

group. Everyone had their group. The Regional Directors had their group. The Regional Office managers had their group. The Area Managers had their group. And the Deputies decided that *we* were going to form *our* own group because there was this pattern of the, how shall I say it, the hard decisions rose to the top, and the Regional Directors were smart enough to push it down and *in the middle* was this set of Deputies that often took on some of the smelliest of the issues that had to be attended to in the organization.

The Middle Level Committee

So we called ourselves the Middle Level Committee—yeah, the Middle Level Committee. However, it was “Misery Loves Company.” That was really our code name. “Misery Loves Company.”

Looking at Grade Levels in the Regions and Area Offices

And we would pat each other on the back as we took on some of the stinkiest of the issues—not the least of which was the grade issue. What grade levels should the Area Managers be? And what to do about the grade levels of the Regional Office managers since their broad spectrum functions across the Region were being changed and this devolution out to the field. So we tiptoed through the mine field of grade level for our managers. And even the HR offices of the Regions and of Denver were just in shock and horror that the Deputies would dare step into this land mine. And, so we did. And that was an interesting time for the five of us, and we invited Wayne Deason into our group—who was the Deputy of the Policy Office down in Denver at the time.

Storey: And who else was there?

Bach: At the time it was Bob Johnson from Lower Colorado, and Rick Gold from Salt Lake City from the Upper Colorado Region, and it became Kirk Rodgers from the West Coast in Mid-Pacific but it did not start with him. It started with Frank Dimick. (Storey: Oh, Frank Dimick.) Yes, it started with Frank, and what a lovely person to be in the company of—had really just interesting ideas to provide. But he also, his term was short, and let’s see, I’m missing a person in our group. Bob, Lower, Upper. So, in P-N it was the gentleman who was Deputy with John Keys for some time, many, many years, however, he often did special projects. Didn’t always have quite the delegated authority that we did.

Storey: Uhh, you know, we didn’t put your microphone on. We need to put this on. Let me check and see what—you were just remembering Ken Pedde’s name, I think.

Bach: I was just remembering Ken Pedde. Yes. Ken Pedde from Pacific Northwest. So, yes, we deliberated on some really tough issues, *and* we also were collectively concerned about ramifications of a quick reorganization and a quick delegation of authority.

“. . . we began deliberating on how you bring up middle level managers when you’ve eliminated so many opportunities for people to move into smaller management opportunities. For instance, there were no longer any positions in

the Bureau where there was perhaps just five to eight staff that you oversaw. . . .”

So, we began deliberating on how you bring up middle level managers when you’ve eliminated so many opportunities for people to move into smaller management opportunities. For instance, there were no longer any positions in the Bureau where there was perhaps just five to eight staff that you oversaw. You went immediately into a much larger group. How do you build the skills in supervision? And also, how do you continue a level of coordination and consistency in the Bureau when there was such an encouragement for individual decisionmaking?

Technology Was Changing the Way Business Could Be Conducted

And in the years that followed, when I became Regional Director, as did several of these counterparts of mine, who were in the M-L-C . . . sure enough if we didn’t get confronted with the consequences of some of these situations. The internet became a *much* more active manner in which we heard from the public, and we would find a water user or an interest group that would discover such and such at Berryessa, and guess what, it wasn’t the same kind of recreation activities going on in, say, Canyon Ferry. Or they would be on a particular water policy that where there was permission to have a nuance in Lower Colorado, and, guess what, it wasn’t happening in the other four Regions. And so *I felt* that we had a really rich intellectual, honest set of discussions in the M-L-C that time turned out to demonstrate to all of us that the instincts were good around that table.

MLC Grew Close Because of the Nature of the Discussions

And, as a result we got to know each other at a very honest, deep level, and we did let our hair down on some of the more tender days in Reclamation at that time—when you move out quickly and you are keeping your hands on several pots as they’re all bubbling. Knowing at some point there’s going to be a geyser going off somewhere. (Storey: Um-hmm.). Very, very interesting days, and very rich for me because, at that time, I was the first female Deputy Regional Director, and then I became the first female Regional Director. And I could not have been more supported by my counterparts. They could chuckle at some of the circumstances that I ran into. And they really could appreciate that there was certainly no substance lost by having diversity at the table. In fact, perhaps, there was so much more to be gained. I really did [receive] quite a lot of support from all five of them, including Wayne. Very interesting time.

Storey: Good. So was there anything else going on in the Region that you were dealing with besides the reorganization?

Contract Renewal in Great Plains Region

Bach: Contract renewal began at that point, you know for Reclamation, particularly in the Great Plains Region, we did not have permanent water contracts as existed elsewhere in the Bureau. We did have contracts that expired after forty years—forty-, fifty years, depending upon if they had riders—extension provisions. And so *that* was the seed that

then became the growth that I dealt with as the Regional Director. But the seeds of concerns were sown at that time because Dan Beard had expressed very different concepts and provisions that he wanted to see in contract renewal. Much of it coming out of the C-V-P, thought Great Plains Region saw itself—its customers never saw itself to be compared with the C-V-P. However, that legislation—something that Dan had been very active in on The Hill became the framework and the baseline for his mental constructs in terms of policies that he wanted to see applied across the board. So I would put the contract renewal at the top of the page.

Title Transfer Became an Issue in the Great Plains Region

It wasn't 'til some years later that the title transfer—it was a few years later that title transfer then became an issue in the Region. And at that point I had been back down to Denver to the policy office to work with Austin, and then on my way back to Billings for the Regional Director position.

Storey: So the kinds of changes that Commissioner Beard wanted, what were they like?

Dan Beard's changes “. . . were very trying on our water customers and our power customers. More so the water because of contract renewal and the prospects that perhaps the Agency really didn't *want* contract renewal. . . .”

Bach: They were very trying on our water customers and our power customers. More so the water because of contract renewal and the prospects that perhaps the Agency really didn't *want* contract renewal. And then it was challenging internal. . . I would say on the one side it was challenging for Regional Office managers and staff, and perhaps somewhat a day of liberation for the Area Managers. Perhaps it was a . . . ounces of euphoria with quite a bit of ounces of concern because, you know, you did have to be responsible for the decisions that you made.

“If in fact you had a Regional Director that delegated, as Dan had requested, which it was a bit of a shell game, I think we all know that, not all the Regions quite delegated to the extent that others did, but, in Great Plains, Neil was very willing to delegate. . . .”

If in fact you had a Regional Director that delegated, as Dan had requested, which it was a bit of a shell game, I think we all know that, not all the Regions quite delegated to the extent that others did, but, in Great Plains, Neil was very willing to delegate. I saw . . . my own experience in working with Neil was, that having been a Project Manager himself, he had a great deal of confidence in the capacity of the Area Managers.

Neil “. . . knew that they would be drinking from a fire hose initially, but that it would position them in a very different place, a much stronger place, within their states and locally . . .”

He knew that they would be drinking from a fire hose initially, but that it would position them in a very different place, a much stronger place, within their states and

locally—and that he had often had experienced the challenge of having to explain decisions when he was a Project Manager—having not always been at the table for those decisions.

Enjoyed the Give and Take of Discussions Leading to Decisionmaking

Liked Using Technology for Conference Calls

What I found it exciting and invigorating was that we made great use of technology and so our conference call mechanisms were utilized for decisionmaking . . . and so, I love debates, and I love discussions, and I love putting one position on the table and hearing another and I do encourage the fiery challenge of thoughts and options so . . . it didn't leave me timid in any regard. I was right there in the fire, and I was given the opportunity by Neil to be the person that brought all the perspectives together, and had the deliberation and the arguments and I certainly didn't take anything personal, but I learned over time that there were some personal feelings amongst some of my Regional Office managers who didn't feel quite as respected with Area Office teams or with their managers. *But*, for me, it was really juicy and vibrant and . . . it was what good government policy is all about from my perspective. So, I was *quite* intent to assure that anyone who had value added to a decisionmaking was at the table. And at the table was the virtual table because it was the conference lines that we used. And there was a period of time when we had some cost-benefit in using the video equipment so that you could do teleconferencing with video, but for the most part we kept the phone and we all knew each other well enough that I could always sense and read when somebody was going red and when they were flush and their face or their fists were . . . and, to me, it was . . . if I could feel the fists coming up, I knew we were getting to the key aspect of a decisionmaking. We were really hitting the nerve, and that's what I felt was my responsibility was to make sure that we had thoroughly aired as much as we could.

Sometimes our decisions had to be fast, and we had to air it fast, but I feel that everyone had to learn how to speak up and how to speak their mind and that if a decision was incomplete or they felt that it was faulty then we all took responsibility for it because if you have the expertise and you didn't open your mouth you were responsible for it not getting aired. And it really turned out to be valuable because we could—we had enough perspectives in that Region that we did a pretty good job of anticipating what a water user or an environmental group or a private citizen or the fishermen's organization—we could pretty well anticipate going into the E-I-Ses for the contract renewals—we could pretty much anticipate where we were going to get hit.

“. . . we understood that we had some people on our staff that had the same perspectives as the water users, and then our attorneys had a very different perspective on the way you looked at the question. . . .”

And so we understood that we had some people on our staff that had the same perspectives as the water users, and then our attorneys had a *very* different perspective on the way you looked at the question. And it was really a lot of fun. Very fun.

Storey: Speaking of the attorneys, the Solicitors, (Bach: Yeah. Yeah.) did you ever have any situations where you disagreed with them. (Bach: Absolutely.) How did you deal with that.

Relationships with Attorneys and Solicitors

Bach: Variety of ways. There were times on Indian water right negotiations that I found it extremely *awkward* that the Regional Field Solicitor was the head of that team, and was appointed such by the Department, and, therefore, that person had certain goals that were—it wasn't that they were *just* Department goals because they were really goals that were set by the Bureau of Indian Affairs [BIA] and there really in the process—there was a Indian Water Rights Office in the Department, and so that that office did play.

“ . . . there were times when I was really concerned that I was getting a less than complete legal perspective on the Indian water rights settlement process. And there were times when, given the authority that that person felt that they had . . . that I felt those negotiations were being at too junior a level in the Region because promises were being made of our facilities that I just didn't know how I was going to negotiate those with the water users. . . . ”

But, there were times when I was really concerned that I was getting a less than complete legal perspective on the Indian water rights settlement process. And there were times when, given the authority that that person felt that they had, and in this case it was Rich Aldrich,³² so there were cases where Rich felt that he *was* given so much authority at the table that *I* felt those negotiations were being at too junior a level in the Region because promises were being made of our facilities that I just didn't know how I was going to negotiate those with the water users. So, that was one example when it was really awkward. And in that case, I did go back to the Department and have discussions with the Solicitor's Office about it—as to how to approach my relationship with my Field Solicitor in that particular context. But then to the extent that I felt it bled into other decisions.

The other circumstance that I ran into more frequently than not, particularly under Dan Beard's time as Commissioner—and then it also did occur when Dan left, same Administration, but then we had Eluid [Martinez], and I think Eluid and were both experiencing it—so this would bring me to when I was back as Regional Director. So the dynamic occurred at both positions. When the Field Solicitor and the Washington Solicitor. The Washington, not the Solicitor himself, but rather the Division of Water and Power, *very* different perspectives, and boy if I, as the senior decisionmaker in the Region, wasn't checking with both of those office, I could be in a pickle. And so there were times when all of us as Deputy R-Ds or as Regional R-Ds were having to perform that same process of consensus building within the Solicitor Office. Because there was a point in the history of the Solicitor's Office when some of the *most* experienced Solicitors took transfers out to the field, and the people backfilled in their positions were on the learning curve, and it was *very* challenging to tell a Chris

32. The son of Harold E. Aldrich, the Bureau of Reclamation's Regional Director in Billings in the period 1964 to 1973. An oral history interview with Harold Aldrich is included in Reclamation's oral history collection.

Rich that you are *wrong* on your position when he had conducted an awful lot of analysis of Reclamation law, and he's being told that by someone who has far less experience than him in the Washington office and so, you know, there was this dance sometimes.

