ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

Warren Fairchild

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Status of Interviews:
Open for Research

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Interviews Conducted and Edited by:
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Brief Chronology of Warren Fairchild

1927–Born in Endicott, Nebraska

1944–Graduated from high school in Endicott, Nebraska

1944–Began to attend the University of Nebraska in Lincoln

1946-1947–Drafted into the U.S. Army

1949–Graduated from the University of Nebraska in Lincoln

1949-1957–Worked for the Soil Conservation Service in his home area in Nebraska

1954–Transferred into the small watershed program in the Soil Conservation Service in Gage County, Nebraska

1957-1970–Served as Executive Secretary of the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission

1970–1974–Moved to the Bureau of Reclamation as the Assistant Commissioner for Resource Planning, including both planning and foreign activities

1974-1976–Director of the Water Resources Council which was chaired by the Secretary of the Interior

1976-retirement in 1989–World Bank where he started by heading the master planning program for water resources in Pakistan

1989-1992–Worked for the World Bank as a full time consultant

1992-time of interviews in 1996–Did occasional consulting with the World Bank, including the large Ghazi Barotha hydropower project.

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STATEMENT OF DONATION OF ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS OF WARREN FAIRCHILD

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Warren Fairchild

INTERVIEWER: _____
Brit Allan Storey

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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.

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For additional information about Reclamation's history program see:
www.usbr.gov/history

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Oral History Interviews
Warren Fairchild

Storey: This is Brit Allan Storey, Senior Historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Warren Fairchild, a retiree from the Bureau of Reclamation, in the offices of the Bureau of Reclamation on the seventh floor of the Main Interior Building in Washington, D.C., the afternoon of April the 3rd, 1995. This is tape one.

Could you tell me, please, where you were born and raised and educated, and how you ended up at the Bureau of Reclamation?

Born in Endicott, Nebraska

Fairchild: Well, I was born on a farm in south central Nebraska, Endicott, Nebraska, and I attended high school at Endicott Public High School, a ***small*** high school.

Attended High School in Endicott, Went to the University of Nebraska and Served in the U.S. Army

There was only six in my graduating class, and so it was a rather small rural high school. On completion of high school, I went and attended the University of Nebraska. During my period at the University of Nebraska, about an eighteen-month break, while I served in the U.S. Army. That was in '46 and '47. I was drafted into the Army.

Graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1949 and Immediately Went to Work for the Soil Conservation Service

But I graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1949, in May of 1949.

I immediately went to work for the Soil Conservation ***Service,*** at that time, and I was involved in soil surveys [and][1] laying out of conservation and irrigation

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.

In an effort to conform to standard academic rules of usage (see *The Chicago Manual of Style*), individual's titles are only capitalized in the text when they are specifically used as a title connected to a name, e.g., "Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton" as opposed to "Gale Norton, the secretary of the interior;" or "Commissioner John Keys" as opposed to "the commissioner, who was John Keys at the time." Likewise formal titles of acts and offices are capitalized but abbreviated usages are not, e.g., Division of Planning as opposed to "planning;" the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992, as opposed to "the 1992 act."

The convention with acronyms is that if they are pronounced as a word then they are treated as if they are a word. If they are spelled out by the speaker then they have a hyphen between each letter. An example is the Agency

(continued...)

practices. I was quite active in the small watershed program known as Public Law 566.

In 1957 Became the Executive Secretary of the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission

In 1957 I was offered the job as executive secretary of the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission, and that is the agency in the state government in Nebraska that's responsible for planning and operation.

While Executive Secretary the Commission Developed the State of Nebraska's First State Water Plan

And it was during that period of time that we developed the first state water plan for the state.

". . . we completely reorganized the natural resource districts, all the special purpose districts in the state, into a series of natural resource districts. . . ."

Probably the most significant thing that happened during that tenure of thirteen years was that we completely reorganized the natural resource districts, all the special purpose districts in the state, into a series of natural resource districts.

". . . twenty-four natural resource districts across the state . . . had complete authority to carry out at the local level all natural resource programs, whether it be irrigation, watershed, soil and water conservation, flood control, wastewater management, you name it. . . . at that time, we did get enacted a flood plain management program, and we also initiated the natural resource databank for the state. . . ."

We ended up with, as I recall, twenty-four natural resource districts across the state that had complete authority to carry out at the local level all natural resource programs, whether it be irrigation, watershed, soil and water conservation, flood control, wastewater management, you name it. They had the authority at that time to carry it out. And they're still very active and, I think, doing a very good job. Also at that time, we did get enacted a flood plain management program, and we also initiated the natural resource databank for the state. So those were . . . especially rewarding period in my life.

"In 1970 I was contacted by the assistant secretary's office and also the commissioner of Reclamation to see if I had interest in coming back to Washington and becoming assistant commissioner . . ."

In 1970 I was contacted by the assistant secretary's office and also the

1. (...continued)
for International Development's acronym: said as a word, it appears as AID but spelled out it appears as A-I-D; another example is the acronym for State Historic Preservation Officer: SHPO when said as a word, but S-H-P-O when spelled out.

commissioner of Reclamation to see if I had interest in coming back to Washington and becoming assistant commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation.

". . . we had accomplished quite a little bit as far as the water programs in the state of Nebraska, and . . . there was a certain amount of controversy associated with it. So professionally it was a good time to make the change. . . ."

At that point in time, it seemed like a logical time for me to make a career change, because we had accomplished quite a little bit as far as the water programs in the state of Nebraska, and with that accomplishment, of course, there was a certain amount of controversy associated with it. So professionally it was a good time to make the change.

I was eventually offered the position of assistant commissioner for planning. As I recall, that became official, I think in about October of 1970. The program at that time involved ***all*** the planning of the Bureau of Reclamation, and also the foreign activities program. So that's really what led me up to this. I saw coming to the Bureau, you know, as very logical and a great professional opportunity. And having worked in water programs at the state level among the seventeen western states, I was very much aware of the professional capability and the programs of the Bureau, and it was a program that was of great interest to me.

Was Very Interested in a Couple of Pending Bureau of Reclamation Projects in Nebraska

Incidently, there were a couple of pending Reclamation projects for our state. Of course, I was interested, hoping they would get authorized. That was just kind of a side item, but I had cooperated very closely with the Bureau of Reclamation and other Department of Interior agencies during my state government [career].

You might be interested in knowing that on the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission, which I served as the executive secretary, the Department of [the] Interior had an advisor, as did the Department of [the] Army and also the Department of Agriculture. So they were actually ***advisors*** serving with us on the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission. So we had a very close relationship with all the various federal agencies, major federal agencies, at that time, and this was just kind of a natural evolution. I looked forward to coming back to Washington and serving in that capacity. So that's the background how it all kind of worked out. Very quickly, that was my background.

Storey: When were your born?

Born in 1927

Fairchild: I was born on November 16, 1927.

Storey: And is Endicott a farming town?

Fairchild: Yes. It's a rural community, about 200 population, and it was a town that, you know, was gradually losing its population.

Family Was Involved in a Brickyard in Endicott

But my folks also were involved with the brick yard, an established brick yard there at Endicott, and that was one of the major sources of employment for many of the people in the area. We're no longer associated with the brick yard, but my sister and brother-in-law still live on the farm and I still go back there and sleep in the very same bedroom I did when I was a kid growing up. So we have roots to Nebraska and that area.

Still Keeps a Finger in Water Resources Activities

Also, on the third of May I'm going back out to Nebraska, because there's a water meeting out there and they've asked me to come back out and participate in it. So we kind of keep involved, directly and indirectly, in the programs out in the state as well as some of the federal programs and some of the international programs. I'm currently serving on a Policy Committee for the United States Department of Agriculture on their Resource Conservation Act, and I do some consulting work for the World Bank. So I kind of keep a little active, but I'm mostly retired.

Storey: Keep a finger in there, huh?

Fairchild: That's right, yeah.

Storey: So you were raised on a farm in Endicott?

Fairchild: Raised on a farm, that's right.

Storey: What kind of a farm was it?

Raised on an Irrigated Farm

Fairchild: Well, it was basically a general-type farm. We had corn, raised corn and alfalfa, livestock. We had some irrigation, but it was a general type of farming operation. Relatively small at that particular time, but it was a full farm operation. I enjoyed my farm background. It's a great way, I think, to learn how to work with your hands.

Storey: When you say there was some irrigation, what was the water source?

Fairchild: The water source was from the Little Blue River and a creek called Rose Creek. So those were under water rights from the state.

Storey: So they're not on a Reclamation project or anything?

Fairchild: No. In Nebraska, actually, there's about, oh, I guess, now probably somewhere around seven and a half million acres of irrigated land in Nebraska, and most all of it is from groundwater. But there's some from surface water from diversion of the rivers, and this is all ***private*** development. There is ***some*** Bureau of Reclamation projects, primarily in the North Platte Valley and the Republican Valley, but the Bureau of Reclamation programs are not that extensive in the state of Nebraska as I think they could have been and probably should have been.

Storey: How good are the water rights on the farm where you were raised?

Fairchild: Oh, we had a quite an early one so it was ***good***, you know, good water rights, ours is surface water rights. Of course, the groundwater regulation in the state we weren't involved in, but the natural resource districts that we established back in–what would that be? That would be about probably 1960– what? '67, I guess it was. They do have groundwater responsibility and they can develop a problem area and do a good job of regulating, and we're ***gradually*** getting over into it. But it's very difficult. But our surface water rights are very good.

Water Issues Between Nebraska and Kansas Because of Groundwater Depletion

And of course, right now there's some question as to the interstate ***compacts*** on some of those streams with the state of Kansas. Because of depletion of groundwater resource and its effect on the spring, why, Kansas isn't getting quite the water that they expect or anticipate or which was allocated to them. So there is a problem right now in the state as to how they are going to meet some of those obligations to Kansas. That's primarily on the Republican, though.

Storey: Do you ever remember not getting your full water supply while you were there?

Fairchild: Never had a problem. Never had a problem. Remember, that was quite some time ago.

Storey: Yeah, I understand. Your sister still lives on the farm?

Fairchild: Still lives on the farm.

Storey: Are they having any water problems now?

Fairchild: Actually, the farm they're on, they're not irrigating. The farm was irrigated. My brother had it, and he's passed away now. My sister-in-law has it, but they still have water when they need it. Yeah. So that has ***not*** been a problem. So far they've been very fortunate that water's been available for them when they needed it.

Storey: What did you study at the University of Nebraska?

At the University of Nebraska He Pursued a Technical Science Program in the College of Agriculture

Thought He Might like to Become a University Professor

Fairchild: I was at the College of Agriculture, and I took a technical science program, because at that time I thought I was going to go on and get my master's degree and probably doctor's degree and become a university professor. At least that's what we kind of thought I might do. But once I got an opportunity to go to work and start getting those little green cardboard checks from the federal government, I never went back.

I went to work for the Soil Conservation Service. So it was a program highly oriented to science, to chemistry, to physics, to math, but then there was the agriculture side along with it. There was agronomy and some entomology and economics and other courses. But it was basically a program that was based upon the prospects of doing advanced work, which I did not do.

"I went to work for the Soil Conservation Service as a soil scientist and in charge of the watershed program in Gage County, Nebraska . . ."

I went to work for the Soil Conservation Service as a soil scientist and in charge of the watershed program in Gage County, Nebraska, and did a lot of the work in one area. When I become head of the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission, of course, that was all water, all water and water planning and water development. So my program, as far as professionally, it sort of evolved over a period of time and my expertise kind of developed as far as planning. Well, it developed to the place where, you know, even though I was not an engineer, I was a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers for many, many years, because they thought with my experience and my background I qualified, and I was very pleased to do so. But I am also a member of the American Society of Engineers as well as the Soil Conservation Society of America and others.

So it was sort of a, I guess, on-the-job evolving activity, and a lot of this, of course, evolved due to my work on the Soil Conservation Service and then, of course, then directly over to the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission and the way in which we evolved that work with the Federal agencies. So it was kind of natural and with that type of planning background that when they asked me to come back here to work on the planning programs of the bureau, because that's the area that, of course, about, I guess, maybe twenty years I've been working on. So that's my background very generally.

Storey: Do you remember any effects of the Depression on your farm life, your life in Nebraska there?

The Great Depression

Fairchild: Well, I was very much aware of it, although because we lived on a river-bottom farm, we always had ***fairly*** good crops there in south-central, southeastern Nebraska, except, I think, it was in '34. We eventually had a crop failure in '34.

". . . times were tough, and people were poor . . . My father . . . was operating the brick yard, and they had anywhere from fifty to a hundred people employed. The salary at that time was twenty-five cents an hour. . . . they were tickled that they had a job. . . ."

But, yeah, times were tough, and people were poor, you know, in the area, but everybody was poor. My father, at that time, was managing the brick yard. He was operating the brick yard, and they had anywhere from fifty to a hundred people employed. The salary at that time was twenty-five cents an hour. That was the salary that those people got. So it wasn't much. But, of course, back in those days, they were tickled that they had a job.

"My first job . . . was water boy at the brick yard and I got four dollars a week. . . ."

My first job, actually, was water boy at the brick yard and I got four dollars a week.

Storey: What does a water boy do?

Fairchild: Water boy. What I did, I carried water around to all the employees, because we didn't have hydrants running everywhere. So I'd take around, and I'd make sure the buckets were full of water and they had water to drink, because it got very hot out there in the summertime. So that was my job. And with that four dollars a week, I saved enough money that I bought my bicycle.

So, yes, I'm well aware of the hard times of the Depression. It was a hard time. But, you know, in an area like that it's kind of interesting. Even though everybody had hard going, nobody was looked upon as being, well, really the poorest of the poor and they needed all sorts of help. Everybody was pulling and we helped each other out. And I think there was kind of a little different psychology then than there is today. But, of course, even in the rural areas today in some of those areas, people may not have a lot of money, but because of the neighborhood, the neighbors and the fact they can have their gardens and cost of living is not so high, poverty in those areas are not the same as poverty in the inner city, and people are not ***looked*** upon the same as having a tough time financially getting along there that maybe they're looked upon in the city. So I think there is a difference in the levels of poverty. Times were tough.

The Dust Bowl

I remember the dust bowl. I remember the dust storms. But, again, we didn't have the dust storms down in the south central, southeastern part of the state that they had out in the western part of the state. But I can remember them.

Storey: Tell me what they were like where you lived.

Fairchild: Well, you could see these little clouds kind of boiling up, you know. Because houses at that time were not that well built as far as windows, you know, dust would come in through the windows, and my mother was constantly, during those

periods, having to clean up and dust the place. But, yeah, that was really something that we were very much aware of.

But my ***wife*** lived in the central part of the state, and out there the dust storms were much more severe. It was in that area that irrigation was much more prevalent. That's the reason that it was the Depression, then the dust bowl days, and the ***drought*** that led to the development of the Central Nebraska Water Power and Irrigation District. Lake McConaughy under the P-P-I-D Project,[2] and her father and others were directly ***involved*** in trying to get that one going.

So the ***effects*** of the ***drought***, the effects of the ***Depression*** and all was really the thing that nourished them as the generating force behind the Central Nebraska, and a lot of other projects, in the state. So it was an evolving realization that, you know, people just had to do a better job of taking care of their land and the water.

Storey: Do you remember anything about that in particular, for instance, county agents giving talks or anything?

Fairchild: Well, it's funny you'd ask, because our home county was the only county in the state of Nebraska that did not have a county agent. He was voted out. He was voted out primarily because the publisher of the countywide newspaper took it upon himself to poormouth, if you want to use that expression, the county agent and his work, and he was successful in getting the county agent thrown out of the county.

Now, this was a great deal of concern to my mother, because my mother thought we needed a county agent. But for years, Jefferson County, Nebraska, was the only county in the state of Nebraska that didn't have a county agent.

Depression Programs That Operated in the Endicott Area

So really the county agent, in the time I was growing up, did not have any impact because we didn't have one, but other programs, though, did start having an effect. You know, that was about the time the old A-A-A[3] came in. Eventually it come over to be the P-M-A,[4] and they would come out with their maps and they'd talk to my father and his brothers and all about what they could do as far as various government programs, and I would say that there was certainly an awareness about that. Of course, I was aware of it back in those days. I don't know whether you've heard this, but there was a program for buying ***hogs***. Then they'd go and they'd ***kill*** the hogs. You know, they'd slaughter the hogs just to keep the price up. So there was many things.

Also there was a CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps] camp in the county seat

2. Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District.
3. Congress created the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933. The U.S. Supreme Court declared key provisions of the act unconstitutional in 1936, and various successor bureaus carried on the work.
4. The Production and Marketing Administration succeeded the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in 1945.

town, Fairbury. I'm talking about Jefferson County. And the CC boys did quite a bit of work on erosion control on the farms. One of the times I was aware of it, why, they came down to our home. We had a great big cedar tree, and they spent several days down there picking the berries or the seeds off the cedar trees that they could use in planting out and starting windbreaks. So really you couldn't help but be aware of the hardships.

But then as you went into, say, the late thirties and forties, the big thing that happened was, of course, we started to get more rainfall. Moisture improved. The economy, because of the spinoff of some of the war and things like that, things started to pick up and the economy did get somewhat better.

A Lot of the Work Was Done During the War by the Old and the Young

But then, of course, during the war years, when I was in high school, we were short on help. We were extremely short on help. So it's not too surprising young fellows like myself would be driving the tractors and the trucks. It was not unusual to see teenagers at that time of probably twelve to sixteen years of age, and I was driving the grain trucks into the elevators. You know, drivers license was not a question, because we ***had*** to do it. So it was an experience when old men and young boys kind of did quite a bit of the work around. So it was part of the development, I guess, of the background of some of my heritage. So I'm real proud of my background as far as being a farmer in south central Nebraska.

Storey: Could you describe for me the brick manufacturing process that was being used at that time in Endicott?

Brick Manufacture

Fairchild: Well, the brick plant was located basically at the junction of Rose Creek and Little Blue Rivers. The background of that is on the home farm there was a big shale bank or clay bank, or maybe they called it shale. So my father took a sample and sent it in to the University of Nebraska to see what it had in it, you know, to get an analysis. They sent it back and they said, "Well, the thing is worthwhile for would be for building bricks, making bricks, manufacturing bricks." So with that, they started the brick yard. That's the way things happened back in those days.