I eventually, I believe, with Barbara [J. Smith] Geigle—eventually what I saw was that she would employ the Deputy Solicitor to conduct the same kind of process that we as Regional Directors did. I think a number of us Regional Directors gave hints to Barbara as to how to overcome this situation. And it wasn't always a matter of differential experience. In some cases it was that the Washington Solicitors, the staff themselves, were hearing definite policy directions from outside the Bureau and they were being held to the fire, their feet to the fire, to align the legal decisionmaking with it. So that was interesting.

“ . . . everyone loves to dabble in policy. . . . there were times when we had to *point out* to the Solicitor's Office what was policy and what was not policy. So when you have Your Solicitor's Office staffing the negotiating teams for water rights, they're not always dealing in legal matters. So you've just given them a ticket on the policy train . . . ”

The other times when it became an interesting matter—everyone loves to dabble in policy. Everyone likes to get their fingers into policy, by the way, that's an observation that I have to make about the whole decisionmaking process. And there were times when we had to *point out* to the Solicitor's Office what was policy and what was not policy. So when you have Your Solicitor's Office staffing the negotiating teams for water rights, they're not always dealing in legal matters. So you've just given them a ticket on the policy train, and there were some surprises along the way.

Storey: Any of those you can talk about?

“ . . . I found it particularly delicate was in Montana with the tribal water rights in which we were to allocate a section of the reservoir strictly for the Native Americans to hold and yet we had state water rights at those reservoirs. . . . The other *fortunate* situation was that those reservoirs *were not* fully utilized because Montana was under-developed, so to speak—that it had a small population. . . . ”

Bach: Some of the specifics are not as clear as some of the generalities. Where I found it particularly delicate was in Montana with the tribal water rights in which we were to allocate a section of the reservoir strictly for the Native Americans to hold and yet we had state water rights at those reservoirs. Now it wasn't—on the positive side one could understand a sense of *equity* that these are the tribes that were *most* dislocated for the construction of reservoirs on-the-Missouri, off-the-Missouri, so there is that whole history of whether . . . whole history of the relationship of the displacement of Native Americans and where homesteading was permitted and then eventually where Reclamation placed its reservoirs. The other *fortunate* situation was that those reservoirs *were not* fully utilized because Montana was under-developed, so to speak—that it had a small population. But, policy-wise and conceptualize it was not always a case where we had an opportunity to converse and consult with enough of the

state representatives and the power community. In fact, the power community, by far, were the ones most left out of the conversation. And, if one knows the revenue stream in Reclamation, but for the power generation, the Agency would be funded by the taxpayers—not the water users [who] aren't paying anywhere near the amount of power. So it was more that, from the Indian water rights team . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. APRIL 26, 2011.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. APRIL 26, 2011.

Issues in Indian Water Rights Negotiations

So from the Indian water rights negotiation team perspective, particularly the chair, *they* felt that the consultation was going on because they had a representative from the state at the table. That didn't quite meet the standard that I feel the Region felt it owed all the parties, and included in that Native Americans to be sure that there weren't repercussions within the state for things that were decided at that table. I mean, certainly there needed to be a resolution of inequities by all means. It's a matter of how complete was that process.

“. . . it's the Indian water rights settlements that I felt were the *most* challenging to keep up with. . . .”

So it became a bit of a parallel organization that existed in the presence of each of the Agencies, and with all of the work that was going on, the Region with all of the very serious water and power issues that we were dealing with—it's the Indian water rights settlements that I felt were the *most* challenging to keep up with. And granted, we had a position in our Region that was the representative for the Indian water rights negotiations, but we had *so many* going on at one time in a Region as large as the Great Plains Region, that it was hard—I believe it was hard and challenging across the board if you were to ask Chris Kinney, who was the Native American representative, the key senior staff person in the Washington office—I know he felt he never got enough air time within the Bureau. And we were just pulled in all different directions that was perhaps not the healthiest situation . . .

Storey: And Chris was SES, I believe.

Bach: Chris was a [GS-] 15. When he was detailed to the Department Indian Water Rights Office, I believe he was also a 15. Maybe he may have spent some time in an SES position in the Department. That I don't recall. That's a question mark for me . . .

Storey: And who was before him?

Bach: Before him in Indian Water Rights (Storey: In the Indian office.) you know I was of the impression . . .

Storey: I want to say Joe something.

Bach: Well, Joe Oglander was in the Solicitor's Office and heavily involved.

Storey: No, this guy was Reclamation.

Bach: Let me see if that comes back to me as we go on. But my—right now it’s not . . .

Storey: I’m recalling he was married to an Indian.

Bach: Miller.

Storey: Joe Miller. I got half of it anyway.

Bach: Yes. Miller. He was an SES position. Miller was SES, as I recall.

Storey: Oh, so Miller was and Chris wasn’t. (Bach: Chris was not.) So that’s when it changed was when Miller retired. What were the other Bureaus that were involved.

Bach: Other than B-I-A and Reclamation we would have had, likely, Fish and Wildlife Service, because of course they had an interest in any changes of water allocations of the reservoirs. And also the ramifications of wildlife and the natural habitat. From time to time, depending on the location of where the reservation was and the surrounding lands you may have had [National] Park Service. there was liaison with Indian Health Service in USDA, but they were not, as I recall, part of the team. They certainly were not part of the interior team. And then also there was customarily a representative from the Department Policy Office, and that would have been just a few staff that did know Native American issues quite well. The Policy Office of the Department—so that would have been under P-M-B [policy, management, and budget]. They did maintain a position on all of these teams. They couldn’t always keep up with them, and that was a real challenge, but they also were quite instrumental in a number of policies that affected . . .

Storey: So were most of these water rights settlements in the north of the Great Plains Region?

“ . . . what became a part of them was the commitment to build Indian water Projects, and another delicate topic there was that we were talking about *hundreds* of millions of dollars for these water Projects when the water *need* of the reservation, even twenty to thirty years out, could have been met with more local systems. But it became a way to address the size—the amount of money that the attorneys for the Indian tribes *felt* represented the loss of opportunity or of resources over time . . . ”

Bach: The ones that were *active* in Great Plains were in the north, yes. And also what became a part of them was the commitment to build Indian water Projects, and another delicate topic there was that we were talking about ~~hundreds of thousands, I mean,~~ *hundreds* of millions of dollars for these water Projects when the water *need* of the reservation, even twenty to thirty years out, could have been met with more local systems. But it became a way to address the size—the amount of money that the attorneys for the Indian tribes *felt* represented the loss of opportunity or of resources over time, and if you attributed a part of that loss—so say the estimate was a billion dollars, and in some cases this is really difficult to put a—you’re getting into a whole new field—you’re getting into a

whole other field of economics.

It's the intrinsic value. How do you attribute an intrinsic value to something in nature with a dollar symbol. It doesn't equate. But in the effort to do that—and how do you put a dollar figure on the removal of a way of life from a group of people. I mean that's the gut-wrenching part of these settlements. In an effort to do that, though, if something was considered to be in the order of a billion dollar loss, and you proposed a \$450 million dollar Indian water Project, my own sense was that there was a mentality that that type of a package perhaps was more acceptable in the political process.

I have to say, myself, I always wondered how it was for some of the elders of these tribes because I think the elders are the ones that struggled with it the most. That's almost selling out to the system that exists now. So, what you did is you presented back to the Native American a system which was the same system that destroyed their way of living. That was a real *ethical* dilemma for me. Particularly *when* it didn't even meet their long-term needs. It did set them up in years to come to be the administrators of a system similar to how Reclamation has to administer systems in terms of allocation out of a reservoir. It just seemed an interesting misfit—to me.

Storey: Now are we talking about the rural water supply Projects like Mni Wiconi and . . . we talking about something else?

“ . . . each of these Indian water rights Projects are amalgamations of large distribution systems out of some kind of a reservoir. . . . ”

Bach: We're talking, I would say that the Mni Wiconi, all of these would fit into that. They're all—each of these Indian water rights Projects are amalgamations of large distribution systems out of some kind of a reservoir. So they're essentially copycats of the original Reclamation. (Storey: Um-hmm.) And in some cases we used, not reservoir water, but it was municipal supplies so in some cases we actually passed in the Congress legislation that essentially, without acknowledging it, it abandoned an existing reservoir to put in a distribution system using municipal water. It was really a—it was something that over time I did have a lot more internal debates and deliberations than I felt we ever *could* have around the table as a Department. And it took a bit for me to affirm my perspective on all of it. It just seemed like a very strange set of bedfellow ideas, so to speak.

“ . . . once Mni Wiconi went through then it became the bandwagon—everybody was on it. . . . ”

But to get the *traction* for the discussion—see, once the first, once Mni Wiconi went through then it became the bandwagon—everybody was on it. And me being, I think I would attribute it to some of my Hill experience, the cross-examining of ideas—me being the person that I was in that Deputy job and then the Regional Director job, I couldn't help but ask these questions. I mean, “Let me make sure I understand this. Are we, *in fact*, approving a \$450 million dollar Project in the same vicinity as an existing reservoir and what we're asking is the non-Native American community to participate in this distribution system? Aren't these the same users of this particular

reservoir? What am I missing here? What am I missing here? So we're never going to get payback on this particular—we're never going to *have* the Federal treasury compensated for the funds that were borrowed to build this reservoir. We're never going to have a return to the Reclamation Fund because now we've jumped onto this other proposal." From a policy perspective it seemed—I can understand the political arguments that were made; I understand the blanket that it was wrapped in and the flowers that were added to it for the delivery in the political system to get the votes for it; but I have to say that, to this day, it's troubled me that we essentially came up with this construct to—rather than to have the discussion that it was really a billion dollar damage caused by the actions of the Federal government to a tribe, that what we sold them was a measure that was one of the same aspects that destroyed their culture. Just my view.

Storey: Now, my understanding of those Projects was that they were approved, they were authorized, but they were never appropriated. Reclamation basically had to pull the money out of their budget.

The Indian water settlements in the north Great Plains were never appropriated, and that required reclamation find the money within the existing budget, and "That was a very deliberate action on Dan's part. . . ."

Bach: Correct. There was only on a—it was really a shuffling of the pie within Reclamation. But I do believe that Dan intended that. That was a very deliberate action on Dan's part.

Storey: On Dan *Beard's* part.

". . . I believe that Dan and Ed [Osann] very much intended that the resources within Reclamation be redistributed to a community other than the water and power users. So that those *other* communities affected by the actions of water and power activities were receiving some kind of compensation. . . ."

Bach: Absolutely. Absolutely. That was Dan's perspective from The Hill when he was present. I think if you were to, perhaps, either go to his oral history or to go back and ask specific questions to Dan, I believe that Dan and Ed [Osann] very much intended that the resources within Reclamation be redistributed to a community other than the water and *power* users. So that those *other* communities affected by the actions of water and power activities were receiving some kind of compensation.

". . . within Reclamation was a degree of competitiveness, if not hostility, towards Great Plains because money would be taken and redistributed within the total pot, and some of the Regions felt that it should always come from Great Plains. Let Great Plains eat it all . . ."

So what it resulted in within Reclamation was a degree of competitiveness, if not hostility, towards Great Plains because money would be taken and redistributed within the total pot, and some of the Regions felt that it should always come from Great Plains. Let Great Plains eat it all up. But these were Projects that were authorized as a

result, often times, of Indian water rights settlements. So the settlement would go forward, but the settlement didn't have the full authorization of the Project. Then what would come in the implementation of the settlement would be legislation for the water Project itself. So, in a sense, it was rarely ever new money, and, you know, it can be debated and argued that well why shouldn't the same that contributed to the loss of culture and the tradition of these Native Americans—why shouldn't they be a major contributor. And on the other hand you have decisions that were driven from the more senior parts of the government beyond a particular Bureau. And where is there a honest assignment of commitment to obligations. So, it was a bit of passing the hot potato. (Storey: Um-hmm.)

“ . . . you get the settlement through, and there is this general feeling of conclusion to a very painful part of history, but then where the rubber *really* meets the road is when you have to implement. . . . ”

So you get the settlement through, and there is this general feeling of conclusion to a very painful part of history, but then where the rubber *really* meets the road is when you have to implement. So . . .

Storey: And so when they tossed the hot potato to Reclamation, to the Region, what kinds of issues did that cause?

Finding the Money to Implement Title Transfer and Indian Water Rights Projects

Bach: Oh, my goodness, really gut-wrenching issues. Where do you even come up with the money to negotiate title transfer? Where do you even come up with the money to negotiate water service contracts? Where do you come up with the money for the E-I-S that has to be done for the Indian water rights water Project that's being proposed? And *how* do you *not* look like you're a double crosser when you're in front of the tribe who has already been at a table that had a Secretarial appointment being the Indian water right negotiator?

Indian Water Rights Projects Were Much More Extensive than Necessary to Provide Quality Water

How do you come in *after* the fact and look at the engineering and say, why are we doing this Project when if our *real* goal is to assure that the reservations have quality water? That's a knowable goal. But why are you doing it with a—say, a 747 when it may take a bicycle or an Airbus?

Storey: And there was no way to get that information back . . .

“ . . . if you came in with a logical question that would have questioned a commitment made, you were sure putting a rope around your neck. . . . ”

Bach: There was such a fanfare—and beyond a fanfare. There was such a presence and assurance from the Secretary of the Interior to the tribal council or the Secretary's representative who was two doors down from him, of the genuineness of the

commitment, that if you came in with a logical question that would have questioned a commitment made, you were sure putting a rope around your neck. (Storey: Um-hmm.)

“I do recall a specific instance with a tribe in Montana where they were so adamant that the reservoir was going to have a dam constructed a particular way . . . and we had such *grave* concerns about their consultant that we . . . discussed . . . what engineer has the credibility and the personality to go up against a tribal construction company. . . .”

And *so it* was your *job* to make it work. I do recall a specific instance with a tribe in Montana where they were so adamant that the reservoir was going to have a dam constructed a particular way, and they were allowed to hire their own consultant, and we had such *grave* concerns about their consultant that we went to the state, had the discussion, we knew the dam would fail, and I pulled, and I remember we discussed who has the personality within the Bureau, it can be anybody, what engineer has the credibility and the personality to go up against a tribal construction company.

Perry Hensley

In this case it could be as white, as Caucasian a construction company, but because under 638, public law 98-638 the tribe was able to hire that construction company to oversee, and we had to step back. And I believe that this was more than Cheyenne. I believe this was the Northern Cheyenne, and we picked Perry Hensley, and Perry Hensley is, perhaps, in the top five of the most brilliant engineers in Reclamation. And we just had to brief him as to our circumstances and send him off and just trust that if anyone was going to demonstrate to that reservation why they couldn't possibly go with the construction of the dam that way and what would be the consequences.

And you know Perry pulled—Perry did it. Perry is a exceedingly bright individual that has *no* pretenses whatsoever, and he is a very respectful individual of the tribe of their elders, etc. But we had to sit back in Billings and man him with the technical analysis. He did his own, on top of ours. He peer reviewed ours, and he went in there, and thank God for it because we would have had a massive failure at the time that reservoir was filled. There was no way that that reservoir was going to make it. But, you know, it *took* befriending the manager, it was an individual, I can see him quite vividly, and his name is not going to come to mind, and perhaps there's a beauty in that. He had a jaded attitude towards the Bureau because he had been through the Indian water right process, the settlement process, and became so attached to every word and also, understandable, very thrilled with his opportunity under 98-638 to conduct the technical report. But these reports were nowhere near the quality of what Reclamation was accustomed to dealing with.

Quality of Reports on the Indian Water Rights Construction Projects

So when we would have these construction reports come in, that was another really challenging part. We would just find that they didn't have anywhere *near* the

quality of engineering for building these Projects, but under 98-638—forget it! We didn't have a role. We could comment, and yet our Assistant Secretary and the Department had to sign off on these reports. You know, it was just not a pretty picture any time these reports came through. And, understandably, the tribes were always very *anxious* to get it through because once it sat up in Congress then we could begin funding the Project. It was a very delicate balance of wanting to provide *quality*-added so the approach that we took was that we did dedicate some people on our staff that we made readily available to interact with those that were writing the reports—either a consultant for the tribe or a tribal member and just very fluidly providing as much input as possible. And it was all arbitrary. It was optional whether they took it or not, but to try to begin to improve these *reports*—I remember that being hardly a cakewalk at the time I was Deputy and Regional Director. Maybe you have some other questions?

Storey: And you had more than one of these Projects? There's Mid-Dakota . . .

Bach: Goodness. There is Mni Wiconi, Mid-Dakota, (Storey: I want to say Tri-State, but I'm not sure that's right . . .) Tri-State seems to me there was a smaller one. There were, in the time that I was reg . . . there was Rocky Boy, there was Northern Cheyenne. At *one* point I believe the number, various stages, but the number was upwards of eight in Great Plains Region.

Storey: Well, one of the things that happened was the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, am I right.

Lewis and Clark Bicentennial

Bach: Yes. Bicentennial. Fascinating time. Really, really fun. (Storey: Was that when you were Regional Director, though?) I believe that that was while I was Regional Director.

Storey: That would have been 2002, -3, and -4.

Bach: Yes. And we had a staff person in our Montana Area Office and one of our field locations that was very, very involved in that celebration, and part of a local community of recreationists. They carved the canoes out of the local trees, and they tanned their hides, and they dressed to perfection as Lewis and Clark would have and the whole team of explorers. So it was really a fun, fun time. Really a fun time. I got to meet the author. I got to meet [Stephen Ambrose (1936-2002)]—he's deceased now. In fact, I don't think that he made it to the end of the [Lewis and Clark] Bicentennial, but he authored—well, he's written a number of historical . . . It's creative historical. It's not a true historical account—there's some interpretations that he lent to it, but he was very heavily involved in the designation of the year of the Lewis and Clark celebration. He wrote *Hawaii*. He wrote (Storey: [James] Michener?) . . . Let me let that stir because it will come forward. John Keys and I went to the Library of Congress and met him and his family. And John had canoed a number of tributaries. Had a fascinating conversation with him.

Storey: Um-hmm. When you were Deputy, any other major issues that came up. Of course reorganization you were back two years that would have kept you busy I imagine.

Bach: Heavily reorganization. The streamlining. The beginnings of contract renewal. The hint of title transfer. So it was the beginning of title transfer. And, yes there were many others, but those really do come to the surface as the hottest ones.

Storey: OK. And then you came back to Denver. How did all this happen?

Moving to Denver to Work with Austin Burke

Bach: I caught wind that the Director at the time was going to be—it was Austin Burke, and he was signaling that he wouldn't be around for a long time. He had been stationed in D.C. for a *very*, very long time and had tried very hard to be transferred back out to Denver, and he had family out here, and he had gone through a divorce, and he was anxious to get back to where his children were, and Austin was one to take on *quite* a bit of gnarly challenges for Reclamation. And so when he settled into the Director of Policy, it was a position that he had long wanted to be in, and he had a wealth of experience and knowledge. And I wanted to tap into that before he retired. So, much to Neil's dismay, I approached him *and* Austin, and Austin was happy to accommodate. Neil and I weren't hitting a stride at that point, and from his perspective I would have gotten an exposure to a number of the policy issues had I stayed in the Deputy position. What . . .

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1, APRIL 26, 2011.

BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. APRIL 26, 2011.

Storey: This is tape two of an interview by Brit Storey with Maryanne Bach on April 26th, 2011.

Views on Decisionmaking

Bach: . . . to Neil was the manner in which I look at decisionmaking. If you were to look at my career you would see that I wrote legislation, I viewed Agencies entire budgets when I was on Capitol Hill, I came into the Department Policy Office, I'm an ecologist by training so an ecologist *looks* for that big landscape, and it's within that landscape that you put the details of the picture. And my grounding in decisionmaking comes from the grounding in policy. So, rather than being exposed to—because I was not raised in Reclamation—it *was not* that specific policy that I was in—I was in the Department Policy Office, and even in my time in the White House Science Office I was in the Office of Science and Technology *Policy*. I mean, you'll see policy coming up in many places that I had been. So that, coupled with being an ecologist and a psychologist, one sees things from a *broader basis* as opposed to a decision comes up that involves a couple of policies and then you move on to the same decision.

“ . . . I just knew that my footing would be firmer if I were to spend time specifically with Austin who really got it. . . . ”

So, for *me*, I just knew that my footing would be firmer if I were to spend time specifically with Austin who really got it. He really understood what I was describing. He knew what I was describing. He knew what I indicated that I needed, and he felt

that we could accomplish it in the timeframe that he was going to be there. And he wasn't yet signaling how long that was going to be, but I had the same feeling that it was give or take a year. And at that point, once I had it, I'd be comfortable to consider other positions. So that's what I did. I went down to Denver and, at the time, it was Wayne Deason as his Deputy and I did take on the title of Assistant Director of Policy.

“ . . . I got to see the world of Reclamation from across all five Regions as I was accustomed to seeing it when I was at the Department or at the White House Science Office. . . . ”

And Wayne and Austin and I had a great time. Really, really a vibrant time, and I got to see the world of Reclamation from across all five Regions as I was accustomed to seeing it when I was at the Department or at the White House Science Office. So you see it across all of the Agencies and the White House Science Office. In the Department of the Interior you see it across all of the Bureaus, and Department of the Interior is a microcosm because of how truly diverse its Bureaus missions are. It was a mini-cabinet for me. And when I was in the White House Science Office I sat through many a cabinet meeting and so I just have that love of the various perspectives from which an issue can be viewed.

Applied for a Regional Director's Position

And the time was no more than two years in the policy office, and then at the time Eluid was the Commissioner and I was asked if I would consider putting in for the Regional Director position. And at the time one of the early people that approached me, there were several, but one of them was John Keys. And he was signaling that he was going to be leaving, and so, he said “I would really appreciate it if you would consider—it would be lovely if you were my successor in Boise.” And at the time I put my name in, it really wasn't going to be clear whether it was Boise or Billings. And then just timing it turned out that it was Billings.

Storey: So you, in the meantime, had taken SES training.

“I had been an SES in the Department and in the White House Science Office. So I had time on the clock as a senior executive, but as a non-career—not as a career. . . . ten of us that went through the Bureau SES training program. . . . ”

Bach: I had been an SES in the Department and in the White House Science Office. So I had time on the clock as a senior executive, but as a non-career—not as a career. I did not go through the Department SES training. I did go through one of the classes that Margaret [Sibley] organized for the Bureau. There were ten of us that went through the Bureau SES training program. At the completion of that, however, you did not receive a certificate that permitted you to be lateraled in. You did have to compete. So I both had time on the clock, and I had the SES training. Which, our SES training mirrored the Department.

“ . . . the Bureau leadership was concerned that we were having so much turnover that it wanted to expedite that training program . . . It wanted to expand its pool

because . . . the leadership team was believing that . . . they could have a massive, massive exodus and the Bureau did not receive many slots in the Department SES training program. . . .”

It’s a matter that the Bureau leadership was concerned that we were having so much turnover that it wanted to expedite that training program regardless that it required competition at the completion of it. It wanted to expand its pool because it was believing, the leadership team was believing that it was *evident* from the statistics and from the quiet indications around the leadership table that they could have a massive, massive exodus and the Bureau did not receive many slots in the Department SES training program. For an SES training program to permit a lateral in of a position, it has to be OPM-approved, and *that* is the only distinction that the Bureau had. It was not an OPM-approved program the Department didn’t allow the Bureaus to receive OPM approval of their own programs—but didn’t mind if we wanted to do analogous training. So we did analogous training.

Storey: So this was before you became Assistant and Deputy Regional Director up in Billings that you took that?