The brick yard was started back in the 1920s, and it's evolved. The "I" Building [phonetic] of the World Bank[5] is brick from the Endicott Brick Factory. It's still in operation today, but we don't have any interest in the brick yard. But those bricks are sent all over the United States of America. The characteristic of it is that the shale had quite a bit of iron in it, and when they'd heat it up to oh, say, around 2,2- to 2,400 degrees, the iron would melt, and they'd have little iron spots in it. And that is extremely hard brick, and you'd hit it and it would just ring. They'd ring just almost like hitting metal together. So it was a very successful brick yard. I don't know how many employees they have today, but it's a big going

5. This likely refers to a World Bank Building at 1850 I Street, N.W., in Washington, D.C.

operation out there.

But that's kind of the way things happened back in those days, you know. Somebody would get an idea and they'd try it, and sometimes it worked and sometimes it didn't. The brick yard worked very well. The brick yard worked very well.

Storey: What were the details of the way the bricks were made?

Fairchild: Well, first off, of course, was the shale bank, and among other things, it was the Fairchild Brothers and they had a great big what they called a planer, and it would go in and actually cut the shale off into quite small lumps. Then they'd transport it by track up to the brick yard. There they'd grind it up and put water in with it and get it so that it's the right consistency, and it would go through a press and the press would press it out and it'd come out on the line. And there was a cutter would go and cut it off. Then if you wanted, say, brick with three holes in them, that was the type of die you had. If you wanted, say, eight holes in it, that was another type of die. If you wanted ***brick***, you'd have a different type of die. Then, of course, then you could judge the way you cut them then with the cutters.

They went up in a drying shed, because you couldn't put them directly into a kiln. They'd dry for about a week and dried a lot of the moisture out and once they dried, then you'd take them over to the kiln. Then you'd put them in the kiln, and you'd bake them there for about a week up to, say, 2,200 or 2,400 degrees. When they come out of that kiln, they were done, and with that they were ready to be sold.

It's a rather simple process, but the success depends on the quality of the product that goes into it. The shale there was just excellent. It still is today. It still is today. (Storey: Um-hmm.) It's a wonderful shale bank.

Storey: A lot of hand labor?

Fairchild: It was back in those days, yeah. As I say, Fairchild Brothers had up to 100 employees, and I think they may have 70 to 100 employees now. They put out more brick. They have three plants now down in [unclear] We had just the one mill, and they put out many more bricks. And, of course, now they have loaders and things like that. So the actual physical labor has been cut down considerably, but there's still a great deal of physical labor involved in moving those brick around. The old trucks, you know, you used to take them in what they called a [unclear], you'd take them ten at a time and put them on the truck, you know, with a wheelbarrow. Now they have great big hoists on the truck and they go and they pick up these pallets and put them on the truck. So, yes, it's much more modern than it used to be, just had to be in order to keep the cost down.

Storey: Do you know how your family learned how to make brick?

Fairchild: Well, as I recall, they did go and visit, I think it was, a brick yard in Iowa to see how it operated. But once they decided, you know, to do it, why, they got the

necessary equipment together. And there was natural gas. Well, first they fired the kilns with coal. But, back in, I think it was about the late 1920s or the 1930s, they brought in natural gas, and so natural gas went up to the brick yard. Because of the water and electricity went to the brick yard and natural gas, we had all of those things for our house out on the farm.

"We had a very modern home out on the farm then. . . ."

We had a very modern home out on the farm then.

Storey: That must have been nice in those days.

Fairchild: Yeah. Yeah. The telephone was a ring-type telephone, ring up, you know. Ours was 5404. Four shorts. We had a party line, I think, of probably about ten. I think we had about six on the party line. The brick yard was ***also***. Here it was a pretty big commercial operation, but it was also on the very same party line. It was 5421. So if it would ring two longs and a short, that was the brick yard. Four shorts, that was us. And of course, the party line everybody could listen in and hear what's going on. That was just the nature of it. Actually, it wasn't until after World War II that we got single lines, you know. But an interesting background, yeah.

Family History and Genealogy

A lot of history in the background. My mother used to talk about history. This is pretty off the subject. My great-grandmother's first husband was killed by "Wild Bill" [James Butler] Hickok at Rock Creek Station, Nebraska.

Storey: Oh, really?

Fairchild: Yeah.

Storey: His name?

Fairchild: His name was McCandless. She remarried, and it's when they married that our family comes about. But her first husband was killed at Rock Creek Station. Now, there's quite a state park there today, because that was on the Pony Express. And there was a ford there. McCandless actually built the station for the Pony Express and for the ford, and he sold it to what was called the Major Cartage Company or something like that, that carried freight on the Oregon Trail.

He sold it to them, and there was a disagreement over paying for the station. He went over to collect, and Wild Bill was one of the employees there. The irony of it was that while McCandless left his gun there and ~~McCandless~~ [Hickok] shot him with his own gun while he was in the door. If you go to the Nebraska State Historical Society, the first exhibit you see when you go in there is the picture of Wild Bill shooting McCandless in the door of ~~his house in the door of~~ the station.

If they had taken the testimony at that time, of I think he was, a twelve- or

fourteen-year-old boy, probably Wild Bill would have been hung in Gage County, Nebraska, and you never would have heard of him again. He was the witness to what happened, but at that time they would not take the testimony, ***apparently***, of a minor. So Wild Bill, he left Nebraska; he never came back. After that he never set foot in Nebraska after that.

Storey: Yeah. McCandless is a name you hear.

Fairchild: Yeah. From that family, McCandless–as long as we're talking about history–let me get this right. One of his grandsons was head of the San Diego Naval Base in World War II. That man, Brian's son, Bruce, was in World War II, and he got the Congressional Medal of Honor for bringing the cruiser *San Francisco* back from, I think it was, the Battle of Midway. It was all shot up. And Bruce's son, Bruce, is one of the astronauts, the first one who went walked in space. So McCandless is kind of a well-known name, yeah. And that was my great-grandmother, Mary McCandless.

Storey: So were these people descended from your great-grandmother?

Fairchild: Yes, that's right. From McCandless. Then when he was killed, then she remarried, and she married a Hughes. So my grandmother's name was Hughes. So these people are ***half***-relatives to us. Of course, I was never a relative of McCandless, because he was shot and I was never a relative of his. It's kind of interesting history.

Storey: Yeah. It is.

Fairchild: Well, anyway, it's pretty well recorded in Nebraska history. And Rock Creek Station is a very nice state park there. Now the [unclear portion] down by Endicott and Fairbury. So that was the Pony Express. You can still see the old ruts of the Oregon Trail, right there where they eroded out, you know. As the wagons went west, why, you know, going up those deep cuts. They wore out the grass and then there was rain, of course, then you got these big ruts wash in underneath. You can still see those out there in.

Storey: When did your family move to this area, to Endicott?

Fairchild: Oh, to Endicott? Well, the McCandlesses moved back there. That would have been just prior to the Civil War. So that would have been in the late 1850s, early 1860s. That was on the maternal side. And on the paternal side, I think it was in the early 1900s. Well, it had to be in the 1800s also, because the home place, the home farmstead, was built in 1904. It's a nice Victorian farmstead, and it was built in 1904. Prior to that time, I have a photograph of the log cabin that preceded the home place that was built in 1904. So it was in the late 1800s when they actually came there.

The first thing they developed there in that area is in the creek bottom. They developed a sorghum mill. They had a big sorghum mill there. Of course, you

know, sugar was not all that common, so sorghum was used in a lot and molasses was used a lot for sweetening. That was really quite a ***big*** operation. They'd make as many as 3,000 gallons of sorghum a day, got that sorghum out. So it was also a big operation.

Then when they got the brick yard why they just more or less closed down the sorghum factory, because, of course, I suppose with the advent of sugar and other things, that wasn't as good an operation. So they went over into brick manufacturing.

Storey: And do you know when they disposed of the brick manufacturing?

Fairchild: Well, they sold it in, I think it was 1939, and just farmed from then on.

I went to the University of Nebraska in 1944 and went in the service in 1946, graduated in 1949. But in the summers I'd go back and I'd operate the farm, because my father . . .

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

Storey: You were saying that you went away to the University of Nebraska in '44.

Fairchild: In 1944. At that time, I was sixteen years old and I went to the university. I'd come back in the summertime and actually kind of operate the farm, because Dad had a real serious heart attack, and he wasn't able to do a lot of things then because of that. So then I went into the service. When I went into the service and I come back, I returned to the university and my mother went on the home place and farmed. Eventually, my sister bought the home farmstead, though. So my siblings, the brother and two sisters, lived all their life in Endicott there on the farm. I was the only one that left. I was the one that left.

Storey: Are you the only one who went to college?

Fairchild: No. ***All*** of us went to college. That was very important to Mom and Dad. We all went to college. Three of us graduated. My brother did not graduate. He could have, but he decided that he wanted to go back to the farm and do other things, and so he never graduated. But my two sisters did. They graduated as did I.

Storey: Did they then work at anything?

Fairchild: My two sisters were teachers, teachers in the public school systems, and my mother was a public school teacher.

Storey: And did they both marry?

Fairchild: Yes, and they have children. None of the children live in that area. But the whole family basically stayed in that area. Then I also had many aunts and uncles,

particularly on my mother's side. There was eight children, and most of those continue to live in the area. So there's still quite a family of–well, now it would be Comptons down in that area.

Storey: What made you study technical science programs at the University of Nebraska? In Lincoln, right?

Fairchild: Yes, the University of Nebraska. Well, as I said, at the time, I thought I was probably going to go on and get a master's and a doctorate degree and probably teach at some university. So that was the background, and that was good background for that kind of program, and that was really what that was oriented to college of agriculture, people they thought were going to go on and do advanced work. That was a good program for them to get into. ***But***, when I graduated in 1949, I had a chance to, as I said, to go to work for the Soil Conservation Service, and I took that job, and I never went back, which probably I should have, but I did not.

Storey: Was there, for instance, a teacher or a 4-H or a F-F-A [Future Farmers of America] or some incident that caused you to go in that direction?

Family Believed in Education for the Children

Fairchild: I would say it was my parents. My mother felt very strongly that her children should have an education. My father was always very supportive. He thought that the pinnacle of a professional is if you're going to be a college professor or a teacher. And then I think, even though he didn't live all that long, I think he was kind of disappointed that I probably was not going to do that. But it was primarily the encouragement of my parents. They were the force. My mother was ***extremely*** interested in education, extremely interested in seeing that her children get educated.

Storey: But was her interest limited to an agricultural education, or was it more general?

Fairchild: Not necessarily. More general. She just wanted to make sure I had an education, whether it be in engineering or whether it be anything else, you know. But she was quite interested. And because we lived on a farm and all, I guess it was kind of natural that I would go that way. Of course, when I went up to the university, why, I did get associated with some professors up there that were very helpful and encouraging. So I found it very comfortable there. I enjoyed it.

Storey: Do you remember any names in particular?

Fairchild: Well, there was the head of the agronomy department, Dr. [Franklin D.] Keim, a very nice old man, of course, long since passed away. There was Dr. [Homer] Gooding,[6] who was his assistant, was a very fine person. I took some of my

6. These names and footnote information are derived from two documents at the following website: http://agronomy.unl.edu/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=2f9860bd-ed85-4179-9615-861095e3a224&groupId=412

(continued...)

chemistry and math courses down at the main campus downtown.

". . . in 1944, the ratio of women to men at the university, I think was something like ten to twelve to one. . . . even though I was only sixteen years old, I was kind of an unusual person, because the campus basically was all girls. . . . Then, of course, I went into the service. When I came back, it was just the reverse. . . ."

It was time, back in 1944, the ratio of women to men at the university, I think was something like ten to twelve to one. I was really quite a–the fact that I was there on the campus, you know, even though I was only sixteen years old, I was kind of an unusual person, because the campus basically was all girls. That's because of the ***war***. Then, of course, I went into the service. When I came back, it was just the reverse. So many of the veterans had come back after that, you know, from World War II, and I think the ratio then was something like eight to ten men to women. What a shock that was for me.

". . . the G-I *Bill* was very helpful, you know, to people like myself finishing our education. . . ."

But, of course, having gone in the service, one of the real things was, of course, the G-I ***Bill*** was very helpful, you know, to people like myself finishing our education. It was a good program. The G-I Bill was very helpful to us, so many G-Is took advantage of the G-I Bill.

Storey: Wasn't the age of sixteen a little young to be going to school?

Fairchild: To college?

Storey: Yes.

How He Ended up Going to the University at the Age of Sixteen

Fairchild: Well, it was a mistake. Not a mistake that I was sixteen, but it was a mistake of getting started. The background of that was that my mother had some eye problems, and she was in Lincoln getting her eyes treated. School was starting. My sister had started the year before. So my father took me to school and the teacher asked, "Well, Mr. Fairchild, how old is Warren?" Well, Dad didn't know, because Dad had never paid that much attention. You know, he didn't know exactly, and I was so dumb I didn't know how old I was. She said, "Well, we'll let Warren go to school, and then when Edna (that was my mother) comes back from Lincoln, we'll find out how old he is and whether he should continue."

So, anyway, a week or so later, why, Mom came back and she said, "Well, my

6. (...continued)
8273&.pdf which was accessed on March 21, 2013, at about 4:15 in the afternoon. Robert C. Sorensen developed a brief article titled "Keim Hall Remembrances" and Lowell Moser and Paul Read compiled a "Department of Agronomy and Horticulture Timeline." According to the timeline F. D. Keim joined the University of Nebraska in 1914, and Homer Gooding joined the Agronomy Department in 1917.

goodness. Why is Warren going to school? He's only four years old." So she went and talked to the teacher and she said, "Well, he seemed to be doing all right. Why don't you just let him continue?"

But the irony was that I was in kindergarten. After I was in there about, I guess two or three months, they decided to do away with kindergarten and put all the kindergarten people up in the first grade. So I was four years old in first grade. So that's the reason I had graduated at sixteen. Not that I was a great brain or anything like that, it was just a matter of I just kept moving on and graduated when I was sixteen.

Actually, I graduated from high school and went into the army. When I came back from the army and started at the University of Nebraska–in fact, that would be in 1947–I was a junior, a junior level at the University of Nebraska. I'd spent almost a year and a half in the service. At that time, I was nineteen years old. So it's just a matter of I started early, that was all.

Storey: And then you went to the Soil Conservation Service. Do you remember how many were in your graduating class at Nebraska?

Fairchild: At the university?

Storey: Yeah.

Fairchild: I think at that time, probably when I graduated, I would guess it was probably somewhere around 3,000 graduated from the university. Johnny Carson was one of them that graduated that year at the university.

Storey: With you?

When he graduated from the university "There were so many opportunities, all sorts of opportunities to go to work. You really didn't have to look that hard to find a job. . . ."

Fairchild: Yes. Although he was downtown. He was down at fine arts, you know. But I knew ***of*** him, because he was always quite the master of ceremony at various things. He was quite an entertainer even in those days at the university. But then a lot of veterans, of course, were graduating at that time. There were so many opportunities, all sorts of opportunities to go to work. You really didn't have to look that hard to find a job.

Storey: How did you end up with the Soil Conservation Service in a situation like that?

Soil Conservation Service Offered Him a Job Where He Would Work Part of the Time in His Home County

Fairchild: Well, I didn't know exactly how I got directed that way. I guess I'd heard through some source or other that there were some openings with the Soil Conservation

Service. So I went over, and I talked to the state conservationist and his assistant about the possibility of going to work, and they offered me a job. What was particularly ***appealing*** about it was that they offered me a job as a soil scientist, which I really wasn't all that qualified for, but they offered me a job as a soil scientist, and one of the counties I was going to work in was my own county of Jefferson County. So I'd stay at home on the farm and work for the Soil Conservation Service. That was ***very***, very appealing, you know, that I could just stay at home and work with Soil Conservation Service. So I did that for, oh, I guess, two or three years.

About 1954 He Went to Work in the Small Watershed Program and Went to Work down in Gage County

Then about that time, the small watershed program came into being, and they asked me to kind of divert over and start working on that, because that was really kind of the real expanding program of the Soil Conservation Service, there was a pilot watershed program. I forget what year that came out. I think that must have been about 1954. And then, of course, the PL-566 in 1956. No, that's not right. Yeah, I guess that's about right.

". . . I think it was in 1956, we laid out almost 1,000 miles of radiant terraces in Gage County. So we had a, our watershed program, we had a very aggressive program . . ."

Anyway, so I got involved in the watershed program and eventually came working in conservation down in Gage County. It was a excellent kind of work, because that's at Beatrice a neighboring county to Jefferson County. It's a fairly good-sized county. But at that time, I was working in conservation and we had seventeen employees on the staff, the Soil Conservation Service. We had a big operation in our watershed program. I think it was in 1956, we laid out almost 1,000 miles of radiant terraces in Gage County. So we had a, our watershed program, we had a very aggressive program and worked very close to the various districts.

"That was one reason, then, why they contacted me to head up the state department, because things were going *well* at that time in what we were doing in Gage County. . . ."

That was one reason, then, why they contacted me to head up the state department, because things were going ***well*** at that time in what we were doing in Gage County. So I agreed that I'd go to work for the state government, and I worked with state government for thirteen years. And then worked there and then things kind of evolved and the various programs evolved.

So then I was contacted would I like to come back to work with the Bureau of Reclamation as assistant commissioner. It seemed like a good time professionally to make a change. It was a real opportunity. I welcomed the change, and it turned out to be real good. It turned out to be a great opportunity for me professionally

and personally.

Storey: Now, when you were at Soil Conservation Service at first, right out of college, you said there were about three years before the small watershed program started.

Work at the Soil Conservation Service

Fairchild: Yeah.

Storey: What were you doing?

Fairchild: I was conducting soil surveys for conservation farm plans. In other words, you know, the Soil Conservation Service used a little bit different land classification program than did the Bureau of Reclamation. We had a land classification program based upon the soil type and the degree of the slope and the degree of erosion, which we'd come up with a capability, one through eight. So we ran these soil surveys. The E-R-S also did it for the U-S-D-A.[7]

So whenever a farmer indicated an interest in doing conservation work, one of the first things we did was develop a conservation plan, made a farm conservation plan. And the farm conservation plan was based upon a soil capability map, which is a soil survey. In other words, the type of erosion control tracks you put on the farm would depend upon the capability of the land. And if you had, for instance, a Class Six land, why, then in the Soil Conservation Service terminology, that was not good land to use for crop introduction. We would encourage that be re-seeded or put into forestry classes. And Class Two and Class Three land, that would be in various rotations and conservation practices we would recommend for those.