Bach: I . . . think I took that when I was Deputy [Regional Director]. I think I did that program—Margaret organized it, and she would have been head of HR [human resources] at the time, and I seem to think that I did it at the same time that . . . I either did it when I was Deputy or I did it when I was an Assistant in the Policy Office. And in the group comes to mind who they were, if you’d like to, I think I can pretty well go through their names. (Storey: Sure.) So let’s see, there were ten of us. There was Maryanne Bach, Sandy Simons, Fred Orr, Larry Todd, Mike Roluti, Rick Gold, Kirk Rodgers, Bob Wolf, I *think* Bob Wolf was in that class, that’s a question mark for me, Kathleen Wheeler, who was Bob Wolfe’s Deputy in the budget office, (Storey: Um-hmm. I did a little three week assignment with her one time for GPRA.³³) and so now I’m down to . . .

Storey: So these were all Reclamation people?

Bach: Yes. It was a Reclamation SES program, and it had each of the corollary training pieces that were in the Department SES program that was approved by OPM. What it did not have was the O-P-M certificate at the completion.

Storey: And what kinds of things did you do in the training program?

The SES Training Program

Bach: We attended a two-week course in D.C. that was run by trainers of the Department SES program. They were part of the USDA college. There was the school that USDA ran—had a particular name, but one of the Departments was the OPM training. So we had time with Members of Congress, which I had had plenty of time with when I was on The Hill. But we had some time observing the process with Members of Congress. We had many mock-up sessions of where we role played different cabinet positions in

33. Government Performance and Results Act.

the government. We had formal classroom training on what the four criteria were for having the expertise of an SESer. And so what did it mean to build consensus, what did it mean to look comprehensively at decisionmaking. There were two other criteria that they're not coming to my mind right now. We had assignments in other locations. We were asked to find locations out of our own geographic areas.

Served as Acting Deputy Regional Director in Mid- Pacific Region

So, for *me*, I went to the Mid-Pacific Region, and so I think *you* are accurate that I did this *before* I was the Deputy Regional Director because I had time with Roger Patterson when he was the Regional Director in Mid-Pacific. I went out to serve as the Acting Deputy Regional Director in M-P Region, and I had perhaps a month in that—believe that was a month assignment. (Storey: Um-hmm.)

John F. Kennedy School of Government Senior Executive Program and Other Training Programs

Now *some* people went to Harvard for the John F. Kennedy School of Government senior executive program. And I was fortunate enough to *have had* that opportunity to have done that before. That is a summer program. I think that's a six week program. And there you are assigned three 4-inch binders of very involved policy decisionmaking. You might say in contemporary—I'll give a contemporary example—I still have all of these binders downstairs because the policy write-ups they might be in the order of thirty to forty-five pages apiece, but they are exquisitely written. They are just beautiful pieces. And we would have the individuals, whether they were at the U-N or in the Federal Government of the United States or from the Defense Department, or the National Security Council, we would have those individuals *at* our class at Harvard. It was a *fantastic* program. And I always saved those books because I thought it was such a great example being a policy lover that I was, policy formulation lover, I thought it was such an amazing example of how you would lay out the issue, lay out the decisions to be made, lay out those to be affected, lay out the ramifications of the various perspectives on that decisionmaking, and we would debate those in class. So there were members of *my* Reclamation SES training group that did have a chance to attend Harvard, or Carnegie-Mellon, or there was the F-E-I, the Federal Executive Institute, which was any one of those assignments, and there are a few other institutions that do that type of intense training, it's a residential program where you are with people, preferably that you do not know, have never known, and in many cases you are with people internationally also. They come to our institutions for senior executive training. So those are examples of some of the aspects of the training.

Storey: Good. So, am I understanding that you applied for the Regional Director's job in both Boise and Billings?

“ . . . my application was ready, and the position that opened up first turned out to be Billings. . . . Neil made the move first, before John [Keys] announced his retirement. . . . ”

Bach: The way that it occurred is my application was ready, and the position that opened up

first turned out to be Billings. I believe it was that Neil made the move first, before John announced his retirement. (Storey: He came down to Denver.) I believe that he came down to Denver and the position opened. I believe that the—must have been that Felix [Cook]³⁴ retired. It would have been—Neil stepped into, didn't Neil step into a position that oversaw the Technical Service Center *and* some of the administrative functions.

Storey: I don't remember whether he took Jim Malila's job or whether he took Felix's job.

Bach: You know, perhaps he took Malila's position. Hmm, I recall where his office was. However, nevertheless, John [Keys] had been contemplating leaving earlier than he did. It seems to me that there was an evolution in the salmon issue in the Pacific Northwest and John was asked to stay on longer, and he did. And, therefore, they did not post the Boise job, but when John approached me as did Carmen [Maymi], Neil, a few others, John was of the understanding that he was going to be leaving sooner. When I put in for Billings it seemed to me not too much longer after that Boise opened up. My preference was for Billings. It worked out well for me. My preference was for Billings. (Storey: Really.) Yes.

Storey: OK, let me play devil's advocate here. I would think Billings would be the most difficult of all the Regions. It's spread from border to border. The Regional Office is in an inconvenient location in relation to *most* of the Region—*much* of the Region, (Bach: Correct.) Boise is more compact, it has some of the grander Projects like Minidoka and Columbia Basin Project. Tell me why you preferred Billings.

“ . . . my second assignment in my SES training program. I also spent time in the Pacific Northwest, and it convinced me that I would bless the person that would take that job when John moved out of it. . . . attended . . . meeting of the salmon task force . . . / felt that I could make more of a difference in that job than I could make a difference in P-N. . . . and I concluded that they were *not* psychologically ready for a strong woman to step into P-N Region. It was the community, the state, there were some very strong religious perspectives that could not handle a woman stepping in . . . ”

Bach: So then I'm recalling my second assignment in my SES training program. I also spent time in the Pacific Northwest, and it convinced me that I would bless the person that would take that job when John moved out of it. Because I attended, with John, the meeting of the salmon task force, and as much as an ecological, broad geological issue, broad geographic issue would intrigue me, I was not seeing enough of a breakthrough in commitment to move forward. It was a really hostile time, and there were a few other issues that John and I talked about that were percolating that I thought, “You know, yes, Billings is the—the G-P Regional Director job is an enormous job—more enormous than individuals sitting in other R-D positions ever imagined. You described it very well in terms of challenges. I'd had a pretty darn good footing in there for the two years that I was Deputy Regional Director, and *I* felt that I could make more of a difference in that job than I could make a difference in P-N. The other factor, quite frankly, is I did not consider myself a Joan of Arc, and I watched a few women step

34. Oral history interviews with Felix Cook are included in Reclamation's collection.

into the Regional Director positions in P-N Region, particularly the woman who stepped into the B-L-M position in Idaho, and I concluded that they *were not* psychologically ready for a strong woman to step into P-N Region. It was the community, the state, there were some very strong religious perspectives that could not handle a woman stepping in, and they ate alive the woman who went into the State Director position for Idaho. And I had lengthy conversations, I can remember consulting with women in the Department—Betsy Rieke, Patty Beneke, on a very frank discussion of, you know, “I am not a Joan of Arc, and I am not going to spend my time addressing or being the target for institutional challenges that the state of Idaho is having.” I wouldn’t say Oregon would have been a problem—or Washington. But I concluded that they were going to really for the—if your interest is in good decisionmaking and to provide leadership, what you don’t want to be providing yourself as a target for institutional or religious beliefs or psychological constraints with the role of women. It wasn’t worth my time. (Storey: Interesting.) Maybe if I was in my 20s and 30s when I was willing to fight those kind of battles, but I was interested in substance and progress and alliances and there were some challenging issues albeit and some harsh feelings in Great Plains Region. Lot of mistrust for the Bureau because they were a more traditional customer base, perhaps. But I felt that I had—my skills could be put to better use there. And they’re very down to earth people, and I could relate to them better. I didn’t want to be *posturing*. I wanted to be beyond *posturing*, and I saw a lot of posturing going on with some of the hottest issues that were going to require the Pacific Northwest Regional Director to be involved in. And so it worked out perfectly for me.

Storey: Yeah. And you had that experience up in Boise, too.

Bach: John was very gracious in his time with me. We had an opportunity to sit and talk in his office about what he saw that that position was going to be; what he thought I would offer to the position; what he was trying to do; what he couldn’t accomplish; who he had to work with. I don’t think the female aspect ever crossed John’s mind, but it became really apparent to me. And when I was at the salmon task force meeting I watched these extremely educated, well-informed, broad spectrum experienced women speaking, and it was a struggle for them. It was a struggle to be noticed. Some of their own ideas are the exact same ideas that provided the solutions to their final approaches, but having come from Washington where this was not an issue and seeing it in the field, I honestly was grateful that the position that came open first was Billings. And, I’ve not had this conversation with anyone else.

Storey: Interesting. Well, you went to Billings, (Bach: Went to Billings.) and you kept your house. (Bach: Correct, I did.) Tell me about that if you would.

Bach: And what aspect of that?

Storey: Well, why did you keep your house/ Most people sell their house and buy another one wherever they go.

Why She Kept Her Home in Evergreen

- Bach: Another personal but professional reason. I had a number of people come to me privately and share with me that Billings was a very small town and that I, as the first female Regional Director, would be under a microscope. And, just to be knowledgeable about that and to be mindful that it would be healthy for me to have a group of peers that were outside of Billings because news traveled easily. So I decided it would be preferable as a single woman—if I was married, I think it would have been different. I probably would have sold the house and bought a house up there, but as a single woman and the first [female] Regional Director I was, they were right, I was under a microscope in ways that were ridiculous—to me now, crazy to me now. But ones that I had to manage. So I decided to—I took an apartment up there. I rented from—well, when I was Deputy Regional Director, I did rent a small house and walked to work, and that was very convenient. And then when I became Regional Director, I moved outside of town on the west edge of Billings, and I rented from a dear woman who was in her late 80s who raised sheep. And she and I were the best of friends. And I had my little haven of privacy on her farmette—her family had homesteaded there, and had originally owned all of the farming area, and she taught me how to raise sheep. And that was my time outside of the office. And it was a really nice balance. And when I traveled through Denver, which I often had to do—could hardly get anywhere in my Region without having to go through Denver, I kept a second car here and I used it. I rarely ever rented cars. I think of all the Regional Directors I had the lowest hotel and car rental charges because I had to travel so much that I couldn't stand the idea of living in hotels. I would find friends that I had over the years anywhere I could go, and I would much rather stay with them than to stay in a hotel. And I had an aversion to rental cars. It took up too much time. It took up too much of my budget. I had staff whose budgets were cut, and I worked out the mathematics, and I figured that if I kept the Subaru down here, which I had happened to have bought in Billings, I brought it down here and I kept it readily available, and when I first left here I had a professor on sabbatical from Stanford who rented the house, and then I eventually had two nieces who were school teachers, and they rented the house. So, it became a very manageable way in which a single woman had a high profile job but maintained her privacy.
- Storey: So you went to Billings, and then all of a sudden it took two days to get most everywhere, I guess.

Travel While Deputy and Then Regional Director in Billings

- Bach: Yes. Oh my goodness, yes. It didn't take me but a few experiences in the position to also scratch my head and say "Why is this Regional Office in Billings?" I was more stationed and stayed in Billings when I was the Deputy R-D, although the second year of my job there I did constant travel because Neil and I had a discussion about it being Haven Stessman's last year of high school and he was very busy involved athletically and Neil wanted to be present for his last year of high school. So I agreed to do quite a number of trips for Neil that otherwise perhaps the Regional Director was going to do. And, so we divvied up our policy issues such that I picked up ones that required—oftentimes it was D.C. Neil kept the international and a few hot spots.

However, when I was Regional Director, I was on the road all the time. It just—I did have the Deputy position, and I did allocate the functions . . . We *split* policy issues,

but I also did, as was done when I was the Deputy, it was the responsibility of that Deputy to convene the policy deliberation processes and to work through and to present me with the shorter list of options that I had to make [decisions from] as a Regional Director. And then . . .

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BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2. APRIL 26, 2011

For me, towards the end of what I knew would be my tenure as Regional Director, I began to phase in the Deputy that we were essentially splitting the travel and then I upped the travel on the Deputy and on the Assistant R-D so that the Assistant R-D was mostly stationary in the Regional Office to handle really large implementation issues—so all the Indian water rights, because that definitely required the use of our technical staff and so that person was there to *oversee* any major developments commitments. They oversaw the budget formulation process, budget distribution process. But the Deputy became very active. So I did, to some degree, follow a similar model as Neil had . . .

Storey: I'm wondering what kinds of issues you had to deal with as Regional Director up in Billings and how they changed from when you were Deputy and Assistant?

Commissioner Eluid Martinez Brought Different Insight to the Job than Had Dan Beard

Bach: So, what changed was the fact that now we were to Eluid Martinez as Commissioner, and Dan Beard had moved on, and Eluid being a water engineer himself brought a very different level of insight to the concerns of the water users, particularly.

“ . . . the hottest issue on *my* plate when I arrived as Regional Director was the lack of progress on the Republican River contract renewal. . . . ”

And, so, And what really was at the core of it was a letter that Neil had written expressing, years previously, the perspective that Dan had about contract renewal.

“Fortunately for me, I had, as one of the consultants for the ten Districts that were in Nebraska and Kansas interested in contract renewal, Joe Hall, who had . . . a very cordial working relationship with these individuals when he was the Regional Director. . . . ”

And that letter did very much reflect the policy instructions that Neil had received, but it was viewed by the water users as “This Agency does not want us to stay in business. This Agency does *not* want contract renewal so they are putting up as many obstacles as possible.” Now, how I was able to come to that realization was through a very *gracious* relationship that I had with Joe Hall.³⁵ Fortunately for me, I had, as one of the consultants for the ten Districts that were in Nebraska and Kansas interested in contract renewal, Joe Hall, who had been the prior Regional Director of the [Lower] Upper

35. Reclamation's oral history program includes interviews with Joe D. Hall.

Missouri Region³⁶ who had a very cordial working relationship with these individuals when he was the Regional Director. And he had a natural demeanor of trustworthiness and a great set of Aggie jokes. Thank God!, because there were times when the conversations were so bloody serious that I would have to say to Joe “Do you have an Aggies joke, please! Could you please lighten . . .” (Storey: A what kind of a joke.) He was a Texas A&M graduate so he had an aggie A-G-G-I-E joke, and fortunately he could provide an ounce of relief to some of the most unpleasant conversations.

“at the time Roger Patterson was the Director of Water Resources for the state of Nebraska. So I had two individuals that had a prior history with Reclamation—both of whom were prior Regional Directors in my Region who had instrumental roles in consulting with the water users. . . .”

Now also at the time Roger Patterson was the Director of Water Resources for the state of Nebraska. So I had two individuals that had a prior history with Reclamation—*both* of whom were prior Regional Directors in my *Region*³⁷ who had instrumental roles in consulting with the water users. So the water users in Nebraska would go to Roger and say “What about this. What about that.” And so in our own way we had a resuscitation team to get these contracts back on track and to—and we had a very understanding and intellectually rich with experience Commissioner who could see where he had to issue some amendments to existing policy—not a change in Administration, mind you, same President in the White House. But where Eluid’s day to day experience previously managing the state of New Mexico’s water resources department could hear what I was saying as to the [road]blocks.

“So one of my challenges was to wean my water users off of the Commissioner who they were calling on a very regular basis. . . . get an interpretation from Roger . . . from Joe Hall . . . because by this point I had some really hostile parties at the table, and, because I had been Neil’s Deputy, they initially had their guns up. . . .”

So one of my challenges was to wean my water users off of the Commissioner who

36. Joe D. Hall served as Regional Director in Denver from 1975 to 1980. He did not serve in the Upper Missouri Region, which was headquartered in Billings. However, in 1985 Reclamation consolidated the Lower Missouri Region with the Upper Missouri Region to create the Missouri Basin Region. Then in 1988 Reclamation consolidated the Missouri Basin Region with the Southwest Region to create the Great Plains Region.

37. Roger Patterson served as Regional Director of the Great Plains Region 1988-1991 and subsequently was Regional Director in the Mid-Pacific Region in Sacramento.

A note on Reclamation’s regional organization is in order. Reclamation originally created three Regions on the Great Plains: Region VI in Billings, Region VII in Denver, and Region V in Amarillo, Texas. In 1972 Reclamation changed the names of these Regions to avoid confusion with standard Federal Regions because Reclamation’s Regions were organized on the basis of river basins rather than political divisions of the country. The new names were Upper Missouri Region in Billings, Lower Missouri Region in Denver, and Southwest Region in Amarillo. In 1985 the Upper Missouri Region and Lower Missouri Region were combined in Billings and renamed the Missouri Basin Region. In 1988 the Southwest Region was further combined with the Missouri Basin Region, again in Billings, to form the Great Plains Region.

Thus, Joe Hall served as Regional Director in the Lower Missouri Region, a part of the Great Plains Region, and Roger Patterson served in the fully combined original three Regions—the Great Plains Region.

Interesting information on the merging of these three Regions is contained in Reclamation’s oral history interviews with Billy (Bill) E. Martin who served as Regional Director in the Lower Missouri Region, the Missouri Basin Region, and the Great Plains Region.

they were calling on a very regular basis. Wean them off, get an interpretation from Roger as the state engineer of what his water users were experiencing. Get an interpretation from Joe Hall who did a great job of translating because by this point I had some really hostile parties at the table, and, because I had been Neil's Deputy, they initially had their *guns up*. They were ready to shoot me in a minute. They presumed that I would be walking the same talk and they very much attributed to Neil, but, perhaps, didn't quite appreciate the degree to which Neil was also reflecting the preference of the Administration. You know, so from their perspective, it's the same Administration, but now we have a Regional Director named Maryanne Bach, Dr. Bach who is going to speak differently about this issue so it must have been Neil.

“. . . Eluid was brilliant in being able to weave around policies that this Administration was not going to budge off of, but in which he could demonstrate the implementation was impossible in certain parts of the country. . . .”

And it wasn't, it was a matter that Eluid was brilliant in being able to weave around policies that this Administration was not going to budge off of, but in which he could demonstrate the implementation was impossible in certain parts of the country. So, that was one.

Other issues by this time now were implementing a number of Indian water rights.

Storey: Let's talk a little further about the other, though. My recollection under Dan Beard, he didn't want contracts to go more than, like, twenty-, twenty-five years. (Bach: That's right.) Did that change? (Bach: Yes, we got an exclusion to that, an exclusion to the policy.) So it went to . . .

“. . . I feel that we had thirty-year contracts. . . . policy of the Bureau was that the majority of the monies coming in were to go to the account that would essentially pay down the capital, but it was really apparent that these Districts were in desperate O-&-M repair. . . . I . . . [told] Eluid that if we really wanted healthy modernized Districts then it was necessary to allow them to build up a capital improvement account. . . .”

Bach: I believe that—well, what's coming to mind for some reason, I feel that we had thirty-year contracts. With, perhaps, provisos under certain conditions to extend. (Storey: Um-hmm.) Also, the policy of the Bureau was that the majority of the monies coming in were to go to the account that would essentially pay down the capital, but it was really apparent that these Districts were in desperate O-&-M repair. And so, I made a proposal to Eluid that if we really wanted healthy modernized Districts then it was necessary to allow them to build up a capital improvement account. (Storey: Um-hmm.) So that meant that their payment was going to be less to the capital or the mortgage, and that we allowed for a replacement fund—that was unheard of at the time. But from my perspective, there wasn't, it was also a demonstration of trust. It was also a way to assure them that we really were about having a long-term relationship; that we were not challenging their water rights at this facility.

Title Transfer Issues in the Region

And then we also had a few title transfers that were occurring in the Region. One of them by a contractor in Nebraska that did not want contract renewal. Wanted to be done with us.

Middle Loup Project Transferred to the Water Users

Wanted to demonstrate that a District could run a water project just as well as anybody in Reclamation. And so the Republican River—one of the tributaries, Middle Loup, took title in the time that I was Regional Director. And that was a very tedious process too. A lot of rocks unturned— topics that his board was not familiar, that he as the Project Manager, had a handle, and then there were functions that were conducted by the T-S-C, the Technical Service Center, down in Denver, exquisite *monitoring* and watching that facility like a baby and knowing it inside and out, that only those folks down at the Denver Technical Service Center followed, that—and we had a training program that we had to put him through. And then I had to work with Roger [Patterson] on the fact that there was really no substantive—as-strong-as the Reclamation dam safety program that he was going to have to take over dam safety inspections. And was he prepared to do that as the state engineer? And he sure wasn't too enthralled with having to do that. So he wanted to know could he contract with us? Well, "Talk to the District first and see if you're going to be on fair ground with them. Are they going to even accept *that* as your way of conducting the responsibility to make sure that that facility was safe.

Title Transfer at Palmetto Bend

At the same time we also had Palmetto Bend title transfer occurring down in Texas with some very strong sentiment that Texas is so well known for—everything better run by the state—we'd prefer all the Feds to be out. So that was a testy title transfer to work through. And other issues . . .

Storey: Well, did that go to the state?

Bach: It ended up going to the Palmetto Bend . . . to the particular irrigation District that managed Palmetto Bend. But some similar issues with the state—well, you're going to have to step up to the plate on some of the functions that Reclamation has been performing in terms of oversight, and inspection, and dam safety, and . . . and then there was the whole repayment of that Project that was really more complicated than some others. And . . . (Storey: It was a fairly recent Project, as I recall.) More recent because it's down the southern part of the Great Plains Region had more recent completion of construction Projects.

Storey: But, isn't it standard for the state engineer to be responsible for safety of dam inspections on all non-Federal reservoirs in the state? Maybe I'm misunderstanding how this system works.

Bach: No, you're not misunderstanding. The degree of sophistication varies considerably.

Storey: Oh. (Laughter)

Bach: What's on paper and what's in reality vary, and also important for historical capturing is that there is an advantage to having the Federal government as the scapegoat for a number of these states. It just happens to be very convenient when it comes to some longstanding water issues. And none of these state engineers involved in the title transfers that occurred in the Bureau needed one more job. In many cases, as in Roger's case, he was already involved in negotiations either court ordered or efforts to avoid Supreme Court actions on interstate water agreements. So, he was in the midst of *Nebraska v. Wyoming*, *Nebraska v. Kansas*, and *also* on the Platte River Governance Committee, which I was on also. And that was another very large responsibility that I had when I was Regional Director. And that was to sit on the governance committee that was overseeing the agreement the Fish and Wildlife Service and Reclamation was reaching with the states of Wyoming, Nebraska, and Kansas on the flows in the central Platte. So we had the depletion—we had four listed species and depletion of flows; we had an interstate compact; we had delivery requirements at the Colorado-Nebraska line; but we had both Federal and non-Federal, well, particularly, *non-Federal* power facilities upstream of the critical habitat. So it was non-Federal, yes. So we had a very active negotiation going on.

So Roger was pulled in multiple directions. The last [thing] he needed to do was to beef up or *establish* a more extensive dam safety program. So he approached Mike Roluti, who at the time was Director of the Technical Service Center and said "Can I contract out? Because I'm going to need some expertise, because, frankly, *I* know, having been in Reclamation, I know that you got people down there that know this facility like the back of their hand. They walk in their sleep and talk about this facility. They know it, and we'll never be able to know it the way that you know it." It was an interesting outcome of the Middle Loup title transfer. (Storey: Yeah.) And also, the—I came to understand that the manager, the irrigation District manager, from Middle Loup—he based his salary and his bonus for a few years on the guarantee that he would successfully attain title transfer. And Tommy Knudsen (phonetic), boy did that fellow *ever* clock miles in and hours in the title transfer process. I think he did, in the end, really come to respect an aspect of Reclamation that he hadn't seen before, but also very determined that he would be able to accomplish this without any loss of safety or without any loss of quality out at . . .

Storey: That's very interesting because a lot of Districts apparently *thought* they were interested in title transfer, and then they decided "No, maybe not!" For a lot of different kinds of reasons.

Bach: And liability being one of them. You know what, it's a *lot* more comfortable to know that you have the pockets of the Federal Government if there's going to be a flood downstream, or upstream, and you've inundated people's homes.