So that was really the basis of the farm conservation plan, on each plan. And then later on I had started developing plans as part of the conservation program and the watershed program and, you know, from there then taking those farm plans and putting them into the watershed, kind of a watershed approach. That was the Powell [? unclear] watershed and PL-566 program.

In Gage County, I think up in Gage County, I believe we had–I believe it was about six active watershed programs in Gage County. It was a program that really get to that area, and the farmers were extremely interested in it, because the ***soils*** in southeastern Nebraska and south central Nebraska have a heavy clay pan down about twelve to fourteen inches, and if the topsoil washes off. It's very difficult to till it. So the farmers were ***extremely*** interested in holding that topsoil and not losing their land. So that's why they were so responsive to the Soil Conservation Program.

". . . south central Nebraska and north central and northeastern Kansas and southeastern Nebraska probably are as active in the soil conservation program as any place in the United States and primarily because of the soil type that you

7. Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

have there. . . ."

That area in south central Nebraska and north central and northeastern Kansas and southeastern Nebraska probably are as active in the soil conservation program as any place in the United States and primarily because of the soil type that you have there. So a lot of times the reason why these programs evolve better than in other areas.

Storey: So in that early period you would go out and you would look at the land and you would determine slope?

Fairchild: Slope and erosion and the soil type.

Storey: And how did you determine the soil type?

Fairchild: That was just by knowledge. You could determine by looking at it whether it was glacial till, or whether it was loess, wind blown, and then you could determine by the feel as to whether it was a medium texture, moderately heavy, or heavy soil, or whether it was a light soil. So this was all done by your survey, and you'd actually go out and dig a hole and make that determination by looking at the soil as you go down through the various profiles so you could determine what kind of soil it was. You'd take that information along with the slope and the erosion. That determines your soil capability, which then with the determination as to how you recommend that it be handled by the farmer.

Storey: So you didn't do laboratory tests or anything?

Fairchild: No. We would take along some acid bottles and things like that to see whether it had any lime in the soil and things like that, because that would then be a little bit different soil type. But we didn't ***test*** the soil. Soil Conservation Service did not ***test*** the soil like for fertility. That was done by the county agent. The county agent did that. If you wanted a soil test to see whether, for instance, what you need is some phosphate or you needed sulfur, you'd send those a soil tests in to the county agent. We did not do that. That was the Cooperative Extension Service.

Storey: What was the purpose besides classifying the land and telling the farmers what you thought they ought to be growing?

Fairchild: Well, that was the main thing. But then also by that you would determine then, certainly, the conservation practices, whether there was terraces needed. Then you would also find out whether there was some particular gullying problems that may need some erosion control structures and things like that. These were all identified on these maps, and it sort of gave the basis, the inventory, and the plan we used when we went out and sat down with the farmers and determine what he's going to do with his land to better conserve the land.

After I did that a few years, then I actually became a soil conservationist and working in conservation and was in charge of laying out the practices. I laid out

quite a few practices myself, you know, erosion control structures, terraces, irrigation practices, drainage. I did a lot of that, too.

Storey: What was the typical sized farm in that area?

Typical Farms in the Area Where He Worked

Fairchild: At that time, I suppose a typical farm would probably be 240 to 320 acres at that time. There's a lot of 160-acre farms there, too. But a lot of them should be a quarter-section to a half-section farms.

Storey: And we're talking farms rather than ranches?

Fairchild: Yeah. This was farm country. You go out in the north central and northwestern parts of the state, you get into ranches. These were farms. These were where you raised crops and you had cattle and livestock, hogs.

Storey: How did the system work in those day? Say there was a farmer and he wanted the S-C-S to assist him. What was the process that was gone through? And then once S-C-S became involved, how many people from S-C-S were involved and how long did it take and so on?

How the Soil Conservation Service's Program Worked in Those Days

Fairchild: Well, if a farmer became interested, what he would do, he'd sign an agreement with the local soil conservation district, which is a little body out there which is organized under state law. In this, why, he applied for a conservation plan on his farm, and he agreed that he would carry out a conservation program. So once he signed it, outside of the district, he couldn't get technical assistance from the Soil Conservation Service until he actually signed an application with the local soil conservation district. So we were there to assist the district in carrying out their program. (Storey: Uh-huh.)

So the farmer would become a ***member*** of the district. He would apply to become a member. And then we'd go out. And the first thing we'd do is run the soil survey. After that was done, why, then, of course, then the conservation people, the soil conservation, would go out and work out the recommendations as to his cropping programs, whether he needed terraces, whether he probably needed diversions, whether he needed erosion control structures. And then there would be a sequence set up to accomplish this.

"There was cost sharing to encourage the farmers to do this. At that time, I think it cost them like four or five cents . . . a *foot* to build a terrace, and probably the cost sharing would be somewhere around two and a half-, three cents a foot. . . ."

At that time, there was cost sharing through the old P-M-A, now called A-S-

C-S. I don't think it's called A-S-C-S any longer.[8] There was cost sharing to encourage the farmers to do this. At that time, I think it cost them like four or five cents ~~a mile. That doesn't sound like very much. Is that right? Four or five cents~~ a ***foot***. Excuse me. Four or five cents a ***foot*** to build a terrace, and probably the cost sharing would be somewhere around two and a half-, three cents a foot. He'd get that from the A-S-C-S. But he'd only get it once we had certified that he had constructed it according to specifications, which was prepared by the Soil Conservation Service, which was through the local conservation district.

". . . there was not only a tactical assistance, but there was financial assistance from the federal government to put these conservation programs on. . . ."

And so there was not only a tactical assistance, but there was financial assistance from the federal government to put these conservation programs on. We're talking primarily erosion control. The same thing was true also of irrigation practices, but somewhat less so for irrigation practices. But you'd get cost sharing like for cutting in line ditches. You'd get cost sharing for some land leveling. But anything that would save the water and save the soil, at that time the government was giving financial assistance to do that.

Storey: How long would it take to do a typical farm and how many people from S-C-S would have to work on it?

Fairchild: Well, of course, we were working on many farms at one time, but I'd say that a normal farm plan would probably take two or three years to complete it. But the farmer, if he was kind of short, and didn't have too much money, why it might take him ten years, you know. There wasn't any set time. So we'd go as he was able to do it, and as he had the money and also as the land was available. You know, you couldn't go out all the time to put on terraces, because the fields had to be open [unclear]. So it was, I'd say, anywhere from probably three to ten years is what it would normally take to get that done.

But it was an interesting period in my life, working directly with the farmers. It really was. You know, you'd ride up with them, improving their farms. And, of course, they were happy to improve their farms, glad to get the assistance. So we developed a very close relationship with the farmers.

Storey: And really you were there by invitation, so that you didn't get an adversarial sort of situation.

Fairchild: Not at all. Not at all. Not at all. They wanted us. They would ***call*** us to come out, and they would sign up [for us] to come out. But, of course, we had an education program to ***encourage*** them to contact us and to work with us. In that area, we had an awful lot of work to do. It was extremely successful, and the farmers they liked it. If you ever drive through that area, around Lincoln and south of Lincoln, you'll

8. Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service which was merged with other Department of Agriculture bureaus in 1994 when it became part of the Farm Service Agency.

see an awful lot of conservation work in there, and that was done only with the leadership and the cooperation and the involvement of farmers. But there wasn't any way the government could say you ***must*** do this. There wasn't any way you could do that. But only if the farmer ***wanted*** it done, they'd become a member of the local soil conservation district, then that would happen.

Work after Becoming Executive Secretary of the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission

So there's where I got involved first with the soil conservation districts as an example.

Creation of Natural Resources Districts in Nebraska

But at that time, the soil conservation district and ***drainage*** district and the irrigation reclamation district is what we ***then***, when I went with state government, that we ***reorganized*** those into a series of natural resource districts. So you won't find a soil conservation district in Nebraska anymore. You will in other states, but not there. ***Now*** if you want to get conservation work done on your farm, you go to the natural resource district. The natural resource district will probably cover, on average, three or four counties. It's much bigger. Much bigger. And these districts have their own personnel and their own programs. They have the power of taxation and the power of eminent domain. They have ***all*** the authorities they need to try out all these programs.

And so it was the recognition of the people in the district movement, basically farmers and also city folks, that the local districts just didn't have the authority to do what needed to be done, and now they use this holistic approach. The holistic approach of watershed management. So as ***that need*** which became evident back in the, I'll say, the 1960s, late 1960s, it gradually evolved into us being legislated into these natural resource districts.

So that really was an ***effort*** on our part to develop a holistic approach or a comprehensive approach, and the natural resource districts organized on what we called common problem areas. In some areas those common problem areas were topographic. So like as an example, the Blue Rivers, the boundaries of those would be to take in the entire basin of the Blue. Whereas up in the Sand Hills, there, you know, you would have an undefined drainage, and so we'd just use the administrative boundaries, the boundaries of the counties. It didn't make any difference. However, in the central part of the state where groundwater was the critical thing, we basically organized around groundwater areas. So the boundaries were a little bit unique in what we called "common problem areas," and the common problem areas could be based upon hydrologic, based upon groundwater, or based upon the administrative boundaries, based upon what they really were. So that was what ***evolved*** that particular piece of legislation in the state, which is quite successful. It's really very interesting now to go back and see how those districts are working.

Storey: What kinds of political pressures caused that to occur?

Fairchild: The political pressure, as I see it, is a nonpartisan legislature, so there wasn't any partisan politics involved, but the political pressure came from, I would say, the local people themselves that were organized into state associations that saw a need.

It just so ***happened*** that I was ***there*** at the time and was able to work with them and coalesce that type of interest in that innovation and that imagination on the part of these state leaders that came from the local level that they could see that something more had to be done in our state. So through a period of several years we had a lot of programs of information and education among the farmers in their local soil conservation districts and others as to why this change had to come into being.

At that same time, we were working with the Nebraska legislature and their various committees so they could ***also*** see that we could not continue like we were doing because we knew that we had 500 districts and within a period of probably twenty years we were going to have a ***thousand*** districts, ***all*** fractured and doing different things. We ***weren't*** doing a good job of managing our groundwater. We ***weren't*** doing an adequate job of financing the watershed flood control programs. We needed something also that could better spawn some Bureau of Reclamation projects.

We could see all these things that needed to be done, and we didn't have the tools at the local or state level to do it. So it took quite a little bit of time to develop the grassroots support, and it was only after that was developed, of course, then efforts were made then through the legislature to bring it forth.

". . . it was quite controversial. There were many local farmers and local groups that thought this was wrong. They thought, 'Oh, my, we're going to lose local control.'. . ."

But it was quite controversial. There were many local farmers and local groups that thought this was wrong. They thought, "Oh, my, we're going to lose local control." Like the little one room schoolhouse, the little one room schoolhouse. We'll lose local control. That has gone into the county seat town, you know. So there was some of that, too. And, you know, you've got marvelous people that felt very honest about it, but they were not in a majority position as far as their opinions, and it passed through the legislature relatively easy. We had a very outstanding governor who was farsighted, and he signed it, and then we were in business. But it took a lot of work. It just didn't happen.

But the reason it ***worked*** was because we had the ***foundation*** laid at the local level and those people worked with their legislators to get the action done. It could ***never*** have been done from the state level. But it was done because they were ***sold*** on this was the proper approach, and it coalesced them in their group as a state focal point, and we got the legislature in, and they supported it to the legislators, and it passed. LB-1357 was the number.

Flood Plain Management Act

The same way sort of our Flood Plain Management Act. ***Very*** controversial act. But we got it passed through the legislature without them opposing it. But just before it went up for enactment, we had a big flood in Omaha, and anything that said "flood control" was going to pass at that time. Some times ***timing*** is important. (Storey: Uh-huh.) And so that act passed and it's a very good act, flood plain management, to keep from ***building*** in these flood plains, you know, and you make sure that you have the right kind of facility in those flood plain areas. And we set up the natural resource databank.

Anyway, there was just awakening in the state that many things had to be done, because soil and water in that agricultural area out there is just critical to the future of the state, and how you take care of it is so important. And I do feel very strongly about that. But we had opposition. We had some opposition among the federal agencies. Had some opposition among some university people, too, because they were kind of involved with some of these local units, you know. They'd kind of see that, "Gosh, we're going to lose those local units out there we've been working with, you know." But rather than see that here's a bigger group they could work with, which ***now*** they see, that had some power to work with us, there was some apprehension.

I remember a representative of Farmers Home Administration called one day and he said, "Warren, we don't want to be involved with this natural resource district." They had these little water supply districts out there in the rural areas.

I said, "Well," I said, "Joe, that's tough." But I said, "You're going to be included." So we were kind of hard-nosed at the time. And they ***were*** included and it's been a ***great*** thing for them. They have a ***much better*** rural water supply program now than they ever would have had on these little districts. That's just natural. It's hard to see how sometimes these things work out.

Storey: It's natural to resist change, I think, too.

Fairchild: Yeah. As you can see, there was some controversy. And it was about that time that we got them going, that it was time for Warren to make a professional change, and I was asked to come back here, and it worked real well from my standpoint.

Storey: What other kinds of responsibilities did the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission have?

Development of the Nebraska's State Water Plan

Fairchild: Well, we developed the state water plan for the state.

Storey: What was that about?

Two Bureau of Reclamation Projects Were Key to the Nebraska State Water Plan

Fairchild: That basically was a program on how to manage the water resources of the state and using the assistance from the various federal agencies and state agencies to better manage and utilize the soil and water resources for the betterment of all. ***Until that time***, we never had a state water plan. But this evolved, the state water plan evolved, and one of the key features of the state water plan was a couple of Reclamation projects that were proposed.

The O'Neill Project

One of them was the O'Neill Project,[9] would become very controversial, and even though we got it authorized back here in Washington later on, it was never built because of some environmental concerns which, in ***my*** view, were totally misplaced, totally misplaced.

But that was one of the keys to the state water plan. As I told the people when I spoke to a water meeting back there last year, I said the high point and the low point in my professional life probably occurred in the state of Nebraska. The high point was enactment of the natural resource district legislation, and the low point was the fact that the O'Neill Project was never implemented. I feel very sorry about that.

It was a ***wonderful*** project that should have been implemented but was not, because the opponents to it, in ***my*** view, used a lot of scare tactics and they had the press and fears and things like that that it's just almost impossible to implement it. But it was a great project that should have been built, but never will be now. At least it won't be in our lifetime.

Storey: I sort of recall somebody telling me about the development of a water plan for Kansas about this time.

Kansas Developed a State Water Plan Before Nebraska Did

Fairchild: They preceded us. They had a state water plan in Kansas a few years before us, yeah.

Storey: Was there anything . . .

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

Storey: This is tape two of an interview by Brit Storey with Warren Fairchild on the April 3rd, 1995.

I had asked you if there was anything triggering these water plans.

9. Congress authorized the O'Neill Unit of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program in the Reclamation Project Authorization Act of 1972, Public Law 92-514, which became law on October 20, 1972.

The Water Resources Planning Act and the Water Resources Council

Fairchild: Well, of course, I would like to think what triggered it was a real need, and there ***really*** was need. But I would say the ***catalyst*** was the enactment of the Water Resources Planning Act by the U.S. Congress. I forget the year that was enacted now.[10]

The Water Resources Planning Act Included Assistance to the States for Development of State Water Plans

But, anyway, one of the provisions of that act was some funding to states for the development of a state water plan. Now, ***Kansas*** had already started doing this even before the Planning Act was envisioned, but it was ***that*** enactment of the Water Resources Planning Act that also had the Water Resources Council in it, that encouraged the state of Nebraska, because here if we started to evolve and develop the state water plan, we could get some assistance from the federal government to develop that plan.

So there was a ***need***, and ***also*** because there was going to be some financial assistance, planning money coming to the state to hire personnel, was helpful and it helped me ***sell*** this and the people sell it to the legislature and we got ***funding*** for it on a matching basis from the state of Nebraska to develop the state water planning body. So there was, basically, months of hearings led by Senator [Robert S.] Kerr from Oklahoma at that time. This act evolved and that was one provision of it. Another provision was, of course, to establish the Water Resources Council that made the option of development of river basin commissions and to call for turning out water assessments, national water assessments, and there also was this funding for states. So there really was four different things that were involved in that act, which is a very fine act. I think most people will tell you that it's very helpful to them. It certainly was very helpful to us in Nebraska.

Then because of the nature of our commission, we had not only these federal agencies I talked about earlier–Department of Interior, Department of Army, and Department of Agriculture–advisors to us, we had representative state agencies. We had the Department of Water Resources on the commission. We had a couple of people from the university who were on it. So these people were advising as well as locally elected people that were on the commission. So we had really a broad-based group who made up our commission at that time. So when the commission, working with these local people, decided this was something that needed to be done, we had a pretty strong group behind us. So that was what made it possible for some of these things to happen.

Storey: I presume the Department of Water Resources would be, for instance, in charge of water rights?

10. Water Resources Planning Act (42 U.S.C. 1962a - 1962(a)(4)(e); P.L. 89-80; July 22, 1965; 79 Stat. 245) as amended by: P.L.94-112; October 16, 1975; 89 Stat. 575; P.L. 95-404; September 30, 1978; 92 Stat. 864; and P.L. 97-449; January 12, 1983; 96 Stat. 2441. Source is: http://www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/WATRES.HTML accessed on March 23, 2013, at about 7:40 A.M.

"The Department of Water Resources . . . the regulatory body. They had water rights. They worked on the interstate compact commissions . . . We were involved in planning and development. . . ."

Fairchild: The Department of Water Resources was a separate department from us. They were the regulatory body. They had water rights. They worked on the interstate compact commissions and things like that. That was their activity. We were involved in planning and development.

And I think there was a good reason to separate regulation from operation in Nebraska. We were separated. But we had ***very*** good cooperation from the Department of Water Resources. But they took care of all the regulatory programs, and we took care of the planning and development. That was our bailiwick.

Storey: So, for instance, the state water plan would be planning and development?

Fairchild: That came under us. That's right. That come under the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation. If you wanted a water right, you went to the Department of Water Resources. If the state was going to be developing or planning a program of, say, a compact with the state of Kansas or Colorado on, let's say, on the Republican River, that was handled and administered by the Department of Water Resources. That was the breakdown of responsibilities.

Storey: Seems like there would be some overlap.

Dan Jones Headed the Department of Water Resources

Fairchild: Well, I'm sure there were gray areas, but we had a excellent relationship. The director the Department of Water Resources was a man that had been head of that department for years, name was Dan Jones. Dan has now passed away, but really a fine gentleman. Dan and I developed a very good working relationship, and it was the type of thing that–incidentally, he was a member of our commission. He was a member of our commission, and so he sat on the commission. So we were always able to work closely together, because the state government of Nebraska was ***not that big***, you know, that you had these boxes you just couldn't get out of. And the same thing was true of the man that at that time headed up the Water Pollution Control Board. Now, he was an ***advisor*** to the commission, but he sat on our commission.

So we basically had all these ***parties*** sitting together, as well as the local people that were representing the local people. So we had eleven members of the commission. I think we had about five advisors. We had a great big conference table, and when we had our meeting, everybody sat there and was able to add their input to it. Once a decision was made, why, it was a pretty solid decision. And I'd say everybody was ***very farsighted*** in what they were looking for in the state at that time. And the legislature, we had some legislators that were ***extremely*** interested in seeing that this program develop and that we develop better programs to better manage our resources. One of them was a state senator from Aurora, Morris

Kramer, a very fine person, and he took a personal interest, as did many other state senators.

And having a unicameral, we knew that if we got about twenty-five votes we could get anything passed through the legislature. So we probably were able, because of the unicameral, ***nonpartisan*** unicameral, we were probably able to get things done like the natural resource district legislation that would have been much more difficult in a two-body house where partisan politics were involved. So I'd say the makeup of the legislature, also, and the leadership of some of the people in the legislature was extremely helpful to it.

So the program really evolved rather quickly at that point in time, say, from when I first went there in '57 through '70, about thirteen years. Really it involved many, many, many folk at that time, and the program still is evolving and developing now.

Dale Williamson Succeeded Him at the Commission

The man that was my assistant, who I hired, has headed up the program ever since I've been back, about twenty-five years. So there's been some great continuity in that program. Dale Williamson [phonetic] has been the head of the program back there for about twenty-five years.

Storey: How were you given the job with Nebraska?

Fairchild: Well, we had this commission, and the man that was ***head*** of it, he was going to go work for a ***bank***. So they were looking around and, for whatever reason, they asked this man that worked for the Soil Conservation Service in Gage County whether he'd like to come up and head up the state agency.

Storey: So the ***commission*** selected you.

Fairchild: Yeah. They actually come down and they contacted me to see whether I'd be interested. And I said, "Well, I'd like to come and visit with you about it," and I went up. At that time, the department was really quite small, but you could see these things were starting to develop as far as the local support and the local leadership and the feelings in the legislature and things like that. You could see things starting to move. There was a lot of interest in irrigation and watersheds and flood control, and it was just a matter of getting people organized to support so you could really start making some great strides. So the time was ripe.

So I was ***asked*** to come and consider it, and we agreed that we would do it. And the same thing was true when I come back with Bureau of Reclamation. I didn't apply for the job as assistant commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. I was ***asked*** to come back.

Storey: But you must have some sense of why you were asked to go to the Nebraska job.

Fairchild: Well, we had a successful program in Gage County, a ***very*** successful program. Had all these watersheds. We had a program like in '56 where they had built almost 1,000 miles of terraces, you know, and no place else was carrying out a program like that. Things were ***really*** moving, you know, and great activity. You know, in a state like Nebraska, people ***know*** where activities are going on. We were quite happy with the way things were moving, and the local people I worked with there were very satisfied. So some of them are involved with the state agency and, of course, that's the way the word, I guess, went up to the state commission. So when the man left, why, they asked me if I'd be interested, and I said, "Well, I probably would be." So we made the change, and I moved from Beatrice to Lincoln, forty miles.

Storey: Gatchus? How do you spell that?

Fairchild: Beatrice?

Storey: Oh, Beatrice. I know that one.

Fairchild: Home of Beatrice Foods. They call it "Bee-uh-trus."

Storey: Yeah.

Fairchild: "Bee-uh-trus" Foods started in "Bee-AT-rus," Nebraska. "Bee-AT-rus" Food wouldn't sound very good, would it?

Storey: Probably not.

Fairchild: So Meadow Gold started in Beatrice.

Storey: How many folks were on the Soil and Water Conservation Commission staff when you went there?

Fairchild: Two.

Storey: Two. You and somebody else.

Staffing Increased Substantially During His Time at the Soil and Water Conservation Commission

Fairchild: Me, myself, and–we'd call her secretary at that time. We were administrative. But when I left there, I think we had right around–with state planning and all, I think at that time we had maybe around seventy employees. Maybe even more than that.

Storey: Average of maybe around seven a year or so.

Fairchild: Yeah. Well, that's right. So there was a tremendous increase. I'd say that ***during*** that period of time, you know, in the thirteen years I was there, I suppose our budget was somewhere around $27,000 for two years, up to a budget that's, well,

somewhere around probably a million and a half to two million. This was basically for people, staff salaries, although we did start making investments. For instance, we set up a watershed trust fund whereby we'd make money available to the local units of government, these local natural resource districts, to procure land for the sites for the watershed structures and other types of improvements. And so the state started actually making ***investments*** in these sites after that time.

So it was a very interesting time. A lot of things. It was a very rewarding time professionally, because things were moving. And, of course, it was also rewarding when I was at the Soil Conservation Service was engaging and things were moving very fast. The federal government was quite active and encouraging these things to happen. Those were kind of the golden days, and you look back on them, and some of that was kind of the golden age also in the Bureau of Reclamation, particularly in the fifties.

Storey: Did you have any trouble adjusting to the growth in the staff size?

Fairchild: I don't recall any.

Storey: Just like a duck to water, huh?

Fairchild: Things just went very well. Since I hired all the personnel, I guess you hire people that you think you can get along with. Even today many of those people are still working there and have retired there, and it's always good to be able to go back and go to the office and sit down and visit with them. Today I have a very close rapport with all of them.

The lady that was the secretary, that later became the administrative officer for our organization, she came back last fall and visited us in our home. We see her when we go back out there. Dale Williamson is head of the department now. About three weeks ago, he and I, our families, we attended a concert together here in Washington, D.C. So, yes, we have close personal ties.

But once I left there, I ***never, ever*** attempted to become involved in any way in the programs of the agency, because I just don't thing that's appropriate. Once you leave an organization, you should never go back to try to influence the programs. They have enough problems without somebody else coming back and sticking their nose back in it. I'm so pleased with what they've done since then, because Dale and the staff back there have really further expanded many times what we started. It's just very pleasing to see what's happening. Like I say, in May I'll be going back to a meeting back there and meeting some old colleagues, and so it's pleasant to be able to go back home, and that is kind of home camp.

Storey: Once again, you know, you must have some idea of why Ellis Armstrong and whoever it was came out to talk to you about coming to the Bureau of Reclamation. It was Ellis, wasn't it?

Jimmy Smith Was Assistant Secretary for Water and Land During Fairchild's Time

at Reclamation and May Have Influenced His Selection for the Job at Reclamation

Fairchild: It was Ellis. There was also another individual involved. The assistant secretary was Jimmy–I want to say Adams. That's not it. Jimmy Smith. James Smith was the assistant secretary, and he was from Nebraska. And I don't want to indicate I had a close relationship with him in Nebraska; I ***did not***. But Jim was aware of things we were doing out there. So during a course of time after Jim was back here and Ellis was commissioner, why, they were looking for somebody to come back and head up the planning program, and apparently my name came up.

Contacted and Asked If He Might Be Interested in Moving to the Bureau of Reclamation

And so they contacted me to see whether I would be interested and whether I would come back. So I said, well, I was going to be at a interstate council and water problems meeting in South Carolina, and we'd just stop by. ~~And that was back in, I think, '57. Not '57. Excuse me. What am I talking about?~~ That was back in 1970. So we stopped by, and things clicked, and it was decided that they would offer me the job. I actually came back here and worked a little bit at one time on a consulting basis, because there was some sort of lag in getting the papers taken care of. And I think it became official sometime in, I think it was, October of 1970 I came back here.

Well, I would guess again it was because of what we had accomplished, and we worked very closely with the Department of [the] Interior. One of the advisors to the commission was head of the Bureau of Reclamation's office at Grand Island. So we knew many of the people. So there was, I think, a ***good*** feeling among all the agency personnel, and that probably was the reason why I was asked to come back, because of looking at what we had accomplished back there, [they] thought "Well, maybe he could help us back here."

Felt it Was Time to Leave Nebraska Because of the Programs Established While He Was at the Commission

So the timing was good. The timing was good. I think it was an appropriate time for me to leave the state, because we had accomplished a lot. But I think there was a certain feeling that maybe if Fairchild would leave, a lot of these activities would sort of go away and we'd kind of slow down for a while. But that was not the case; it just kept right on going. So because I felt that it was a ***good*** time for me to leave, just, among other things, let people ***know*** that there's many other people that are capable of making this continuous growing and development.

Considered the Move from Nebraska to Washington, D.C., to Be a Big Change

So I saw it as an opportunity to come back, but it was a ***big*** change for me to come back here. It was a ***big*** change to come back here, and we had to think a lot about it, but the timing was right, and we agreed to come back.

Storey: What way was it a big change for you?

Fairchild: I had very close family ties in Nebraska, personal ties, very close relations to so many of the people in the state. And you knew once you made that decision that there was no going back. Also my father passed away, but my mother was–and my wife's parents–were quite elderly at that time, and we knew that by coming back here we'd be spending less time with them in the later days of their life, and that certainly was the case. In a matter of three to five years, basically they were gone. So it was tough from that standpoint.

And also it was tough in bringing the kids back, because they were very well situated in the Lincoln public schools and things were going well there, and we knew it was going to be a big change for them. They had to adapt to coming back here. So we knew that was going to be certainly an issue.

". . . I found . . . the Bureau was very easy to work into, and certainly, from that standpoint, the transition period was quite smooth. . . . because so many of the people in the Bureau of Reclamation, the professional staff, were extremely helpful to me . . ."

But they all adapted very well, as did my wife, and I found working for the Bureau was very easy to work into, and certainly, from that standpoint, the transition period was quite smooth.

The reason it was so smooth was because so many of the people in the Bureau of Reclamation, the professional staff, were extremely helpful to me, very helpful to me. People like Jim O'Brien and Dan McCarthy, they were the head of the planning division and assistant head of the planning division at the time I came here. ***My***, they were helpful. They were just great, because they could see some changes that needed to come about, and they really let me know that I was welcome. They didn't see me as an outsider coming back here and I was going to cause them some problems. They were very, very good. There were many others also that were extremely helpful.

So the Bureau personnel were very good that I worked with. To my knowledge, there wasn't any back-stabbing or any problems at all from my relationship with any of the people. I'm sure there may have been some, but I wasn't certainly aware of it.

Storey: You weren't aware of it.

Fairchild: I was welcomed warmly, and for that I was certainly most appreciative to the Bureau people.

Storey: Going from a state government post in Nebraska to a federal government post in Washington, what were the differences sort of at a very generic level?

Differences Between Working for the State and the Federal Governments

Fairchild: Well, big change. ***Big***. Much different. Of course, Nebraska government would be not considered to be a ***big*** state government, but we had a good operation there. But to come back to the Washington level was just a totally different environment. That's the reason why I think many people, when they come back to Washington in at least a position of ***some*** responsibility, if they think that the operation they had back home is going to be the very same back in Washington, they have a rude awakening, because it's so much different.

". . . the relationships not only within, say, an agency, but the relationships within the department and within the administration, and then the relationship upon The Hill, I think for many people–and this is true for myself–it's a difficult period of adjustment. . . ."

And the relationships, the relationships not only within, say, an agency, but the relationships within the department and within the administration, and then the relationship upon The Hill, I think for many people–and this is true for myself–it's a difficult period of adjustment.

"If you don't have people that are here to help you and kind of guide you through some of the *mine* fields, I think you can soon get yourself really in hot water. . . ."

If you don't have people that are here to help you and kind of guide you through some of the ***mine*** fields, I think you can soon get yourself really in hot water.

". . . you've kind of got to listen a little bit, because . . . the reason why some people, when they come back, they get into difficulty, because there is a learning experience back here and you certainly you've got to understand . . . who you're working with and what you can accomplish within certain constraints. And if you don't recognize that, there's going to be some very difficult times. So there's quite a learning process which is involved. . . ."

So not only do you need people to be helpful, but also you've kind of got to listen a little bit, because it would be very easy to think, "Well, I'm coming back there now and we're going to really do this and that, and we're going to accomplish great things, and that's the way it's going to be. You know, that's just the way it's going to be and lay down the law."

That, I think, maybe is the reason why some people, when they come back, they get into difficulty, because there is a learning experience back here and you certainly you've got to understand , in making changes, you've got to understand what the basis of those changes are and who you're working with and what you can accomplish within certain constraints. And if you don't recognize that, there's going to be some very difficult times. So there's quite a learning process which is involved.

". . . the people involved in planning basically were *extremely* helpful, because they generally recognized that there was a *change happening* in our country, a

change in values and things like that, that the old way of doing things in the Bureau was not going to be the way it's going to be in the future. So there had to be a new perspective. So they were *open* to many ideas . . ."

But ***again*** I want to say that the people–and I'm referring primarily to people who are involved in planning, I'm just talking about them right now–the people involved in planning basically were ***extremely*** helpful, because they generally recognized that there was a ***change happening*** in our country, a change in values and things like that, that the old way of doing things in the Bureau was not going to be the way it's going to be in the future. So there had to be a new perspective. So they were ***open*** to many ideas, and they were very open in giving suggestions on what we could do. So the environment was quite good for me. I really feel that. And that was also true of people in the Denver office. Reedy–what's his first name?

Storey: Will [William W.]?

Fairchild: Will. Yeah, Will Reedy. He had a planning program out there, Will Reedy and his people. And they had people out in the region and district offices were all extremely warm in welcoming me on board. That helped. That helped.

Reclamation Could Have Done the Westwide Study Better

But there was some things, you know, that I didn't understand that, you know, we could have done better. We could have done better. One of them was Westwide [Westwide Study Report of the Critical Water Problems Facing the Eleven Western States].[11]

". . . one of the reasons they asked me to come back there was to really head up Westwide and make sure that it got off and got going. . . ."

See, one of the reasons they asked me to come back there was to really head up Westwide and make sure that it got off and got going. It was already going some, you know, some of the personnel had already been selected like Wally [Wallace A.] Christensen and people like that. So I don't want to indicate that I was here to initiate it, but I was here, really, that was going to be one of the major assignments.

". . . one of the problems that we had with Westwide is that we really didn't understand . . . the *politics* behind *why* there was a Westwide Study. . . ."

But looking back on it, one of the problems that we had with Westwide is that we really didn't understand, I don't think, the ***politics*** behind ***why*** there was a Westwide Study. I think we did, but we really didn't. And I certainly didn't. I didn't understand that at all.

11. Department of the Interior, "Critical Water Problems Facing the Eleven Western States-Westside Study Report," June 27, 1976.

". . . not recognizing the political forces like in the Northwest or the Southwest and what they really had *in mind* for the study, we more or less initiated the program and organized . . . to carry out a study as we envisioned it should be carried out. . . ."

So consequently, the Westwide Study was initiated and took off, and not recognizing the political forces like in the Northwest or the Southwest and what they really had ***in mind*** for the study, we more or less initiated the program and organized accordingly to carry out a study as we envisioned it should be carried out.

I'd say that if I had it to do over again, coming back here, one of the first things we would have done would be to go up to The Hill and ask the members of Congress who were responsible for enactment of that part of the legislation to explain to us ***fully*** what they had in mind, because it was really, as I see it now, kind of a political thing that they were doing.

". . . there was a concern on the part of the people in the Northwest that the people in the Southwest, primarily California, because the Central Arizona Project needed more water, were going to steal Columbia Basin water. . . ."

As I recall, the Central Arizona Project was where it probably evolved from, and there was a concern on the part of the people in the Northwest that the people in the Southwest, primarily California, because the Central Arizona Project needed more water, were going to steal Columbia Basin water.

So immediately we had two groups here. We had the Northwest and we had the Southwest, you know, kind of dickering around here. From a practical standpoint, it just wasn't in the cards that people from the Southwest were going to be getting any of the Northwest water at that time, because it would change the values of what was happening. But some of the people in the Northwest kind of liked to ***use*** that as a ***wedge*** or a ***lever*** to get things going, the threat to their ***water*** from California. And, of course, the people from California were looking for water and things like that. But because of that, because of this, you know, when we carried out the Westwide Study, there was constantly this kind of nugging and tawing between the people and between the various groups.

It just seemed like to me that Congress, in enacting the legislation, should have given guidance as to exactly what they were expecting as far as an outcome and the reason for enacting that particular study. Not ***doing*** that, then really we were more or less thrust upon to carry out this study with parties that had divergent objectives. I think that was probably one thing that I see, in retrospect, that we needed to have a ***better*** understanding with Congress as to what this study was all about.

". . . because we didn't have that kind of understanding with *Congress*, there was always a real *struggle* in getting the necessary appropriations . . . carry out this study in a real way, because the staff of the Appropriations Committee up on The Hill were really not very supportive of the Westwide Study. . . . just like pulling

teeth to get money to continue to finance that . . ."

And ***because*** of that, because we didn't have that kind of understanding with ***Congress***, there was always a real ***struggle*** in getting the necessary appropriations through the Appropriation Committee to carry out this study in a real way, because the staff of the Appropriations Committee up on The Hill were really not very supportive of the Westwide Study. They really weren't at that time. And we just had to really–just like pulling teeth to get money to continue to finance that, because even though it had been enacted by ***Congress***, there wasn't the ***support*** behind it, at least in the Appropriation Committee, to give us the funds to really do the job, because there really wasn't a ***clear-cut definition*** of what we were going to be doing with that study. I think that was ***really*** unfortunate.

So ***all*** the time we were carrying out the Westwide Study, particularly in the House, the House Appropriation Committee was just not all that enthusiastic about the study. They weren't really funding it enough. And I would say that also there was, not in the planning, but I think even within the Bureau of Reclamation, there were people that saw that study as not being really one of great concern or great responsibility the people involved in its operation.