Storey: Yeah. That's one of the most cited reasons, of course.

Bach: And Roger, at that time, was facing reductions—budget reductions in his own department. So he sure didn't need to take on more responsibility.

Storey: Um-hmm. And then there was, was it *Kansas versus Nebraska* coming up then.

Bach: Yes. You had *Kansas versus Nebraska* and Kansas was very sophisticated in understanding conjunctive use and how they had documented that it existed. And there was more resistance in the agricultural community—not necessarily in the scientific or technical community within the state government, but on the ground, *much, much* more resistance to any acknowledgment of conjunctive use. And so Kansas was pressuring, and Wyoming was clapping their hands watching Kansas pressuring because they knew they were next in line to go after Nebraska. And Roger [Patterson] knew very well there was this play going on with Wyoming and Kansas, and any action that occurred with Kansas would be very quickly picked up by Wyoming, and vice versa. So, Roger had more than a full-time job, and yet he was also a very important factor in asking those Districts to stay at the table with us because their alternative was to have Roger be the person. If they didn't accomplish title transfer with us and if they moved toward a basinwide title transfer, then it would have been the state of Nebraska because the reservoirs, but one, was sitting in Nebraska. It would have been Nebraska taking on the role of Reclamation and the allocation and administration of those reservoirs, *not* a job he was looking for.

Human Resources Issues in the Great Plains Region

So, the issues as Regional Director: title transfer; contract renewal, quite a large number of them; implementation of a number of Indian water rights; and then there was the whole human resources end of the picture. Because we were seeing more and more retirements—the mean average of the employees was such that we would have significant amount of turnover, and so we were having to come up with creative means of entry positions, middle level positions when you didn't have middle management positions, how to grow leaders, how to backfill positions, how to attract people to Area Manager jobs, Deputy Area Manager jobs, and I happened to be one that loved—I love the human resources aspects of senior jobs. So, as Regional Director I lavished in being able to find the skills in an individual and match them up with a position. And I was also a very big believer of looking for talent within my Region, but also very much outside of my Region. And we had a big initiative under diversity and also of insuring that we weren't just growing our own, but that we were giving opportunities to people inside and outside—not just Reclamation, but inside and outside government.

Dealing with Misinformation in Southeastern Colorado

The other topic—the other very challenging issue that comes to mind are the—a series of contracts that also gave title transfer interests that we had in Colorado, in South[east]ern Colorado Water Conservancy District and we, in my time, saw the transition from one District manager to the other, but we had a very uncomfortable relationship with the gentleman who was the District manager of Southeast[ern] when I first came in. I made it a point to begin visiting the boards of my various Districts, regardless of the time that my Area Managers spent with it because it was by getting in front of the board that I was able to address some of the intentional misinformation, I believe, *very* intentional misinformation, that the particular District manager was giving their board. And until the board could actually *see* and *touch* and *hear* directly from

the Regional Director, they were getting their information through a single source who was also constantly contradicting my Area Manager who was Jack Garner at the time. So Jack had a—Jack, who is known to be a very pleasant easy-to-get-along-with Area Manager in Colorado has many people who really admire and look up to him was having a heck of a time with being contradicted and misrepresented and the person who was in that position was clearly of a different party than the Administration so that person happened to have had some political positions in Washington and in the state of Colorado and, in fact, went on to be a state—either the person was a state legislator before this or after, it may have been that that person went on to be a state legislator. But the enticement for challenging an Executive Branch Administration that was the different party seemed to be a really big motivator in his behavior. And several key staff walked out on him when we were in that job because of the misstatements. But the lesson for *me* was to recognize that my time had to include getting face-to-face with all of these boards.

Storey: This was out at La Junta?

Bach: This was down in—it wasn't La Junta, it was down in Pueblo?

Storey: Well, Pueblo would be logical. So they were interested in the Fry-Ark Project, is that what they were interested in?

Bach: They wanted us, again it was a Republican administrator and a Democratic Federal Administration, and they wanted the government out of everything. And then they began to ratchet down what they wanted. But *most* of why they wanted us, supposedly, out of everything was supposedly the cost of running the Project.

Storey: Oh yeah, they always believe that they can do it cheaper.

Bach: But then the costs were—we ended up having an extensive investment in accounting and refuting the statistics and the figures that were going before the board. But it is part of what I see—a very active movement now so the movement that is occurring in one statehouse after another across this country right now of taking very adamant, and what *I* would call extensive positions of hating government, no government, privatize it all, it's going to be done better. The seeds of it were very active in some of my states, at the time when I was Regional Director. And so one had to be very thorough and willing to cross-examine your own financial offices so that you didn't lose your credibility in any figures you put out there. Because it was inevitable that you were going to have your numbers inflated or represented in a way that you would have considered dishonest—to make a point the government costs too much and that there is no value added. And in some cases I could see that the states and some of the Districts had the capacity, and in other situations they simply did not.

“ . . . in the case of Colorado, the Western Slope water users *never* wanted the Front Range—whether it was northern Colorado or whether it was the southeast. They never wanted them to take title transfer to anything because it was the Federal government that essentially was protecting the allocation of water between the East Slope and the West Slope. . . . ”

And also the behind the scenes were fascinating because, in the case of Colorado, the Western Slope water users *never* wanted the Front Range—whether it was northern Colorado or whether it was the southeast. They never wanted them to take title transfer to anything because it was the Federal government that essentially was protecting the allocation of water between the East Slope and the West Slope. Here most of the diversions were coming from the West Slope of Colorado to fill the reservoirs on the Front Range. And the West Slope water users, which happened to be aligned and Reclamation Projects on the West Slope were managed by the Upper Colorado Region, not Great Plains Region, so that was another clientele to build some trust with because from the West Slope’s perspective, *all* that Reclamation was about on the *Front Range* was protecting those two Districts on the Front Range.

Building up a Relationship Between Reclamation on the East Slope of Colorado and the West Slope of Colorado

And from the time I came into the job, Charley Calhoun and I went about building relationships between the Western Colorado Area Office and the Eastern Colorado Area Office which hadn’t happened in a very long time. *If* it had happened, those offices were so attentive to their day-to-day business that having the support for building an alliance, in this case Carol DeAngelis with Jack Garner, building that alliance and recognizing that we’re one Reclamation and we can’t be picked off—even though we know that there are significant . . .

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. APRIL 26, 2011.

BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 3. APRIL 26, 2011.

Storey: This is tape three of an interview by Brit Storey with Maryanne Bach on April 26, 2011.

Bach: So there were, to repeat, there were certain very key individuals on the West Slope and in the state legislature and in the state agencies that liked the arrangement as it was, and found that we were a good buffer. We, the Feds, were a good buffer. And then there was another sentiment politically driven that had deep sentiments in “get the Feds out of everything.” So, I love to dance, and I’ll tell you I did a lot of it in a very different way in this job.

Storey: Were you still Regional Director when Northern Colorado was looking to have all the facilities transferred to them.

Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District Wanted to Take Title to the Colorado- Big Thompson Project

Bach: Yes. It began on my watch. It began when the Administration changed; Gale Norton went in as the Secretary of the Interior from Colorado and Bennett Raley went in as the Assistant Secretary of Water and Science—having been the former attorney for Northern Colorado [Water Conservancy District].

Storey: Um-hmm. And let's talk about that.

Bach: Northern, for many years had been after water scheduling, and I would never agree to give it up. And water scheduling would be a *function* that I considered inherently governmental to an Agency that held title to the structures, the major structures, in the Northern Colorado water Project, which was Colorado-Big Thompson [Project]. On the other hand, Northern has a very well-educated staff. They are well above average . . . Of managers and technical staff running Districts. And so there had been some incremental transfers of O-&-M, in fact quite a bit of operation and maintenance of the Project was being conducted by Northern, and this is where you get a reverse, an interesting *reverse*, of what concerns we were hearing from other Districts. So, of course, cost is always of concern for any District as well as for any Federal Agency. What would happen is that certain features of a Project may be held a hundred percent in the title of the Federal Government. Certain projects, like Colorado-Big Thompson was a Federal Project, but in its exact proximity and perhaps parallel or adjacent to it were features that were strictly Northern. So there could be connection points and there could be ways in which the state approved Northern to use its water rights that would run water *through* the Reclamation Project, divert to facilities a hundred percent owned by Northern, come *back* to facilities that were still in ownership by the Federal government. There's also a Project called Windy Gap that has been the topic of legal discussion for many years, since Ziglar was Assistant Secretary, in which if ever given a lawsuit, the negotiations that Reclamation did with Windy Gap water *could* be very challenged. So, there's a very interesting relationship that Reclamation has given the strong views on the West Slope about Northern [Colorado] Water Conservancy District is an elephant in the *minds* of the other water users in the state of Colorado. And when you're Regional Director, and then you're Area Manager, you get invited into the closet discussions of what really is going on with this fine alliance of relationships within a particular state. And so, on the one hand, tremendous respect for Northern's expertise and unquestionable experience, and on the other hand you hear the concerns that other Districts have for the number of votes that Northern has because they are in a highly populated Front Range community and also the influence that they have in the state government. So there is this layering of factors that you are presented with, and then multiply it by nine states that I had in my Region. I had many a many fine day with Northern, particularly with the manager of the District, Eric Wilkinson, absolutely fine, fine man. You really are pleased when you have somebody of a strong ethical background and sometimes those people are pushed for philosophical reasons because of board members that they have or trends that the state is taking. And other times it's because it's very much the professional judgement that they have of what more they can do. So it's a very interesting, very exciting time.

Storey: Um-hmm. And, of course, ultimately as I recall the West Slope said "No, you can't," to the Federal Government, "you shouldn't transfer because then our rights might be compromised."

Bach: At least at the time that I left the Bureau that is where matters were. And also to put in perspective what else was happening West Slope/East Slope, the Western Colorado Area Office was in the midst of implementing the endangered species recovery program for the Colorado River. They call that RIPRAP, R-I-P-R-A-P, Recovery

Implementation Program . . . it has acronyms that make sense in the context, of course, in Reclamation's context it sound like a remedy at the peripheral of the reservoir, right, you hear riprap . . . well in my case I had my Deputy, Larry Todd was the person when I first came to the Region who was my Deputy, and he was very engaged in the West Slope conversations. In fact that was another step that was important that Neil took, and then I reinforced, was to have someone from the Regional Office in Billings at these meetings with the West Slope. So that it wasn't *just* the Regional Director out of Salt Lake and the Western Colorado Area Office. But many of the solutions, not many, but *enough*, a handful, of solutions were going to be the willingness of Colorado-Big Thompson and Northern to play in flow releases. So, just really fascinating dynamics, and, you know, at the time that I left the Regional Director position, I firmly believed that we still *did not* have the trust of the River District on the West Slope—that we were going to do *anything* other than protect Northern. And it's a fine line that you're in.

But, all those fine lines were—they were all fascinating challenges to me. I mean they made the job very rich and juicy and exciting and also, given the fact that I have a proclivity for relationships and *psychotherapy* and *psychology*, I found it *all* very fascinating, and they all looked horrified ~~on my face~~ when they realized that I actually was certified in the State to be a therapist. They *all* [had] this look of horror. “*Oh, my God*, what have you really been doing at our meetings.”

“. . . Northern . . . at the table or *observing* what was going on with the Platte River Recovery Program. So the River District wanted to know what Northern was promising or being a part of agreeing to on the *Front Range* which might be their own water—or their *future* water. . . .”

So the meetings on the West Slope about the Colorado River Recovery Program was one set of functions that on the Front Range, remember I mentioned that these same parties, including Northern were at the table or *observing* what was going on with the Platte River Recovery Program. So the River District wanted to know what Northern was promising or being a part of agreeing to on the *Front Range* which might be their own water—or their *future* water. And, so, I say, it was the dance.

You just wondered who your partner, you know, how many partners you were going to have that day because you could have someone from the state government who was in an as equally an interesting *straddle* as you were because here they, from the state government, had customers on the West Slope and the Front Range.