". . . I'm not satisfied with . . . *my* involvement and the work I did, and the leadership in getting the Westwide Study going the way I think it should have gone. I think that it may have been a failure on my part . . . But I don't think any of us were aware of it at the time . . . we just thought, . . . 'Congress enacted this. . . . Obviously there's support . . . we'll just get it done.'. . ."

So I'm not satisfied with, I guess, ***my*** involvement and the work I did, and the leadership in getting the Westwide Study going the way I think it should have gone. I think that it may have been a failure on my part, knowing exactly how Congress works. But I don't think any of us were aware of it at the time, exactly of the fact–we just thought, "Well, here. Congress enacted this. We said we're going to do it. Obviously there's support behind it. We're going to do it. Just go out and do it. In a professional way, we'll just get it done." But there was more behind it than that, and we needed to have a better understanding with congressmen, like Senator [Henry M.] Jackson in Washington at that time and the congressmen from Arizona and others.

Storey: Carl Hayden, maybe?

Fairchild: Well, Carl Hayden was already gone.

Storey: Oh, okay.

Fairchild: It was Rhodes. Johnny Rhodes, yeah. And not that they weren't fine people, please understand, but I just feel that there was not a full understanding between those of us in the Bureau and those up on The Hill, including the committees up there, as to what that study was to do. They may not have known, themselves, when they put it into law. It may have been just a political thing to kind of placate the Northwest

when they got the Central Arizona Project. I don't know.

But, anyway, the Bureau was thrust upon to carry out a study that, once we embarked upon it, did really not ***enjoy*** great success or great support on The Hill, which is unfortunate. Which is unfortunate, particularly in the Appropriation Committees.

Storey: What did Reclamation think it was about?

". . . we looked at it from a strictly professional standpoint . . . a opportunity here for a broad-based comprehensive study . . . a professional comprehensive planning approach. But what I'm saying, I think that was *naive* on our part . . ."

Fairchild: Well, I would say that we in Reclamation, we looked at it from a strictly professional standpoint, thought this is a opportunity here for a broad-based comprehensive study, and that we'll undertake it and determine what the needs are in these various basins, the various states, and we'll come up with a good finding, you know. So I think we looked upon it from a strictly a professional comprehensive planning approach.

But what I'm saying, I think that was ***naive*** on our part, looking back on it, because we needed to have a better understanding as to the forces up on The Hill and what ***they*** wanted, and it ***may*** have been all they wanted was just really a way to kind of placate the various interests that there was a study, go out and do it and then just kind of lose yourself. I don't know whether that was the case or not, but we took it very seriously.

The ***staff*** took it very seriously. Wally Christenson and the people worked real hard on it, you know, but there was not the kind of support on The Hill which I anticipated it would have. Whenever we would go up for budget hearings, it was just like pulling teeth to get the funding for the Westwide Study. It was not a popular study among Congress. It really was never a popular study, particularly in the Appropriation Committee. It was not.

Then also I know there was some feeling on the part of the Water Resources Council . . .

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

Storey: You were saying it was hard to get money and you were working with all of these other agencies.

Fairchild: But we did set it up so that we had, for instance, the river basin commissions or interagency committees that were working with us. We had the federal agencies like the Corps and the Bureau, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Soil Conservation Service. We had the state governments involved in it. So we were carrying out a very comprehensive study, which was our understanding that that should be done.

". . . the Water Resource Council, this is a very same type of study that they were authorized to undertake under the Planning Act. So the Water Resources Council and the staff of Water Resources Council *also* were not supportive of the study, because they saw this as an activity going on they really should be doing . . ."

But the Water Resource Council, this is a very same type of study that they were authorized to undertake under the Planning Act. So the Water Resources Council and the staff of Water Resources Council ***also*** were not supportive of the study, because they saw this as an activity going on they really should be doing themselves. Because of that, I don't want to indicate that they sabotaged the study, because that's too strong a word, but there certainly wasn't support by the council in our activities and our programs and things like that. And I can understand ***why***, because they could see this as a type of planning endeavor that fit right within the Planning Act, but here the Bureau of Reclamation was carrying it out.

". . . we also had the other federal agencies, whether it be the Department of Agriculture, whether it be Department of Army, or whatever it be, or even within the Department of Interior, that also had their own objectives and their own concerns. So they were only cooperative to a point. . . ."

So we had some negatives here. And, of course, we also had the other federal agencies, whether it be the Department of Agriculture, whether it be Department of Army, or whatever it be, or even within the Department of Interior, that also had their own objectives and their own concerns. So they were only cooperative to a point.

So all I'm saying is that looking back on it, I think we needed to get a ***better*** understanding at the very ***beginning*** as to what Congress had in mind and what they hoped to accomplish by this undertaking, and by so doing, we would have had better support and appropriation and a better ***ability*** to get the other agencies to cooperate with us.

". . . I think probably as much was accomplished with Westwide as could under the circumstances, but it should have been a much more substantive study than we ended up with. . . ."

Now, having said that, I'd have to say, though, that the staff of the Bureau of Reclamation and the people that worked on it, I think did a very professional job. But it was a operation that the opportunities to really accomplish something and being successful the way it was envisioned and the way it started out and the way it was undertaken had a very small chance of success, when I look at it in retrospect. And from that standpoint, I think probably as much was accomplished with Westwide as could under the circumstances, but it should have been a much more substantive study than we ended up with. So I would have to say that no reflection on the staff that was involved, but I think we were not as successful as we should have been in that study.

Storey: Um-hmm. Tell me more about the interagency aspects of that. Was that sort of a

new approach to doing things?

Some of the Issues That Affected the Westwide Study

Fairchild: Well, it certainly was for the Bureau and to lead it. That was new. That was new. Part of this time there were interagency basin committees, and there was these river basin commissions that were being set up much like the Northwest. So this type of coordination was relatively ***new***, but certainly it was being ***done*** by other groups, but it had not been done by the Bureau, and there wasn't any really good examples of successful operations at that particular time.

And there was some real ***anxiety*** on the part–for instance, like the Columbia River Basin Commission, as to how we were getting organized and the programs that we were using and whether or not we were going to come up with some answers that would some way or other detract from their ability to fully utilize and develop their own water resources or whether we would be part of a program to divert their water resources to be used elsewhere.

Of course, there was also at that time an evolving issue of some of the environmental, the instream uses and things like that, that were also starting to come forward. Other agencies like the Corps of Engineers was called upon to cooperate with us, and they certainly supplied people and they were involved, as well as the Soil Conservation Service. But you must remember that this was not their primary responsibility, because they weren't assigned the lead responsibility, and so anything they did was something they did as a, well, a passive act of goodwill. It wasn't because they were really charged to do this.

". . . there were many different agendas that were off to the side that made it very difficult for the Westwide Study to really be a success . . ."

So I would say that it was not a program whereby all the other agencies were enthusiastically supporting the Bureau's leadership responsibility. And then not having the support of Congress on The Hill financially and also the fact that even within the Department of Interior, there were agencies here at that time that were not enthusiastic about the Bureau leading a study that would impinge upon some of their instream uses, there were many different agendas that were off to the side that made it very difficult for the Westwide Study to really be a success what it should be.

The fact I came back ***not knowing*** all these things, although I worked with agencies at the state level, I think that had it happened a few years later, I think I would have been better equipped to help the Bureau do a better job. That's all I'm saying. Because it was a ***very difficult assignment*** at the ***very best***. But then when you don't have great support at either the congressional, the department, or the agency, or the river basin, or the state level for these things, because they've all got concerns about what might come out of it, it made it extremely difficult for the staff.

The staff ". . . did a fine job, and we can be certainly satisfied with the outcome, but a report that doesn't result in concrete accomplishments doesn't have a hell of a lot of value to it. . . ."

And under the circumstances, I'd have to say that Wally Christensen, Ed Barbour, Ken Kaufman [phonetic], Terry [Lynott][12] and others did a fine job, and we can be certainly satisfied with the outcome, but a report that doesn't result in concrete accomplishments doesn't have a hell of a lot of value to it. And that's about where it's at.

So I'd have to say that the Westwide Study was somewhat of a disappointment, yeah, because when I come back I was naive; I thought it was legislative-backed, people are behind it; there was going to be funding available; we're going to do professionally the very best job we can. And it really wasn't that simple. (Storey: Um-hmm.) Not that simple. But if you take all those into consideration, I think probably under the circumstances it worked out as well as we could expect under the circumstances. The personnel that were involved with it from the Bureau, I thought they all conducted themselves very professionally and very well. I was quite happy with them.

Storey: I'd like to keep going, but we've gone two hours now.

Fairchild: Is that right?

Storey: I appreciate your coming in. I'd like to ask whether or not you're willing for the cassette tapes and the finished transcripts from this interview to be used by researchers both inside and outside Reclamation.

Fairchild: Yes, I have no problem with that. That's fine.

Storey: Great. Thank you very much.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. APRIL 3, 1995.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 1. JULY 7, 1995.

Storey: This is Brit Allan Storey, senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Warren Fairchild, a former assistant commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, on July the 7th, 1995 in the Main Interior Building in Washington, D.C., at about ten o'clock in the morning. This is tape one.

Mr. Fairchild, I was wondering if you would briefly go over the highlights of the way the state of Nebraska had relationships with the Bureau of Reclamation while you were with the state engineer's office there.

Nebraska Relationships with the Bureau of Reclamation While He Was Executive Secretary of the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission

12. Terry Lynott contributed interviews to Reclamation's oral history program.

Fairchild: Well, first I want to correct you. I wasn't with the state engineer's office.

Storey: Oh, I'm sorry.

Fairchild: There was the Department of Water Resources that took care of the regulatory responsibility, water rights. Dan Jones was the Director of the Department of Water Resources at that time. I was executive secretary of Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

Storey: Yeah, I'm sorry.

Fairchild: We were in charge of planning and development. And so the regulatory functions, for instance, the Bureau of Reclamation ~~gave~~ [filed for] the water rights for the project at the Department of Water Resources. The relationship with planning and development and those relationships were with our particular department.

I would say that to indicate something about the nature of the coordination and the participation of the federal agencies, the makeup of our state commission at the time, we had advisors from the three principal water construction agencies. We had a representative of the Department of Defense, or Department of Army, as an advisor. We had a representative of the United States Department of Agriculture, and a representative of the U.S. Department of [the] Interior.

At that time, the advisor from the Department of the Interior was Paul Harley [phonetic], and Paul was out of Grand Island, with the Bureau of Reclamation at Grand Island. He also was, I think, the Interior's representative on the Missouri Basin Interagency Committee at that time. So this would indicate the fact that we did have very close participation and coordination.

Nebraska Was Particularly Interested in the O'Neill and North Loup Projects Which Reclamation Was Planning

Now, at that particular time, there were two projects that the Bureau was planning in Nebraska that was of great interest to us and were very important to our state water plan. One was the O'Neill Project and the other one was the North Loup Project.[13] These were both funded by the Bureau of Reclamation. At that time, they were ***just*** completing their investigations, and they were going to be coming into Washington for authorization.

". . . among other things, . . . I was interested in coming to the Bureau . . . to . . . see if I could assist in getting those two projects authorized. . . ."

So among other things, one of the reasons, very selfishly, why I was interested in coming to the Bureau when the opportunity was afforded me was to come back and

13. Congress authorized the North Loup Division of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program in the Reclamation Project Authorization Act of 1972, Public Law 92-514, of October 20, 1972.

see if I could assist in getting those two projects authorized.

Storey: When was this?

Fairchild: This would be back in the late 1960s and, of course, I came with the Bureau in 1970 and that was about the time those projects came back here. And of course, there were other Bureau projects, also. You asked me about my relationship to the Bureau at that time.

And, of course, at that time, we had these various Reclamation irrigation districts that were working directly with the Bureau on various projects. There was a group in O'Neill and also in the North Loup Project that were quite actively lobbying for the authorization of those projects. The Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission, they saw us as a important colleague and ally in getting the authorization of these projects. So we worked very closely with them, and we were very supportive of those projects.

The Politics of Water in the State of Nebraska During the Time He Worked There

At that point in time, Brit, it probably would be interesting to recount a little bit about the politics of Nebraska. The governor of the state of Nebraska at that time was a man by the name of Norbert Tiemann.[14] He happened to be a Republican. But he was a very aggressive person, and it was under his tenure that we got the sales income tax adopted. He was very supportive of the enactment of the Nebraska Natural Resources Act. He signed that into law. He was a very progressive person. Of course, as was true also of some governors that did precede him–Governor Frank Morrison[15] was a Democrat–they were ***all extremely*** interested in water resources development and planning.

So whenever we would come up with a project or program in Nebraska, like the Bureau of Reclamation or the Corps of Engineers, watershed project of the Soil and Water Conservation Service, there was usually great solid support in state government, including the Nebraska Parks and Forestation Commission at that time. Mel Stien [phonetic] was the director of the State Game Commission. He was ***extremely*** interested in these projects. As an example, the Salt-[unclear] Project, primarily a Soil and Conservation Service project, he was interested in those projects because of the preparation around the lakes. He ***also*** was quite a supporter of the O'Neill Project, because he saw the O'Neill Project with the lake up there and the releases from the dam, from Norton Dam, as being a great source of recreation. I say this only to indicate the broad support we had in the state at that time.

The same thing was also true of the Nebraska delegation in Washington. Our two U.S. senators at that time were Senator Roman Hruska and Senator Carl Curtis.

14. Norbert (Nobby) Theodore Tiemann (1924-2012) was the 32nd governor of Nebraska. He served from 1967 to 1971.
15. Frank Brenner Morrison (1905-2004) was the 31st governor of the state of Nebraska, serving from 1961 to 1967.

Roman Hruska was on the Public Works Committee, he was on the Appropriation Committee, and Carl Curtis was also ***extremely*** interested in these things. So whenever we'd come up with a project, there were never any serious question in their mind about what they are well planned and well conceived and they would support it. Our congressional delegation at that time was also in the very same mold. So we had really ***strong political*** and technical support in the state government for projects like O'Neill and the North Loup Projects.

So this came along, and these projects were moving along about the time that the opportunity came for me to come back as assistant commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. I was interested in seeing that they went on through the process, as well as other states. I'm not saying I'd come back just to see that Nebraska was well taken care of, but that certainly was an element. There's no getting around that.

Congress Authorized the North Loup and O'Neill Projects

While I was assistant commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, those two projects were authorized by Congress and they were passed. There's kind of an interesting sideline to that, because through the activities of the congressional delegation–I think at that time the congressman, I think it was [David] Martin. I'm not sure, from the western part of the state. I believe it was Congressman Martin. It wasn't his successor.

OMB Recommended that President Nixon Veto the Authorizations

Anyway, the bill was passed by Congress. Then the question came, would we be able to get the president to sign them, to authorize them. The Office of Management and Budget at that time recommended to the president that he veto the O'Neill and North Loup projects.

Storey: Which president was it?

Fairchild: President [Richard M.] Nixon. That he veto it. Of course, this was of great deal of concern to those of us in the Bureau of Reclamation, because we recommended it. Of course, we felt very strongly that the president should sign it. But the Office of Management and Budget [OMB] recommended to the president that he veto it. Well, primarily through the efforts of Senator Curtis, but also Senator Hruska, they prevailed upon Nixon to sign it into law over the objection of OMB. So that may give you a little bit of the beginning as to the strength of the ***political*** will of the state of Nebraska at that time for projects such as was represented by the Bureau of Reclamation and the Corps of Engineers and the Soil Conservation Service. So there was ***strong*** feeling at the state and also on state representation in Washington that these were extremely good projects.

Now, later on there was some change in the political representation in Washington that changed this, but at that time, I want to indicate the strength, because while I was in state government I could call on the telephone and, for

instance, call Senator Hruska's office, who was on the Public Works Committee, and say, "Senator Hruska, we need a resolution for so and so out here." No question asked. He would go to work on a resolution like for a local project or a town or whatever it may be. So there was really ***solid*** local, state, and federal support for this type of program.

Now, eventually this, of course, changed somewhat as you got different personalities come into being. But we were pretty well lockstepping together at that point in time, and we looked upon the Bureau of Reclamation, of course, as being a very important ***ally*** and an important cooperator in development of the state's resources, because we felt very strongly that water development and irrigation, flood control, and water management was the key to future success in the economic growth of our state.

So I want to indicate that, you know, there were very close relationships, not only because they were advisors to the commission but also because just of the ***philosophy*** of the people of state and elected representatives at that point in time. It was a nice time to be in the job I was in in Nebraska.

Storey: Tell me how the interrelations worked. Sitting outside of the Bureau of Reclamation, you had two constituencies, at least, that ***wanted*** these projects and were actively supporting them.

Fairchild: Actively pursuing them, that's right.

Storey: What kind of activity did you see? Did you see people going to the Congress, to Reclamation, to the secretary of the interior, the local people, the state people? How did that work?

Fairchild: Well, all of those. All of those. When we would come back and to testify on these projects, the authorization, why, not only would the local people come back and testify, but I would come back and testify representing the state and also representing the governor. We certainly testified in support of those projects you know and projects such as that, to make sure that they came into being.

So, as I say, it was basically unanimous. And at that point in time, even those people who were involved in wildlife, like the Game and Parks Commission, were also ***extremely*** supportive of those projects. Some of that, of course, changed as some of the environmental movement came into being, the movement came into being in later years. Then there was a change of personalities. But the people at that time saw these as projects that not only were good economically but also offered the state a lot as far as the environmental enhancement and increased recreational activity for the state. And I still firmly believe that that was the case. But, of course, there became some environmental concerns later on about particularly the O'Neill Project, which, in my view, the environmental concerns were ***totally*** misplaced.

Later on, for instance, after I came back from Washington, at that time I think

I was Director of the Water Resources Council of Nebraska, and one of the politicians was trying to get back to Washington as a U.S senator. He was at a state Reclamation meeting and a question was asked of him, "Well, what do you think of the O'Neill Project?" Well, he says, "I'm against the O'Neill Project because there isn't any flood control benefits." Well, of course, that's totally fallacious. Knowing the Niobrara River and what's down below, there wasn't anything down there from a flood control standpoint that we'd protect. So there was very little flood control benefits which were in the project. In other words, somebody got ahold of him to be against the project and gave him the wrong reason to be against what I considered to be an extremely good project.

But that was some of the ***evolving*** things that were happening after I left the state, and it probably would have happened even if I'd been there. I'm not saying that I made that much difference. But there was an evolution in some of the thinking in the state ***after*** that, and it was directly attributable to the environmental movement and what I can see to be at that time some rather, I would say, distorted information on projects such as that.

". . . within the Department of Interior there were people at the local level who were actively fighting the projects, which I always felt was unfortunate, because once a project came into law, I always felt that it should be up to the bureaucrats, so to speak, to support the decisions of Congress and the administration . . ."

One other thing that maybe has not come out, at the time that those projects were authorized and the planning was going ahead for implementation, within the Department of Interior there were people at the local level who were actively fighting the projects, which I always felt was unfortunate, because once a project came into law, I always felt that it should be up to the bureaucrats, so to speak, to support the decisions of Congress and the administration, because, after all, those two projects were authorized.

But there were officials in the Department of Interior, specifically Fish and Wildlife Service, that never stopped working against these projects even after they were authorized, and I thought that was unfortunate, unprofessional, and really not supporting the position of the U.S. Government at that point in time. Now, if they'd been deauthorized or something like that, I can understand then why you might make your feelings known. But as long as they were duly authorized projects, I really felt it was unfortunate, because you may not have got this at the Washington level, but I was aware of it through my contacts in Nebraska at the time that there were officials of those agencies, other Interior Department agencies in southern Nebraska, that were ***actively*** working against those authorized projects.

Storey: Um-hmm. I think I need to rephrase my question. I like the information you've given me, but what I'm trying to get at is you had these local constituencies, then you had state constituencies that wanted the projects. Before you can go testify on authorization, you have to get Reclamation to start looking, and you have to get them to do the studies and all of those kinds of things. How did these local constituencies and the state constituencies deal with Reclamation to get them

interested in the projects and so on? Do you have any personal knowledge of that?

Fairchild: Well, in general, it worked liked this. Of course, the Bureau of Reclamation planning offices, at that time we had one in Grand Island, we had one at McCook that were doing the planning of these projects. And of course, they were always looking at opportunities for projects, which is part of their job, and along with that there were, of course, local Chamber of Commerces, and agricultural organizations were also looking at opportunities for stimulating work in that area.

So to say, well, did the people, for instance, like in the O'Neill Project, did they come up with the idea of the O'Neill Project, I would say probably not, no, but they certainly indicated that they wanted a water program, for instance, to help in stabilizing their groundwater which they could see was being depleted through a lot of deep well irrigation. So they could see a problem looming on the horizon, and they saw a need and an opportunity for developing some of this water that was flowing down undeveloped in the Niobrara River. They knew that was happening.

Now, I don't think they had any concept as to how they would put the resources here to meet the needs that they saw here on the table. So this, of course, then, is where the Bureau came into play, and the Bureau then, with this interest would was stimulated by such groups as the group that supported the O'Neill Project, called the Niobrara River Basin Development Association, something like that, they could work ***with*** them. Of course, because of them they would go through the congressional representatives and they would get authorization, and then the Bureau would have to go for funding for planning and get the planning authorized so their studies could be undertaken.

Now, we at the state level, of course, we were very supportive of these things, also, because we wanted to encourage federal planning of these projects. And at the very same time this is going on, we at the state level, we were developing the state water plan. Those two projects which I alluded to earlier, as well as other Reclamation, Corps of Engineer, and Soil Conservation Service projects, were an integral part of the preparation of our state water plan.

O'Neill Project

In fact, the O'Neill Project was probably one of the very key projects in the state water plan which was a program for diverting water from the Niobrara over into the Elkhorn, which eventually'd go down to the lower Platte and would be the water supply for Lincoln and Omaha. So we at the state level saw a great potential ***for*** that water which ***at that*** time was just flowing, and to this day just flows ***out*** of Nebraska into the Missouri River and [is] basically lost to the state. So we saw this as an opportunity also.

So all these things sort of coalesced, fully supported, I would say, by the leadership of the Bureau personnel basically at Grand Island, they could see this opportunity, this need, this local and state support, of course, it just all kind of came together and went forward together. And I would say at that time there was very

little opposition to projects like the North Loup or the O'Neill Project, because most of us saw it as a great opportunity and also with significant federal assistance, it just seemed to be in the state's interest and also in certain regards in the local interest.

Storey: What about your agency's activities in support of the project?

O'Neill and North Loup Were Considered Essential Components of the Nebraska State Water Plan

Fairchild: Well, as I said, we were the state agency developing the state water plan, and we saw projects like O'Neill and the North Loup projects as being essential components of that state water plan. So it fit very well into what we saw as the program for managing the water resources of the state. So when they came into being, of course, we were always not only willing, but ***wanting*** to support these projects back at the Washington level.

Our commission was made up of university people. It was made up of Soil and Water Conservation leaders across the state that had been locally elected. And a person like Representative Dan Jones, who, as I indicated earlier, was the state engineer for Department of Water Resources was on the commission. And so all these people, we would sit down together and look at these things and basically come out with a program either supporting or opposing a project, and those projects we supported. So then at that point in time, you not only had local support, but you also have some solid state support including the governor's office who is, more or less, ***endorsing*** and ***supporting*** what we were doing, as well as the congressional support in Washington. So, as I say, there was strong support from top to bottom.

Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Commission Did Not Endorse All Proposed Federal Water Projects in Nebraska

I wouldn't want to give the impression, though, that we endorsed every project.

". . . a *large* Corps of Engineer . . . Platte River Dam . . . between Lincoln and Omaha. They proposed that as a big flood control, recreation dam in the state, and we in the state commission . . . opposed it. . . ."

There was a ***large*** Corps of Engineer project on the Platte River that envisioned a Platte River Dam down along Interstate 80, I-80 now, between Lincoln and Omaha. They proposed that as a big flood control, recreation dam in the state, and we in the state commission, we opposed it. We opposed it, and that project never saw the light of day in Washington, D.C., because we just felt that it was just a big boondoggle.

". . . we knew that the Missouri Division did not want it to see the light of day because of environmental and many other concerns. . . ."

The interesting thing about that, though, was that the district engineer in Omaha and his staff were promoting this basically through the Chamber of Commerces from Lincoln and Omaha, but the representative of the Missouri Division was on our commission, and we knew that the Missouri Division did not want it to see the light of day because of environmental and many other concerns. And so we knew where they stood and, of course, we felt very strongly that it was a bad project. And so we were opposed to it, and it didn't go anywhere.

So it wasn't that we rubber stamped every project. We did not. We did not. But good projects, or what we perceived as good projects, we certainly were wholehearted in our endorsement and we did everything we could to get them authorized and get them funded.

Storey: In those days, did cost-benefit ratios play any part in your thinking about . . .

Fairchild: Actually they did, you know. Well, in the first place, if they didn't have a satisfactory benefit-to-cost ratio, of course, they wouldn't go forward. Now, I say this, and I recognize that the way in which you evaluate projects and the way in which the various basin funds and things like that operated, there were some things in the evaluation that could be somewhat questionable, there really could be and there were those. But from an economic analysis, I was always proud of the fact that the water projects were about the ***only real*** projects at that point in time–in fact, that was where the idea of benefit-cost analysis that developed, in water programming. And I was very pleased at the fact that there ***was*** that type of economic analysis that was forthcoming.

". . . if the economic analysis was not satisfactory, of course, we would not have supported it. But using the planning procedures that were in vogue at that time, those projects were deemed to be feasible. Now, in subsequent planning procedures that evolved, that may or may not have been the case, because planning procedures and things like that evolve . . . the national values . . . evolved. . . ."

So, ***yes***, if the economic analysis was not satisfactory, of course, we would not have supported it. But using the planning procedures that were in vogue at that time, those projects were deemed to be feasible. Now, in subsequent planning procedures that evolved, that may or may not have been the case, because planning procedures and things like that evolve, more or less, the national priorities, the national values as evolved. Then skipping on ahead, of course, when I was with Water Resources Council, when we'd come up with new principles and standards and procedures for planning, which recognize the co-equal planning objectives of environment, environmental enhancement, and development. So that came ***after*** projects such as this which we are talking about. So there's been kind of an evolving program on it.

Yes, if there had not been a deemed economic feasibility project, we in the state would not have supported it. But based upon the established procedures at that time, they were deemed to be feasible, economically feasible.

Storey: Were there existing Reclamation projects in Nebraska?

Existing Bureau of Reclamation Projects in Nebraska When He Was with State Government

Fairchild: Yes, we had some, but not as much as many of the other seventeen Western states. We had the North Platte Project down around Scottsbluff. We had those on the Republican River, down in the McCook area. Those were the principal ones we had. So Reclamation was not that ***big*** an operator in Nebraska at that point in time as it was, say, like in Colorado and the other seventeen Western states.

Another reason for that is that we also had a lot of groundwater development. Some farmers were developing irrigation groundwater. And we had some state projects in development of the old Public Works Administration (PWA), like the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District. Then there was the Loup Power ~~District, Power~~ and Irrigation District. So there were some of those that were developed, more or less, by state and municipal government districts under state government. But they were done back in the thirties under the PWA funding at that point in time.

Storey: Did you have any interaction with those existing projects?

"We were more involved with new projects as they were coming on line, that was what we were interested in, was the planning and development of those resources. . . ."

Fairchild: Our interaction with the existing projects was not ***all*** that great. I'm talking about the Republican and the North Platte Project. Because they were basically set up. The irrigation districts were operating at that point in time. They had their water rights and they were operating very much as an ongoing project. So we did not have that much of a relationship with them. We were more involved with new projects as they were coming on line, that was what we were interested in, was the planning and development of those resources. So as I say, we were only marginally involved in those projects, you know.

Storey: Was your agency more interested in agricultural or municipal and industrial, or did it not focus that way? How did that work for you all?

The Commission's Interest Focused Largely on Agriculture, but It Was Also Interested in M&I Issues Even Though Water Requirements for M&I Were Relatively Small

Fairchild: I would say it was only natural because of Nebraska being an agricultural state, that the emphasis primarily was on agricultural or related programs. But that was not the limit of our authority and responsibility. We should have been, and we were, just interested in water development for M&I purposes. But the water requirements for M&I purposes really was relatively small. Like Lincoln-Omaha, they had groundwater fields which were developed for water supply out of the Platte River

and also water out of the Missouri River.

". . . at that point in time, water supply for the municipalities was really not much of a problem. But we could see, looking to the future, it was going to become *more* of a problem, and there was going to be some conflict between M&I users and agricultural users on existing water supply. That was one of the reasons we developed the state water *plan* . . ."

And so at that point in time, water supply for the municipalities was really not much of a problem. But we could see, looking to the future, it was going to become ***more*** of a problem, and there was going to be some conflict between M&I users and agricultural users on existing water supply. That was one of the reasons we developed the state water ***plan***, and that was where we saw, ***again***, the O'Neill Project being such a key component of that, because we could see that taking some of that water was going unused down the Niobrara, if you could bring that down the Elkhorn, irrigate up on the table between the Elkhorn and Niobrara, bring it down the Elkhorn, have some storage in the Elkhorn, but then release it on down so that it replenishes the water fields of Lincoln and Omaha on the Lower Platte. And that was for municipal and industrial water purposes.

So we had interest in the ***range*** of natural resources. That was our ***responsibility***. But obviously, with agriculture being such a predominant focus of the economic growth in our state, I would say that, yes, we looked very heavily, of course, at the agricultural potential. And it's still kind of that way in Nebraska, although there has been evolution to looking more at some of these other aspects of water requirements. And also during this period of time, I think the qualitative aspects are just beginning to become much more significant.

Nebraska Water Pollution Control Board

When I was in the state government, I was also on what they called the–well, let me get the right name–the Nebraska Water Pollution Control Board. Not a very good name at that time, was it? But I was a member, and that was an early effort to try to develop a program for coordinating some of the water quality and water quantity aspects. The man that headed up the Water Pollution Control Board, Ed Philippi [phonetic], was also an advisor on the commission. So we did have kind of a coordinating mechanism to look at both the quantity and quantitative and the qualitative aspects of our development.

So I guess it was that background, you know, that maybe that I kind of evolved, or somebody thought I could maybe do something at the Washington level.

Storey: You were also dealing in the water plan with groundwater?

Concern in Nebraska over the Ogallala Aquifer

Fairchild: Groundwater. Surface water. All water, yeah. Of course, one of our concerns in

Nebraska is the depletion of the Ogallala aquifer. It's not as serious as other states, but over 7 million acres under irrigation development, most of it groundwater. Of course, you want to maintain that groundwater resource, and so this was a ***major*** aspect of our state water plan that we developed. We'd have to go after conjunctive use, comingling surface and groundwater as a way of stabilizing our groundwater supplies in an arid state. The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District–up in the Holdrege/Minden area is a good example of the type of program which we were trying to foster.

Storey: What were they doing?

Fairchild: They were diverting water from the Platte River up on the table around Holdrege and Minden, and because of that, why of course, there's groundwater recharge, and then the groundwater, even though there's a lot of deep well development, the groundwater is actually very stable in those areas. So you have a sustainable irrigation program in that area that should be there in the eons unless there's some other geologic disruption in the future, because that area of Nebraska, groundwater is perfectly stabilized because of the recharge in the surface water coming in to recharge the groundwater.

Conjunctive Use Was a Major Topic in the Nebraska State Water Plan

So conjunctive use was one of the main things we were looking at in the state water plan. We saw conjunctive use in the Niobrara going up on the table between the flat land between the Elkhorn and Niobrara because the water table there is going down because of deep well development, and if we can get some surface irrigation up there, the recharge would stabilize that area. Then we can also stabilize some of the irrigation on the Elkhorn and the lower Platte. So this is the concept which we evolved in the state water plan, and it was a sound concept and one which is very supportable today.

Storey: How long did the state plan take?

Fairchild: I think we were about probably, I'd guess four or five years in developing the state water plan. Federal agencies like the Corps and Bureau and Soil Conservation Service and . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. JULY 7, 1995.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. JULY 7, 1995.

Storey: So the state water plan took four or five years and aimed at conjunctive use in order to stabilize.

Fairchild: Well, among other things. That was one of the concepts behind the state water plan. And there was also a plan basically for the optimum development of the natural resources of the state, surface and groundwater, and we saw conjunctive use as being a major conceptual element of that plan.

Storey: Doing a plan is different, however, from getting something implemented. How did you go about that? Or was that built into the plan or what?

Fairchild: Well, of course, the state water plan was what we would call a master plan or a macro plan, and that would be taking a comprehensive ***look***, in this case, of the entire state. Then once you've done that, then you identify some potentials that it might be possible to try out the concept of that macro plan. So it was the micro plans, the O'Neills, the North Loup, the Salt-[unclear] Project, and things like that then are the building blocks then that fit in under this umbrella of a master plan that carries that out into fruition.

So once we had the state water plan developed, then of course we had a conceptual basis ready for support of these individual micro plans. And it's a very similar program which the Federal Government developed on the Missouri Basin, developed a basin plan, the Pick-Sloan Plan, and individual projects that were figured out to carry out the provisions of that plan.

But that's ***really*** what we were doing in Nebraska. We were developing a comprehensive plan ***for*** the state which the Water Resources Council would say would be, I think, would be at the "B" level at that particular point in time, that type of comprehensive plan. Then once you wanted to implement projects, then you had to go and do more specific detailed planning and design to ensure that those things were feasible and could be carried out. There was economics tied into certainly your macro plan, but the economics and the engineering that went into it were at a ***much more*** oversight basis than they were on the specific projects, where there would have been much more detail.

So your comprehensive planning should really precede your individual project planning. In our particular case of Nebraska at that time, the project plans were coming along, but as we evolved the state water plan, we found that most of these projects fit in very well. An exception, of course, would be the Platte River Dam, which we didn't see fit in. So that's the reason we were against it. It just didn't fit into the plan. We felt it was not feasible, that environmentally it would be a disaster, so we were against it.

Storey: One of the things that I would expect would be that there would be a lot of controversy over a plan like this. Where water is involved in Western arid states, somebody's ox gets gored while somebody else's gets fed, so to speak.

". . . the state water plan that we developed did envision diversion, first diversion of water from the Niobrara, the Elkhorn, Lower Platte, diversion from the Platte into the Republican. . . ."

Fairchild: Well, there'd been a longstanding controversy in Nebraska over diversion of water, and the state water plan that we developed did envision diversion, first diversion of water from the Niobrara, the Elkhorn, Lower Platte, diversion from the Platte into the Republican. So from that standpoint, there was ***some*** controversy. But I'd have to say that by and large, the people of the state were very supportive, very

supportive, at that point in time. And this was, I think, exemplified by the support we always maintained in the Nebraska legislature. If there was a lot of controversy, the appropriations and the support of the state legislation for our programs would have been hurt, but that was not the case.

We had almost unanimous solid support by the state legislature for our state water planning program, for all of our planning initiatives, for support of the various Federal projects as they went forward. So I would say rather at that point in time it was a ***pleasure*** to work in the state, because even though there was ***some cases*** where there wasn't ***total*** support, by and large, the support behind the concepts as we were evolving the Nebraska Natural Resources Conservation Commission, almost total. That is a nice place to work.

"It was probably one of the most *fulfilling* times in my professional life, because things were so, I guess, *solid*, and there was so much unanimity at the local, state, nonpolitical, political areas, and it made the job that I had really kind of a dream job. . . ."

It was probably one of the most ***fulfilling*** times in my professional life, because things were so, I guess, ***solid***, and there was so much unanimity at the local, state, nonpolitical, political areas, and it made the job that I had really kind of a dream job. And it was kind of nice, because I worked for a commission that was nonpartisan. Nebraska legislature was nonpartisan, and so the commission would hire me and the governors would come and go, Democratic, Republican governors, and we could work with them, but we weren't totally beholden to them. This has changed somewhat. But, ***fortunately***, the people that were governors back in those days, whether it be like Governor Frank Morrison or whether it be Governor Nobby Tiemann, people like that, ***they didn't*** want to us as being partisan or anything contrary to their objectives in carrying out the rules of the governor's state, and they were ***extremely*** cooperative, ***extremely*** cooperative. So we had ***very*** close relationships.

Papio Creek Flood in Omaha

I'll give you a couple of examples. Back in the–I think that was the mid- to late 1960s, there was a ***terrible*** flood in Omaha–the Papio [Creek]. And, of course, this was a great concern to Governor Morrison. So Governor Morrison, he asked, and two of us went to Omaha, and we met with the official, the county board, the city council, and we worked with them in evolving the Papio Flood Control Project for the city. So he looked upon our particular organization as one that could really help him in solving some of the flood control programs and problems of Omaha, and we were able to do that.