In my case, being the Regional Director from the Front Range, they presumed that's all I cared about, but I had a counterpart that I respected and was certainly going to work in concert with, and so what happened for *us* in Reclamation, behind the scenes, was a series of *mending* fences between the Eastern Colorado Area Office and the Western Colorado Area Office. And listening to Charley give me a recital on the Colorado-Big Thompson legislation, and to be sure, did I understand this and did I understand that and he wasn't going to be put in the hot spot any more. And my reflecting on all of this, again the ecologist *and* the psychologist looking at it *all* and saying “There's this big landscape, and this particular case there happens to be a mountain range down the front of it. There's all these parties and perspectives on one

side of the range. There's all of these parties and perspectives and an increasing population growth on the other side. There's these *institutional* and *historical* relationships, healthy or not, and then there's an endangered species set of issues on one side moving into a few other states and there's an endangered species issue on this other side, and we happen to have *at least* Colorado and Wyoming in *both* of them. You know, so it became really fascinating. It was just a really big picture, and you operated with a lot of moving parts that, my goodness, fascinating.

Storey: What about, you mentioned another big topic was implementation of the Indian water rights issues while you were Regional Director.

Indian Water Rights Settlements

Bach: Right. So there, what became our implementation obligations were these authorizations for constructing Indian water Projects. And it was *often times* the most challenging issue there, and I do want to mention one other issue which was a *really big* Great Plains issue, but to come back to implementing—often times it became the internal struggle within Reclamation of resources, financial resources as well as the oversight of funds going to tribes that have *much different* concepts about dollars than we do.

“There’s many more activities that a tribe felt very comfortable with funding out of money that came from an appropriation for a specific Project. So I ended up hiring a specific position—hiring and creating and placing an accountant from the Regional Office in my Dakotas Area Office specifically for the purposes of overseeing the funds. . . .”

There's many more activities that a tribe felt very comfortable with funding out of money that came from an appropriation for a specific Project. So I ended up hiring a specific position—hiring and creating and placing an accountant from the Regional Office in my Dakotas Area Office specifically for the purposes of overseeing the funds. Because the mixing of monies—oh, and then we get into the dynamics amongst the tribes—so if I was just to take the Mni Wiconi Project, we had three Indian tribes and one non-Indian player, West River/Lyman Jones [Rural Water] along with three Indian reservations. And, one of those three reservations was designated the so-called “lead” on the funds and on distribution and on managing the Project, and it was *not* always a easy relationship amongst the three tribes no less with West River/Lyman Jones who was the party at the table that *had* water management experience but was the non-Native American party.

Storey: Now, what was this party?

Bach: So we had three tribes, let me see if I will recall the Mni Wiconi Project, but it was three reservations and one non-reservation irrigation District.

Storey: And that irrigation District was . . .

Bach: West River/Lyman Jones. That was their name.

Storey: Oh, L-Y-M-A-N . . .

Bach: M-A-N. West River/Lyman Jones. And they had a manager that had amazing patience and people skills, but anyone in those circumstances was tried to the max. And so there became a dynamic of how much money could the Bureau allocate because the tribe—they were able to manage the program under 98-638 which means that you just keep sending the money and they keep allocating—as long as they can put people to work, they wanted to build that Project as fast as possible. They didn't necessarily want to stay on a Federal appropriations schedule, *but* you had the accusations of mismanagement of money. Then you have a lot of tribal turnover just within one reservation there can be different communities of families that have allegiances and there's tribal elections and tribal turnover and *lot* of social issues to contend with above and beyond the engineering—many, many. So, very interesting time.

Restructuring of the Garrison Diversion Unit of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program

The other *very* time-consuming and significant activity—I can hear Warren Jamison saying “Don't you dare forget to talk about the restructuring of”—none other than Garrison. The Garrison water Project which became the Dakota's Water Resources Act,³⁸ and, goodness, it started when I was the Deputy. But when I came back to the Region we were in the deep throes of state's effort to reformulate what *was to have been* the Garrison irrigation Project. And, as you know, the Garrison—that issue, the Project and the issue, *of itself*, could consume the hundred percent time of any Regional Director, no less of the Area Office. So this Particular Area Office, Dakotas Area Office, in fact, I'm reflecting now that today is April 26th, and I believe today is that day that Denny Breitzman is retiring, and I was meant to have gotten a phone call in to him. So, gosh, I'm reflecting on it now. I believe that's his last day on the job. He's been with that office for many, many years.

Issues with Canada and North Dakota Regarding the Garrison Unit Reformulation

So that was all of the negotiations with Canada that was Manitoba and all of the prior history of Canada with the state of North Dakota. It was the fertile ground for a few environmental groups that came after Garrison who even with the reformulation to the Dakotas Water Resources Act had great suspicions for some of the same individuals that were in the irrigations Districts, the state government . . . Also a very hot bed of time invested by the Region. It was the state's effort to use the existing features that were constructed for Garrison and to do it in a way that also could make use of the flow of water from one section of the state to the other.

“ . . . going from about one million acres of irrigation down to 250,000 acres of irrigation, then converting it, essentially, to a rural water Project with future capacity or capability of using irrigation should they get irrigation . . . And then there's the whole repayment issue . . . for what the Garrison Project was, at that point, responsible for paying back. So there were features in the ground, and

38. “On December 15, 2000, the 106th Congress passed the Dakota Water Resources Act of 2000 (DWRA), which was signed into law on December 21, 2000.” Source: <http://www.rvwsp.com/dwra.htm>

there was always the eye that the Garrison District kept on the repayment schedule so that that repayment schedule would never click into place . . .”

So, very, very time-consuming and relationships building and rebuilding because of the deep mistrust with the environmental groups, which, at this point, now, when I’m Regional Director, Dan Beard is in the Washington Office of the National Audubon and Warren Jamison, who had been Project Manager following Neil Stessman is now the District manager for the irrigation District. (Storey: How do you spell Jamison?) J-A-M-I-S-O-N, I believe, Jamison, and I believe some of the same board members were there when they saw one Regional Director or Commissioner after another come and promise the Garrison Project and then there’s the Garrison reformulation Project and, you know, just going from about one million acres of irrigation down to 250,000 acres of irrigation, then converting it, essentially, to a rural water Project with future capacity or capability of using irrigation should they get irrigation, teaming up with tribes so that it had the tribal component so mimicking off of some other legislation that successfully went through. And then there’s the whole repayment issue to the Federal government for what the Garrison Project was, at that point, responsible for paying back.

“ . . . the Garrison District . . . from their perspective they never had anything but total warfare going on with the environmental groups and with Canada. . . .”

So there were features in the ground, and there was always the eye that the Garrison District kept on the repayment schedule so that that repayment schedule would never click into place so that the *factors* that were originally identified to place that Project or any of its features into repayment status—that that would not occur because from their perspective they never had anything but total warfare going on with the environmental groups and with Canada. So, very interesting dynamics, and the people who had been in the field of water for four-, five-, and six decades all very active, *and* another former Regional Director, now, by this time, Neil Stessman, who was doing some independent work but also collaborating with the National Audubon Society so a lot of folks with long history and deep-seated feelings on one side of the aisle or the other side of the aisle on the issue, and very little trust of any parties.

So, lots of time spent in Washington working either the legislation or the concerns, because we did have to consult with State Department. There were provisos in the original Garrison legislation that also had a form in the Dakotas Water Resources Act. So there was consultation with State Department which meant that there were consultations with Canada, and threats of lawsuits, filing of suits against some of our actions, very, very interesting times. You know, each of these topics that we’re talking about could be a volume in the history of G-P Region that, you know, one Regional Director is responsible for digesting, and then you never are free of the cardinals who have come before you who are still on the issues. So, you don’t want to misstep on any of the facts because you will be corrected for sure. You have the connoisseurs of the various issues, and . . .

Storey: Now, you said there was another issue that came up, did you already cover that?

Bach: Garrison and Dakota Water Resources Act.

Storey: Yeah. So you were there from when to when?

“ . . . I am the person who elected to step out of the position. I had a suicide in my family. I lost my eldest nephew, and it was really challenging to grieve the loss of a close family member and be a Regional Director at that time and be available to everyone. Cell phones had really taken off. Text messaging was there. Computers. . . .”

Bach: ‘98 to . . . November 1998 to the beginning . . . to 2005, it was about six years in this position. Um-hmm. Um-hmm. And ***I am*** the person who elected to step out of the position. I had a suicide in my family. I lost my eldest nephew, and it was really challenging to grieve the loss of a close family member and be a Regional Director at that time and be available to everyone. Cell phones had really taken off. Text messaging was there. Computers. Even at his funeral I was interrupted multiple times by water users who just felt they had to talk to the Regional Director and not to anyone of my capable staff. (Storey: Um-hmm.) And when I came back, even though I had taken two weeks off, I just recognized that it was a turning point in my life, and I would be taking another direction in my life. It’s akin to losing a child. For me it was. I was very, and have always been close to my niece and nephews, and so that was a . . . I was in the Region, I was in Billings that morning when I got my phone call very, very early in the morning, and I remember it very vividly. And then when I returned from all of the services I knew that my time was limited to be sitting at that desk and that my job at that point would be to get the Region ready for me to be leaving the job.

Decided to Seek the Director of Research Position Recently Vacated by Shannon Cunniff

And I had recognized that the Director of Research position had been empty . . . had been unoccupied—it was vacant with the departure of Shannon Cunniff. She had gone over to the Defense Department. And so I didn’t initially see myself there, but I just knew that I needed change of pace. I knew that my life and the allocation of my time needed to change because by that time those Regional Director jobs were . . . they were more than 24/7/365. We all had vacation time racking up and you felt very obliged with the work ethics of the Bureau to take much of your own personal time.

But it was an overall change of pace to watch a twenty-seven year old’s life disappear overnight, and at that time, for me, I believe I was about forty-six, and I just realized, “Wow, there are things that I want to do in life, as much as I love this job, there are other dreams that I have, and time’s slipping by. And it’s time for a major change.”

“ . . . I also recalled that my original commitment to myself was to retire from Federal service at fifty. And that was a straightforward retirement at the time that I started in Government because I started in the Legislative Branch, and Legislative Branch, you had full retirement at fifty and twenty years—not thirty and 55. . . .”

And I also recalled that my original commitment to myself was to retire from Federal service at fifty. And that *was* a straightforward retirement at the time that I started in Government because I started in the Legislative Branch, and Legislative Branch, you had full retirement at fifty and twenty years—not thirty and 55.³⁹ And I could feel . . . I could feel the strain of my commitment to how I did my job with the need for some more personal time. And, so, I do think it was another eight months—it was into the fall of that year before I had John [Keys] convinced that I could move into . . .

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BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 3. APRIL 26, 2011.

Storey: So you transferred down to Denver, then.

Bach: I did. Yeah. Yes, and I'll always be grateful to Steve Magnussen who helped with the Washington Office recognizing that perhaps it's helpful in this day and age to give Regional Directors an option of moving around.

“ . . . John [Keys] came from the world where he was there eighteen years in P-N Region. He couldn't even imagine that somebody would step down. He wanted to know what type of cancer I had, and I said, 'John, I'm making this change so that I don't have that'. . . ”

You know, where John [Keys] came from the world where he was there eighteen years in P-N Region. He couldn't even imagine that somebody would step down. He wanted to know what type of cancer I had, and I said, “John, I'm making this change so that I don't have that,” (Storey: Um-hmm.) “because I'm watching all of you, and the list of cancer in this Agency is *pretty* serious.” All three people that I was talking to—all had had cancer—Bill Rinne, who was my boss at the time, who had been brought in so he was in transition with Steve Magnussen; of course, Steve, when he retired, you went right into cancer treatment; and John Keys, who had spent many a day in my office in Billings going back and forth to the Billings hospital because either he was under treatment or he was visiting his daughter who died in my Region. She wasn't an employee of mine, but John spent many a day and many a weekend in my Regional Office watching his daughter pass.

“So, from my perspective, I had lots of data points that say 'Better watch the stress.' . . . the world of water resources had become so sophisticated . . . it wasn't just a matter of distributing water out of reservoirs and renewing contracts. It was . . . relationship with the Native Americans . . . endangered species, and . . . I could go on and on and on. . . .”