Later, of course, Governor Morrison was a Democrat then. When Nobby Tiemann came in as the Republican, why, he had what was called town hall meetings, and he always made sure that I went to his town hall meetings to explain what we were doing.

So partisan politics at that point in time was not an issue in our deliberations. Fortunately, it was something that was in the background and we were able to work with all of them, and they found they were able to work with us.

Storey: When did you finish the state water plan?

Fairchild: The state water plan actually was finished about the time I left the state. It was just wrapping up about the time I left, and that would be in the early 1970s. I came back here in September-, October of 1970, and we were just wrapping it up at that point in time.

Storey: As I recall, maybe Kansas was doing a similar sort of activity, and other folks.

Fairchild: That's right. Kansas was ahead of us. They had a very strong program down there, and we patterned some of our operations on what we saw in Kansas. Kansas was a few years ahead of us. They had a good program which we were able to pattern some of our activities after.

Storey: Tell me about Paul Harley. What was he like, his personality, the way he contributed to your commission?

Paul Harley, Bureau of Reclamation

Fairchild: Paul Harley was a ***very fine*** individual. Technically, I'm sure he was good, and very good because he went through the ranks of the Bureau of Reclamation. But I would say that Paul Harley was a very cooperative, understanding person who was able to work quite well with the other Federal agencies as well as our organization. So as a consequence, he worked in very well as an advisor to the commission. He didn't come over as a zealot for the Department of Interior. He came over as an individual that was truly interested in working in assisting our commission in developing a good, comprehensive program for our state. So I would say that Paul was a good man for the organization at that point in time. He was looked on as being a morally ***just*** and a good man. His personality was very pleasant. He worked well with people. I enjoyed working with Paul. He was a good man.

Storey: And he was Reclamation, I believe you said, out of Grand Island?

Fairchild: Out of Grand Island, that's right. But he was also Interior's representative on the Missouri Basin Interagency Committee, and Interior appointed him as their advisor to the commission. And at that time. On the Corps of Engineers, we had a man by the name of Charlie Cox. Charlie Cox was with the Missouri Division of the Corps of Engineers, and Charlie was a comparable person, as was Paul. And by then we had the state conservation, the Soil Conservation Service, who represented the Department of Agriculture.

So we had some very fine Federal officials that were advising us, and we looked upon them for advice and counsel. When they came to the meetings, they certainly did not ***dominate*** the meetings, but they were always there to help and

give counsel when asked to do so. And they would volunteer, too, information. (Storey: Yeah. Um-hmm.) They were good help. It was an unusual commission. It really was an unusual commission.

Storey: Did you also meet commissioners from the Bureau of Reclamation?

Floyd Dominy in Nebraska

Fairchild: Yes. At that time, Floyd Dominy was the commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. Of course, he'd come back to Nebraska and Nebraska being his home state he'd come back and he'd be instrumental in trying to promote Bureau activities and see what was going on. I did not know Floyd ***all*** that well, but I certainly knew him, and when we'd come back to Washington lobbying, we'd stop in and we'd always touch base with the Bureau of Reclamation and the same thing with the Corps of Engineers, and the same thing with Soil and Conservation Service. So I knew him.

And Floyd was always, as I know, was always supportive of what we were trying to do in Nebraska. And as I indicated, when I was in state government, one time our family was–I think we had maybe an association with some state water activities. We were going to be in the Colorado River area, and I remember through Paul Harley and Floyd arranged for me and my family to visit Glen Canyon Dam and Lake Powell, and we thoroughly enjoyed it. So my relationship with Floyd Dominy and the Washington office was ***not*** all that strong at that time, but it was primarily through Paul Harley. So that was about the extent of the relationship with Floyd Dominy.

Now, of course, when I came back here there would be hearsay, of course, a lot of stories about the commissioner and things like that which I did not have any personal contact with, but there was some residue, I have feelings about some things that went on there in the Bureau of Reclamation, both professionally and otherwise, which obviously had an effect on our operation at the time I served with the Bureau.

Storey: Um-hmm. How did you meet Ellis Armstrong then?

Ellis Armstrong and Jimmy Smith

Fairchild: The way I met Ellis Armstrong was that in the early days of the Nixon administration, a man by the name of Jimmy Smith was appointed by President Nixon as assistant secretary of interior over the Bureau of Reclamation and the Office of Saline Water, and I think a couple of other offices. So he came back to Washington. Jimmy Smith operated out of Omaha, and I knew Jimmy because of our activities in state government. Also Jimmy brought with him a colleague of mine who was involved in the Papio Project and Flood Control Project, John Neuberger [phonetic].

Asked about His Interest in Moving to Reclamation as an Assistant Commissioner

So after they were back there for a while, why, there was a desire to do some reorganization of the Bureau, and that was to emphasize some of the new planning techniques that were coming into being at that point in time, and so they were looking around for somebody to come back and be an assistant commissioner for the Bureau of Reclamation. So I was contacted through the assistant secretary's office about whether I would be interested in exploring the possibility of coming back as assistant commissioner. I said, "I'd always be willing to come and talk about things like this," and so then Ellis Armstrong called me. I'd never met Ellis before that. Called me on the telephone. And I said, yes, I would be interested in visiting with him. I was going to be back on the East Coast because we were having a conference on interstate water problems in South Carolina in several weeks, and if it was all right then, why, I'd just come up after that meeting and visit.

So I did, and the decision was made by the powers in the Department of Interior and Ellis that they'd ask me to come back as assistant commissioner for planning and foreign activities, and I accepted. So then I came back in October of that year.

So my contact with Ellis before that, I'd never had any contact with Ellis before that. So his knowledge of my work, I'm sure, was more through the assistant secretary's office than it was through our personal knowledge.

Storey: What was he like?

Fairchild: Ellis?

Storey: Yes.

"Ellis had . . . mixed feelings about what was happening at that time in the Bureau of Reclamation. He had worked with the Bureau back in the old days when construction and development was the keystone of the operation, and he thoroughly was supportive of that era. But he could see that times were changing, that the priorities of the country were changing, the values were changing. . . ."

Fairchild: I recall Ellis as an extremely dear man. He just was a ***fine*** person. Ellis had more or less mixed feelings about what was happening at that time in the Bureau of Reclamation. He had worked with the Bureau back in the old days when construction and development was the keystone of the operation, and he thoroughly was supportive of that era. But he could see that times were changing, that the priorities of the country were changing, the values were changing. It was hard to justify an irrigation program to develop more agriculture production at the very time that the U.S. Government was trying to cut production and was subsidizing the farmer for growing less. And so he could see these things that were happening, and he had a dilemma in his own mind.

". . . I was called back . . . to try to see if we could make some changes to the planning process. Evolve the plans of the Bureau to be more reflective of the values as they were evolving in the nation. Ellis was supportive of these things. But he also had a certain amount of anxieties . . . I remember one day as we were visiting with him about this, he said, 'But, you know, Warren,' he said, 'there isn't anything more noble than irrigating a district.' So . . . even though he understood that there had to be changes, he really didn't like the changes which he saw coming . . ."

So I was called back, among other things, to try to see if we could make some changes to the planning process. Evolve the plans of the Bureau to be more reflective of the values as they were evolving in the nation. Ellis was supportive of these things. But [he] also had a certain amount of anxieties background about whether or not this was really unraveling the Bureau as he remembered it. I remember one day that some of us in planning were visiting with him about some changes that needed to be brought into play, and he was agreeing that these were things we needed to do. We needed to [unclear]. We needed to emphasize that more. We need to look more at the environmental aspects, the water quality aspects of the program. We needed to emphasize, for instance, the Colorado water quality program, the work we were doing, for instance like on the–at that time we were doing some–anyway, it was development of some of the deep development for hot water–what do you call that?

Storey: Geothermal?

Fairchild: Geothermal, yes. These are things that I could see that we needed to work into and also to see if we couldn't work with the Federal Government on some of the flood plain management program because of our technical capability. In other words, to more or less emphasize some of these evolving things. And Ellis always agreed. He always agreed. But I remember one day as we were visiting with him about this, he said, "But, you know, Warren," he said, "there isn't anything more noble than irrigating a district." So I say that to indicate that even though he understood that there had to be changes, he really didn't like the changes which he saw coming, because he could see that this meant that the big irrigation projects which he liked so much in the West, that those would not be flowering from the desert in the future, at least for some time. And so he had mixed feelings about that.

Ellis was a very religious and very pleasant person. I would say maybe one of his faults was that he was too nice, too nice in that he would find it ***extremely difficult*** to crack the whip and make people adhere to some of the changes which he knew had to come. He just wanted to be a friend to everybody on his staff. He was such a ***nice*** person to work with, he really was, and I enjoyed him as an individual and as a man, and he was always supportive of what we did. I want you to understand that. But I think that there was some things going on in the organization at that time where there was not total support for some of the things that he was trying to bring about, because he would not always hold people accountable for what he saw should be done.

Also there was another aspect of Ellis, is that when we'd give testimony up on

The Hill, and it was only natural since he was the commissioner, that he thought he should answer most all the questions. Because we had so many projects and programs at that time, it was impossible for him, one person, to have an answer for everything. But bless Ellis, he'd always try to answer all the questions. But, fortunately, the staffs up on The Hill would always give us a chance to correct the testimony, and I'll have to say that an awful lot of the testimony was rewritten because of the fact that–not intentional mistakes, but things that were said that weren't quite right, or maybe words came out that he meant one thing, but he actually said something else. And so there was that aspect which was always quite interesting. We always had quite a little bit of reworking on the testimony that Ellis gave, but it certainly was given with the best of intent and for the full support of the Bureau of Reclamation programs.

"The Bureau of Reclamation was his life. He just loved the Bureau. I'm sure it was a concern to him, the fact that we would have to make some changes. . . ."

He was ***dedicated***. He was loyal to the Bureau of Reclamation. The Bureau of Reclamation was his life. He just loved the Bureau. I'm sure it was a concern to him, the fact that we would have to make some changes.

Held Reclamation's First Planning Conference

We did do some things under Ellis that were possible. For instance, the Bureau never had a planning conference where they brought all of personnel together to go over some of the new aspects of planning. This is one thing that we held, the first and maybe the only planning conference the Bureau of Reclamation ever had, when he was Commissioner, which was a very successful undertaking.

Reorganizing Planning Offices at Reclamation

Another thing we went through, we went through some reorganization of our planning offices at that time.

". . . because the Bureau of Reclamation was decreasing in size . . . We had more planning offices and personnel than we could justify at that time. So we had to go through the painful program of closing down some of the offices, and going through a reduction in force . . ."

The planning program, because the Bureau of Reclamation was decreasing in size, we had to reorganize. We had too many offices. Well, like the Defense Department today, we had too many planning offices. We had more planning offices and personnel than we could justify at that time. So we had to go through the painful program of closing down some of the offices, and going through a reduction in force–not a major but a reduction in force. Fortunately, many of the people were at the age where they could retire, and the actual number of reduction in forces was at a minimum. But we went through these programs.

"We also changed some of the structure of the planning organization itself. . . . the people that headed up the planning office at that time were *always* engineers.

. . .We changed the title, the head of each planning office, from the planning engineer to planning officer. . . ."

We also changed some of the structure of the planning organization itself. Now, I'll give you one example of it. When I came in, the engineers were pretty much the planning officer of the Bureau. And, yeah, we had a few economists, we had a few sociologists, very few of those, and other types of disciplines, a few ecologists, very few. But the people that headed up the planning office at that time were ***always*** engineers. To me, if you're going to talk about a multi-disciplinary organization, which the Bureau had to evolve into, you just couldn't have that. In other words, you had to give all the disciplines an opportunity as they developed their capability to go up the ladder.

We changed the title, the head of each planning office, from the planning engineer to planning officer. That meant that an economist could compete for that job, or an ecologist, or a sociologist could compete for that job just the same as an engineer. That was traumatic. That was really traumatic. A lot of engineers just felt, oh, that was terrible, that was terrible. That was going to be the end of the organization.

I remember that when it really hit was out in the Salt Lake District. It came time to replace, to have a new person head of the planning office out there, and there was an engineer and there was an economist, they were applying for the position, and the economist got the job. That was something new. The economist got the job because of his experience and background, everybody thought he was the best qualified for the job. But the engineer was really hurt, really hurt, because he thought that was his position.

". . . we were *evolving* in these things, and there was certainly a concept that we were trying to get across. . . ."

But, lo and behold, about that time I went to Water Resources Council, and we were working on the national assessment, and I was able to get this engineer a job working on the assessment for that area, and not only get a job but he got a promotion. And then he had little different thoughts, I think, about me, because we were able to work out something for him. But I give this only as an example that shows that we were ***evolving*** in these things, and there was certainly a concept that we were trying to get across.

And Ellis was very supportive of these things. Your question about Ellis Armstrong, he was extremely supportive of these things. So I'd say my personal relationship with Ellis Armstrong was good. His ***desires*** were in the right area. I think he could have been much firmer in his relationship to his personnel. Even though being firmer, I think even so, he, along with that firmness there, could have been some delegations, holding people you delegate to, to accountability for their actions. But he was a ***good man***, and he tried to do the very best for the Bureau, but it was a ***extremely*** trying time.

Ellis Armstrong and Jimmy Smith's Pro Forma Resignations Were Accepted by

the Nixon Administration

I know when Ellis lost his job with the Bureau of Reclamation, he was hurt very, very badly. He lost his job here with the Bureau. At that time, I visited with him, and he was hurt personally. He was not reappointed by the Nixon people at the beginning of the second term.

Storey: I guess I hadn't realized that before, but that would be true.

Fairchild: Yeah. Because he'd been loyal. And the interesting thing is that the assistant secretary of interior, James Smith, also was not reappointed. At that time, all the appointees between myself and the other assistant commissioners and the secretary of interior were wiped out. Gone.

Storey: And they were wiped out by Nixon.

Fairchild: Nixon and his colleagues. That's right.

Storey: I guess I didn't realize that their resignation was expected at a second term with the same president.

Fairchild: When you accept a job like this, basically you submit your resignation at the time. So all the people were asked for their resignations, as well as all the assistant commissioners were asked for our resignations, and some were picked up and some weren't. But in our particular area, they were just picked up right and left. I really think that Ellis thought that his would not be picked up, and it was picked up, and it hurt him. I can understand that, because he was a good God-fearing man that tried to do his very best. He was a hard worker, and he just felt that it just shouldn't have happened.

How Ellis Armstrong Became Commissioner of Roads

Storey: He confirmed a story that I'd been told by somebody else the other day when I was in Salt Lake City. This person had told me that he'd always wondered why Ellis had become the Commissioner of the Bureau of Roads.

Fairchild: Oh, I've heard that story, too.

Storey: Yeah. And that Ellis had said–he'd asked him and Ellis had said, "Well, you know, they called me up and asked me if I wanted to be commissioner. And, of course, I thought it was the Bureau of Reclamation and said yes." [Laughter]

Fairchild: I heard the very same story. I think it's a fact.

Storey: He confirmed it the other day.

Fairchild: And he was shocked the fact that he was commissioner of roads. He's told me about one of his interesting jobs was the design of the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge here, and how it was so designed so that it would more or less fit into the

environment of the area. And he was very proud of the design of that particular bridge. (Storey: Um-hmm.) But, yes, he felt that he was coming back as Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, and here all at once he was Commissioner of . . .

Storey: Bureau of Roads.

Fairchild: Well, anyway, he was a fine person and I enjoyed working with him, but it was extremely trying times.

I remember Dan McCarthy [phonetic] was head of our planning there in Washington at that point in time. I was telling Dan, I said, "You know, Dan, this is really a trying time in my professional life," because having come from the state, I told you earlier about how things were going real well and things were prospering, to come back here and see that even with our best of efforts that we were being squeezed and things were not going the way we wanted, I remember Dan saying, "Well, Warren," he says, "you know, sometimes just holding an organization together is progress." I guess that was a little solace, because we really worked hard to do this and to make the changes which we felt were necessary. Of course, we were then cooperating with the Water Resources Council and trying to implement, or in developing the new principles and standards and procedures, the co-equal planning objectives, environment, and economic development, and we were working on programs to try and improve the educational background of some of our personnel.

Wanted to Develop a Program for Sending Professionals to School for Advanced Degrees

At that time the Bureau had never, did ***not*** have a program for sending some of the professionals back to school to get their advanced degrees, whereas the Corps of Engineers had a ***strong*** program.

This was one program that I tried to push, and we finally got two of our planning officials cleared to . . .

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. JULY 7, 1995.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. JULY 7, 1995.

Storey: This is tape two of an interview by Brit Storey with Warren Fairchild on July the 7th, 1995.

You were saying that sending people back to school for . . .

Fairchild: For advanced degrees and for learning some of the new techniques in planning or in the technology of water management. They were kind of getting, "Well, why would you want to do that? Because the best place you can get that training is in the Bureau of Reclamation. Sending them to school would be a waste of money." We did send two of our engineers back, and maybe it's gone on afterwards after I left. But I know that was difficult. To my knowledge, I think that was basically

probably the last of that initiative, at that point in time. So I was very strong in trying to train our people through our planning conferences and going back to school. But it was not an easy time.

Tried to Get Reclamation Involved in HUD's Flood Plain Management Program

Let me just give you one other example, is that about that time the flood plain management program was coming into being. Because we were evolving and getting a surplus capacity within the Bureau of Reclamation, some people in HUD [Department of Housing and Urban Development] had contacted us to see whether or not we wanted to cooperate with them and do some hydrologic studies on some of the flood plains which identifies some of the flood plain areas for the Flood Insurance Program. I felt this was something we certainly had the capability of doing.

I worked with them, and we developed a program, which would have been a nice aid to keep on some of our people working for the Bureau of Reclamation. ***But*** when I presented it to the Department of Interior, I was turned down. And they said, "No, we don't want the Bureau of Reclamation getting involved in things like that, because we think this is not in their area of expertise, in their area of work. So we'll let somebody else do it."

". . . there was a philosophy within the secretary['s office] at that time to really not only cut down the Bureau, you know, as far as its stature, but there was also this feeling that they did not want the Bureau doing anything that would particularly *enhance* its operation into new fields. . . ."

I point this out to you to indicate that there was a philosophy within the secretary['s office] at that time to really not only cut down the Bureau, you know, as far as its stature, but there was also this feeling that they did not want the Bureau doing anything that would particularly ***enhance*** its operation into new fields. This was unfortunate, because I saw the Bureau had the capability to do these things, and we could have been a great help to other Federal agencies.