So, from my perspective, I had lots of data points that say “Better watch the stress.” (Storey: Uh-huh.) Yeah, and there just comes a time when you—the world of

39. Referring to the differing requirements for retirement in the Legislative Branch versus the Executive Branch of the Federal Government. This means that in the Legislative Branch you could retire at the age of fifty years with 20 years of service with no penalty. In the Executive Branch you had to have twenty-five years of service and be fifty-five in order to retire with no penalty.

water resources had become so sophisticated and there were—it wasn't just a matter of distributing water out of reservoirs and renewing contracts. It was the whole history of the relationship with the Native Americans that needed to be rectified, and the ramifications of the engineering Projects on endangered species, and continuing straining of government and a philosophy that government was involved in too much. I mean, I could go on and on and on.

Served a Year or less in the Research Office and Then Became Acting Director of Safety, Security and Law Enforcement

And I recognized that, *at least for me*, for me to make room for other dreams and goals that I had in life that I could step forward, having been extremely grateful, and I went to the research office and was there, oh it perhaps was under a year, and the Washington office wanted a different set of leadership in Denver and wanted some different emphasis in those offices and so I was tapped to step over to the Security, Safety, and Law Enforcement job.

Larry Todd Moved to the Washington Office to Become Director of Administration

I became the acting Director of Security, Safety, and Law Enforcement while Larry Todd took over a new position, Director of Administration. And that was a fascinating time. The acting Director of Security, Safety, and Law Enforcement—I lavished it. I loved it.

“I had a large number of security, safety, and law enforcement issues when I was in Great Plains Region. . . . the President of the United States was from Texas. The Vice-President of the United States was from Wyoming, and the Secretary of the interior was from Colorado. . . . there were some very delicate security issues that I can't go into that were occurring in all three of those states. So I did carry a . . . top secret security clearance, and I spent a good chunk of my time commuting back and forth to Denver to be able to participate in classified briefings. . . .”

It was post-9/11, and it was implementation of a number of goals that the Agency had established for its Security, Safety, and Law Enforcement program, and it was a whole—I had a large number of security, safety, and law enforcement issues when I was in Great Plains Region, by the way. We didn't touch on that, but at the time I was a sitting Regional Director the President of the United States was from Texas. The Vice-President of the United States was from Wyoming, and the Secretary of the Interior was from Colorado. And, 9/11, there were some very delicate security issues that I can't go into that were occurring in all three of those states. So I did carry a security clearance, top secret security clearance, and I spent a good chunk of my time commuting back and forth to Denver to be able to participate in classified briefings. (Storey: Um-hmm.)

“. . . I felt very comfortable going into the Security, Safety, and Law Enforcement position. I had had a lot more experience than people had recognized that I had had when I was Regional Director . . .”

So, I felt very comfortable going into the Security, Safety, and Law Enforcement position. I had had a lot more experience than people had recognized that I had had when I was Regional Director, and it was a fascinating community to operate in.

SSLE Issues Arose after 9/11

Some challenging issues there that we were putting restrictions on facilities that had been very easily occupied and traveled by local communities, people were fishing downstream of our reservoirs, they knew all the hot spots for fishing, but we found some very inappropriate individuals in some of those places, too, so we had to begin putting fences up and excluding public from areas and, yet, they were also some of our best eyes and ears. It was a mixed bag of appreciation and anger at the Bureau. And a new program that, like the rural water program, came with *some* new money, but not the degree to which O-M-B could allocate for a new effort.

“ . . . we dealt with the resistance that Secretary Norton had with establishing another set of law enforcement officials . . . we could never obtain her approval to go for legislation to have Reclamation’s own law enforcement officials. . . . ”

And we dealt with the resistance that Secretary Norton had with establishing another set of law enforcement officials, one of the functions that the Secretary of Interior, when she *was* in state government, when Gale was in the state of Colorado, as attorney general, she did have law enforcement under her purview, and she had some less than positive experiences in dealing with law enforcement wanting to expand and increased budgets and numbers of individuals, and also how they managed their authority became a controversial issue for her when she was attorney general. So, we could never obtain her approval to go for legislation to have Reclamation’s own law enforcement officials.

Reclamation Was Allowed to Contract with Other Bureaus for Law Enforcement Capability

What we were permitted to do under executive order was to utilize another Agency—in this case, it was the Bureau of Land Management that we would be able to have contractual arrangements through, basically the human resources offices and the Director of the B-L-M to bring on board some law enforcement officers. So the regional law enforcement officers were essentially—they were B-L-M employees. And, it didn’t work too smoothly. However, we did the best we could in those initial days with networking in the local law enforcement and with national law enforcement. (Storey: Um-hmm.)

“ . . . we also had to address the ability of the Regional Offices and of the Denver office to get secured information. . . . ”

And then we also had to address the ability of the Regional Offices and of the Denver office to get secured information. So, for us, the Agency that had that expertise was the U.S. Geological Survey. And we had a very good partnership with them. So, a very

fascinating time. Working with the T-S-C on the expertise that our people had and the Corps of Engineers had in knowing where the vulnerabilities were of our facilities, and—intriguing, intriguing.

Storey: You didn't talk about what you did when you were in the . . .

Work While Director of Research

Bach: Director of research. (Storey: Research office.) Well the Director of Research—I was very familiar with that office having come out of the research community myself, having spent time on the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology on The Hill and then having in the Department when that Research Office was moved from being a unit within the Technical Service Center to being a stand alone office. And so I was quite familiar, and I was on a first hand professional basis with prior Directors of that office.

“ . . . I had excellent staff, just really brilliant, fabulous staff, and the majority of our time was spent seeing how it was that we could help the Regions match up with expertise in the T-S-C and partner with other Federal Agencies on research topics that were multi-dimensional in nature. . . . ”

So, it was a time that went very quickly. I had excellent staff, just really brilliant, fabulous staff, and the majority of our time was spent seeing how it was that we could help the Regions match up with expertise in the T-S-C and partner with other Federal Agencies on research topics that were multi-dimensional in nature. They were interdisciplinary of nature. And, many cases they were addressing some of the environmental recovery issues we were facing. Sometimes they were structural of nature—new instrumentation, but for the most part they were an outgrowth of the environmental consequences of the projects. So some of the fish hatchery problems that the units of C-V-P were facing, or the introduction of the invasive species, the zebra mussel and what it was doing to our structures and the operation of some of our power facilities. Or the adaptive management concept which was becoming of age in recovery programs and what did that mean when it was on the ground. So, that was how I spent a good part of my time.

“ . . . another part of the responsibility, was, I found myself back at the White House Science Office again because the Director of Research for Reclamation sat on some of the interagency working groups that I had established back when I was in the White House Science Office. So, it was, in some regards, I could feel that I was coming to the closure of my Federal career. I was coming back to where I had started. . . . ”

The other piece that I participated in, or another part of the responsibility, was, I found myself back at the White House Science Office again because the Director of Research for Reclamation sat on some of the interagency working groups that I had established back when I was in the White House Science Office. So, it was, in some regards, I could feel that I was coming to the closure of my Federal career. I was coming back to where I had started. It was a really interesting experience. Any other questions you

might have about that time as Director of Research?

Storey: No, just interested in what they did. How you saw it, is all. Was there anything else you wanted to talk about about S-S-L-E?

“ . . . once 9/11 occurred we entered a whole new set of interagency relationships that we had not previously been party to. So the world of the F-B-I and the world of the classified community and classified research and then the liaison with state law enforcement that’s a whole new chapter in Reclamation’s life . . . ”

Bach: No, I think that we—well, the other aspect that might be useful to recognize in Reclamation’s history is that once 9/11 occurred we entered a whole new set of interagency relationships that we had not previously been party to. So the world of the F-B-I and the world of the classified community and classified research and then the liaison with state law enforcement that’s a whole new chapter in Reclamation’s life—reflective of the world as we now know it.

Storey: And then you retired from it. Well you didn’t retire . . .

Became Director of Technical Resources after about a Year as Acting Head of SSLE

Bach: So, from S-S-L-E I then, John Keys asked me to take over a new position. I was in S-S-L-E for a year, and he had completed his reorganization in Denver and had created a new senior executive position that was over research and over the T-S-C, and it was technical resources, it was Director of Technical Resources. So I moved into that position and was there for a year, and Larry Todd had been in the Director of Administration and moved to Washington with the creation of a new Deputy Commissioner post for administration.

Managing for Excellence

And, we had “managing for excellence” as an initiative and Larry and I found that a good amount of our time was on that core team—managing for excellence. Larry headed up the team, and it came as a result of the next generation of interest in “Why is title transfer taking so much time? Why can’t we have more of it? And, you cost too much as a Agency.” And, so we had an examination of who we were as an Agency.

“It’s another next generation of the internal examination of Reclamation, and what further would it take for the Agency to either demonstrate that it is efficient or to address where it wasn’t or where our customer base didn’t believe it was. . . .”

It’s another next generation of the internal examination of Reclamation, and what further would it take for the Agency to either demonstrate that it is efficient or to address where it wasn’t or where our customer base didn’t believe it was. And having come into the Bureau at the time of CPORT,⁴⁰ and having been through a number of

40. Commonly referred to as CPORT (see port), this was the *Report of the Commissioner’s Program and*
(continued...)

organizations and reorganizations, and hearing my predecessors talk about how many *more* they had been through, I could recognize that I was, and I was approaching fifty, and I reminded myself of that goal that I had set for myself that it was time for me to follow another path in life. So I stayed as long as I was able to complete my responsibilities on the managing for excellence team.

Involvement in Desalinization Efforts at Reclamation

And also I had been involved in desalinization efforts of the Bureau and trying to get that mission clear. There was various perspectives about whether we should be involved in desalinization or not be involved, or whether we were over-involved. And, I had that *function* when I was in the research office, but it was spread out in different directions across the Regions. The research office had a portion of it, but there were activities going on the in T-S-C, and then some activity in the policy office, some activity in each of the Regions, and so when I felt that I could get it as far as *I* could get it, *and* we were building Tularosa, we had been authorized and appropriated by Senator Domenici and the Senate Committee to build Tularosa, when I felt that it was to the point where, as far as I could take it, and it happened to coincide with turning fifty.

“ . . . I inquired about returning to the Science Committee in the House of Representatives, and was able to secure a position and I transferred there, and then, within a few months, negotiated my retirement from my Federal career. . . . ”

And, at that point, I inquired about returning to the Science Committee in the House of Representatives, and was able to secure a position and I transferred there, and then, within a few months, negotiated my retirement from my Federal career.

Storey: And that was when?

Bach: I believe that was 2007. I believe that last month marked my four years in retirement and a new world.

Storey: And are you doing any consulting or anything?

Activities in Retirement

Bach: I am not doing any consulting in the water resources arena. I, from time to time, have done some consulting insofar as training through the—government training and teaching through the O-P-M facility that is in Aurora. I’ve done that with some consultants that do government training. But in terms of government activity, it’s been very limited, and my interests have taken off in all sorts of areas. I’ve never had a lack of hobbies or other interests that I’ve wanted to pursue. So I have broken in a few horses, I’ve raised a few goats, I’ve gotten involved in little cottage industries of cheese making and I’ve also continued my counseling. I am year out from obtaining my license as a spiritual counselor. And, you know, the list actually goes on. There’s lots of different things . . .

40. (...continued)
Organization Review Team of August 1993.

Storey: Sounds like you're enjoying yourself.

Bach: I am.

Storey: Your retirement. Well, let me ask—well, is there anything else we ought to talk about?

Bach: Not that comes to mind.

Storey: Okay, well, then let me ask if you're willing for the information on these tapes and the resulting transcripts to be used by researchers.

Bach: Absolutely.

Storey: Great. Thank you.

Bach: Yeah. Thank you.

END OF SIDE 2, TAPE 3. APRIL 26, 2011.
END OF INTERVIEWS

Appendix 1: *Plains Talk* Article

APPENDIX 2: *Centerline* Article

Appendix 3: Curriculum Vitae