". . . years earlier when the Bureau could have been moving into some of these areas with a good deal of gusto, the opportunity *might* have been there . . . But . . . the Bureau had resisted so long doing anything but irrigation, that those venues basically had been foreclosed because other agencies . . . had . . . taken over those particular operations. . . . there was a feeling on the part of . . . Interior that the Bureau, through the years, had not been all that cooperative . . . and now why would we cooperate in sustaining the strength of an agency that in the past had not always been that cooperative . . ."

But I think it indicates to me that back in years earlier when the Bureau could have been moving into some of these areas with a good deal of gusto, the opportunity ***might*** have been there, ***might*** have been there. Who am I to say it would have been done? But it ***might*** have been there. But at the time I came back there, the opportunities for new venues for the Bureau, because the Bureau had resisted so long doing anything but irrigation, that those venues basically had been foreclosed

because other agencies and other officials had come in and they had more or less taken over those particular operations. I think there was a feeling on the part of, and within, Interior that the Bureau, through the years, had not been all that cooperative in their programs, and now why would we cooperate in sustaining the strength of an agency that in the past had not always been that cooperative in our operations.

". . . there was a feeling, that I felt, of animosity of other bureaus in the Department of Interior toward the Bureau because what they perceived in earlier days . . . high-handedness . . . in achieving their objectives maybe to the detriment of what they saw were the objectives of other agencies. . . ."

So there was a feeling, that I felt, of animosity of other bureaus in the Department of Interior toward the Bureau because what they perceived in earlier days was sort of the high-handedness of the Bureau in achieving their objectives maybe to the detriment of what they saw were the objectives of other agencies. I'm referring to such agencies, for instance, like Fish and Wildlife and possibility Geological Survey and others that felt that maybe at one point in time that the Bureau could have been a little more cooperative with them. They might not have been ***quite*** so opposed when we came on hard times, because there certainly was not any great feeling within the Interior Department of wanting to ***salvage*** a strong Bureau of Reclamation at that point in time.

Reclamation Did Manage to Move into a Few New Activities

So we were going through a program, really, of retrenchment, trying to do what we could with the authorities we had to try to change the Bureau into the areas I'm emphasizing–municipal, industrial water supply, fish and wildlife, recreation. Those areas we tried to move into, but we found it very difficult.

There were some areas that we were successful, and that was that we did develop at that time what we called a Total Water Management Program out in California. [Unclear] some of the Bureau's operations and some of their maintenance activities. Our work on Colorado Water Quality Program, I think also was an extremely fine program.

"I was only marginally satisfied with what we were able to accomplish in Westwide Study. There I think it was a case where the Westwide Study was authorized for political reasons, and the people that authorized it didn't know exactly what they wanted. . . ."

I was only marginally satisfied with what we were able to accomplish in Westwide Study. There I think it was a case where the Westwide Study was authorized for political reasons, and the people that authorized it didn't know exactly what they wanted. They asked us to do something that they did not identify as far as the subjectives. We in the Bureau didn't really pursue it, then what they really wanted to accomplish. So we did what we thought they wanted, but because of politics, I think it was almost a mission impossible because of the conflict basically in the Northwest and the Southwest on the water supply aspects of the

Western United States.

Storey: Why would there be a conflict between those two areas?

". . . there was a feeling on the part of the officials in the Northwest that the California-Arizona people were going to steal their water. . . . And there was a feeling on the part of the people in the Southwest, they *needed* more water and there was water in the Northwest and that should be looked into. So you had immediately a built-in confrontation between the Northwest and the Southwest. . . ."

Fairchild: Well, at that point in time, there was a feeling on the part of the officials in the Northwest that the California-Arizona people were going to steal their water. That's what they were all about. They were going to steal the Columbia water. And there was a feeling on the part of the people in the Southwest, they ***needed*** more water and there was water in the Northwest and that should be looked into. So you had immediately a built-in confrontation between the Northwest and the Southwest.

And here we were in the Westwide Study. We were supposed to look at these things and resolve those differences, and the breach was very wide. See, the Central Arizona Project (CAP) was where the Westwide Study was authorized, and that was really an outgrowth of the Central Arizona Project, was to make that study. I'm not sure why Senator Jackson and others at that point in time ***wanted*** the study. I don't think they knew. But, anyway, they authorized the study, and then after it was ongoing, why, then the members of Congress and the staffs really weren't supportive at all in trying it out, because even though it was authorized, they just really didn't see this as something they wanted to see done in any regional way.

". . . some of the agencies that were only half-heartedly cooperating with us. . . ."

So you had that problem, and then also you had some of the agencies that were only half-heartedly cooperating with us. In other words, why would the Soil Conservation Service and the Corps of Engineers actively and aggressively cooperate and support a study of the Bureau of Reclamation when they really were trying to do some of the very same things?

Then you had the Water Resources Council that looked at that study, saying, "You know, that's really a comprehensive study that should have been assigned to the Water Resources Council." So really, the Federal agencies didn't, including the major construction agencies and the Water Resources Council, they weren't going to help us at all to be successful in our program.

". . . the states in the Northwest and the states in the Southwest . . . certainly were at cross purposes [in] what they wanted to see come out of the study. And so it was a study that was *extremely difficult to manage* and come up with a meaningful answer. . . ."

Then you had the states in the Northwest and the states in the Southwest that

certainly were at cross purposes what they wanted to see come out of the study. And so it was a study that was ***extremely difficult to manage*** and come up with a meaningful answer. I think on the surface we did as good a job as we could. But looking back, since this was a major undertaking, I was brought back here to do, I think one of the things that we should have done when I came back here is we should have gone to The Hill and met with Senator Jackson and said, "Okay, now, what ***really*** was your intention, your objective, of this study, and what do you ***really*** feel that we should strive to accomplish?" We didn't do that, and I think that's probably as much my responsibility for not doing that as anybody, and this is only in 20-20 hindsight. Because ***possibly*** if we had done that, we ***might*** have got better support from The Hill as to really what they meant in authorizing the study. Because once they authorized, it's kind of like they divorced themselves from any aspect of it as far as the findings and also even funding for the study.

". . . it was not a study that was supported on The Hill with any great enthusiasm, which is unfortunate, after they'd authorized it. . . ."

So it was not a study that was supported on The Hill with any great enthusiasm, which is unfortunate, after they'd authorized it.

Storey: Who was working on that, do you remember?

Fairchild: For the Bureau of Reclamation?

Storey: Yes.

Reclamation Staff in The Westwide Study

Fairchild: Yes. And it was a good team. It was a very good team. The man that headed the team was Wally Christensen, and I don't know, I think Wally is still living out in California. ***Wally*** was a good man. And we had such people as Ken Kauffman [phonetic]. I think Ken probably is retired and still near the Bureau of Reclamation in Denver. He was out of McCook. I knew Ken very well, very fine engineer, very fine.

Ed Barbour

And there was Ed Barbour.[16] Ed Barbour is an economist. In my view, probably Ed Barbour is one of the finest natural resource economists in the nation. He was on the team. So we had a good team. We had others like, you know Terry Lynott. Terry was also on that team. So we had good people.

And then, of course, we had all of our field offices which were involved, and we worked with like the Columbia River Basin Commission, the Southwest Interagency Committee, and others. So it was a sizeable operation. We had good people involved, and as far as I'm concerned, we had a good plan of study. But because of the less-than-understood objectives that we were to accomplish in the

16. Ed Barbour contributed to Reclamation's oral history program.

study; because of lack of strong political support, meaning the political indecision as to what they wanted; and the state conflict; it was an extremely difficult study to manage and to bring any type of meaningful role. I'd have to say that that, I'm sure, was somewhat discouraging to the people which were involved in it. I think they were happy to have the opportunity, but I know that I was sorry that we weren't able to make something more worthwhile out of the study.

There were some good things that came out of the study, please understand, but it was ***not*** as good as it should have been, based upon the need and the opportunity. I think we missed the opportunity.

Storey: And if you look at the study, the issues seem to be issues that have not yet been addressed.

Fairchild: And they still are there. That's right. I'm sure the politics and the regionalism that was present at that time is just as evident today. Maybe why it is not quite as strong is because the whole ***thrust*** of ***major*** water development has more or less disappeared from the scene. Even for the people in the Northwest or the Southwest, at that point in time in the basins, there was going to be a ***massive*** program of diversion of water from the Columbia Basin to the Southwest was just not in the cards.

I remember one meeting of Westwide people when I and somebody said that very same thing. I said, "We're here today discussing these things, you know, and having problems on it. I think all of us know that in our lifetime such diversions are not going to be, just not going to happen." But that was a very strong rigidity that we've got to prevent it from happening, you know, even though it wasn't going to happen.

Storey: Well, of course, in the sixties there was Parsons and all of the . . .

Fairchild: That preceded it, that's right.

Storey: There are so many ***names*** for these various plans. But tell me why . . .

Fairchild: Regarding the Yukon . . .

Storey: Yes.

Fairchild: . . . and Canada down into the Southwest, yes.

Storey: Tell me why these didn't look acceptable to you.

Believed the Grandiose Water Schemes Proposed in the 1960s and 1970s would not happen ". . . because at that point in time . . . support for that size of water development just wasn't there . . . Even though maybe it could be found to be feasible, the *money* was starting to be spent on other things . . . on some of the social issues of the time, . . . on the environmental concerns, and we were developing a program of significant water pollution control abatement. . . ."

Fairchild: Well, because at that point in time in the early seventies, the support for that size of water development just wasn't there, just wasn't there. It wasn't going to happen. Even though maybe it could be found to be feasible, the ***money*** was starting to be spent on other things and in other areas, more on some of the social issues of the time, more on the environmental concerns, and we were developing a program of significant water pollution control abatement. More and more money was being spent there. And so even though there was some money for development, you could see, as the projects were being completed, that a lot of new ones, and particularly large ones, were not coming into being.

Platte River Dam

Going back to the Platte River Dam, which I talked about earlier, the timing of that project, not withstanding the fact that probably it was a boondoggle, but that project didn't have a chance of ***ever*** seeing the light of day if it ever hit Washington, D.C. It was just too expensive, too big. Funding for it was not going to be possible.

". . . you could see this happening, because we were struggling for whatever money we could get together to continue our diminishing planning program and to complete the projects like the Grand Coulee Third Powerplant and . . . We were struggling to get the Central Arizona Project off the drawing board. . . ."

And so you could see this happening, because we were struggling for whatever money we could get together to continue our diminishing planning program and to complete the projects like the Grand Coulee Third Powerplant and things like that. We were struggling to finish those projects. We were struggling to get the Central Arizona Project off the drawing board. Everything was a ***struggle***, a struggle to get funding for those. At a time when the budgets for these programs were shrinking, we were trying to complete these others and to add ***big new*** projects. That type of a cushion just wasn't going to happen, just wasn't going to happen.

"The *values* of our country and the *priorities* of our country *had changed* from the fifties and early sixties to the seventies, and many people in the Bureau of Reclamation did not accept that. They felt that the golden days were going to continue forever, and that was the feeling of some of the people out West, that we would be able to *get* those big projects and were going to *do* those things. . . ."

Now, maybe it will happen sometime way off in the future, but the values– see, this was what was changing. The ***values*** of our country and the ***priorities*** of our country ***had changed*** from the fifties and early sixties to the seventies, and many people in the Bureau of Reclamation did not accept that. They felt that the golden days were going to continue forever, and that was the feeling of some of the people out West, that we would be able to ***get*** those big projects and were going to ***do*** those things.

"Well, if you're going to *do* these things, then what we were going to get was money to improve the management of existing . . . facilities, and going to have

programs that had more of a multipurpose type of development, an emphasis on municipal/industrial water supply, for recreation, fish and wildlife, and environmental enhancement. Those were the projects that had *some* likelihood of coming into being. But big *programs* for, say, irrigation development, when we were in a period of agriculture surpluses, just were not to be. . . ."

Well, if you're going to ***do*** these things, then what we were going to get was money to improve the management of existing structures, existing facilities, and going to have programs that had more of a multipurpose type of development, an emphasis on municipal, industrial water supply for recreation, fish and wildlife, and environmental enhancement. Those were the projects that had ***some*** likelihood of coming into being. But big ***programs*** for, say, irrigation development, when we were in a period of agriculture surpluses, just were not to be. They just were not to be.

I think it's one of the ***big*** crunches of the Bureau of Reclamation at that time, because you had these ***highly*** trained, ***very good*** technical people that could design canals and design dams and irrigate water, the best of anywhere in the world. This is what they were trained to do. They took great pride in their work. They took great pride in their work. And all at once, the end of that era was coming, and basically they found it ***extremely*** difficult to accept, because they had lived through the fifties when all this was going very good for them, and I think it was that reluctance to accept that back in, say, the fifties and early sixties, when the Bureau could have made some changes, but they could not see it coming. Just like the old buggy, the old buggy manufacturer. If he didn't convert over to the automobile, he soon went out of business. But it was coming, but we just didn't want to convert because we were doing so well.

"So with that kind of support [on The Hill], even though you could see the storm on the horizon, why make the change? Then when the change did come, it was so *traumatic* that something's wrong, 'People don't understand what we're doing, all the good we're doing.'. . ."

We had supporters up on The Hill, like Senator Hayden of Arizona, that regardless of what the Department of Interior said, "We'll get you funding for those projects." And being on the Appropriations Committee, he did. So with that kind of support, even though you could see the storm on the horizon, why make the change? Then when the change did come, it was so ***traumatic*** that something's wrong, "People don't understand what we're doing, all the good we're doing." Well, we did do good. We were in line with the values of the country of developing the West at that point in time. The Bureau of Reclamation had a ***great*** history. But if an agency, or any organization, is going to survive and prosper, they've got to be able to look to the future and see what changes are coming and to lead, not be brought into it fighting and resisting every step of the way. And I think this was truly unfortunate, because the Bureau had such a ***technical capability***, and there's so many areas that could have been of great value of the country. And now you look at it today, it basically is being dismembered, its being dismembered. To me, this was a great resource that's going to be lost.

And I'd have to blame those of us who were in leadership as much responsible as anybody else, because even though we could see these changes coming, we were either unable, and many unwilling, to adapt to those. It should have come much earlier. But to make the changes we made in the seventies, I would say, were too small and too late. I'm proud of what we did here, but it was unfortunate we couldn't have done more. That's really what I'm saying. And maybe if the big old battleship had started being turned around a little bit in the late fifties and sixties, we might have got it on a different course that would have been very helpful to the nation. But by the time I came, it was pretty late to make significant changes in the Bureau. And even at that point in time, there was a ***real reluctance*** on the part of particularly the construction and then some of the maintenance people to change.

"I guess this is loyalty, but I felt that the planners were really quite astute and could see the fact that there had to be some changes. . . ."

I guess this is loyalty, but I felt that the planners were really quite astute and could see the fact that there had to be some changes.

". . . there was becoming more and more feeling on the part of the people up on The Hill, the news media, and others, that some of the water policies of the Department of Interior and the Bureau of Reclamation were antiquated, particularly as related to water charges . . ."

Let me give you one example of reluctance to change. When I was assistant commissioner here with the Bureau, one of the things that was becoming quite ***obvious*** is there was becoming more and more feeling on the part of the people up on The Hill, the news media, and others, that some of the water policies [of] ~~that~~ the Department of Interior and the Bureau of Reclamation were antiquated, particularly as related to water charges, and there was a feeling that there was just too much subsidy in those water charges and for water projects, and that there were big corporations that were benefitting from these projects, and that the Bureau needed to tighten up where they could [in] ~~for~~ contracts. Of course, some of these were old contracts and, of course, you could not negate them. You have to please understand that.

An Example of a Water Contract Issue That Happened to Come to Him

But I remember there was a contract that was being negotiated with one of the very large irrigation districts around Fresno, California, for a project out there. Anyway, it was happening at the very time when the secretary of interior was ***telling*** us that "Bureau officials, we've got to be tougher on our contracts, we've got to be tougher on our contracts." I forget exactly the details. But for some reason or other, the new contract proposal of this large irrigation district came across my desk. It was a mistake, because it didn't need to come across my desk. It should have gone the other way, but a mistake was made and it came across my desk. So I had it there, and the man that was head of O&M says, "Where's that contract?"

I said, "It's right here."

He says, "I want to get it in to the Commissioner."

I said, "I'll go in to the Commissioner and discuss it with him, with you, but," I said, "there isn't any way that the water charges which you envision in this contract is going to go forward by the secretary of interior. He's not going to accept it." I forget the exact amount. It was some ludicrous small amount that they envisioned which they'd negotiated with this district for a contract. I said, "There isn't any way." I said, "You know, with the direction we're getting, it will be foolhardy to send this forward." With that, he picked it up and he walked out of the office.

About two weeks later, the contract came back and he'd doubled the charges. It was still too low, you know–he'd doubled the charges.

I give you that only to show as an example how ***reluctant***, even at that time, to recognize that ***change*** was at hand. Some of us ***saw*** that our ***responsibility*** was to those irrigators out there and give them the very cheapest water we could get them. I'm really representing the government, the public interest, in negotiating a fair price.

So there was a reluctance on the part of Bureau people at really a fairly high level, that times were changing and changing rather rapidly. It was not a happy period, and I'm sure it's not been a happy period even in subsequent years with the Bureau. Again, my only regret is I think that there was a ***time*** the Bureau, with its great technical capability, could have done some things that could ease itself into this period we're in right now, and afforded a ***role***, a role of leadership in water management and things like that that would have been very positive for the nation. But because we still saw back in the sixties, and many people even in the seventies, that our objective was to irrigate the deserts, even though Congress and others were saying that we were just hitting that solid wall and not recognizing that times had changed.

Storey: The Congress was saying, "No, that isn't really what you need to do."

Fairchild: They were beginning to say it more and more. There was still some elements in the Congress who were still trying to do a little of this.

Storey: Like Carl Hayden.

Fairchild: Well, but he'd gone at that time.

Storey: Yeah.

Fairchild: He'd gone at that particular time. Who was the congressman from Arizona, Republican that was very interested in the Central Arizona Project? There was people like that that were still very helpful in getting these things through, but they were also getting older and they were passing from the scene, and as they passed

from the scene, then the Bureau's support then passed along with it. And since we did not have a strong base in the Department of Interior because of what they perceived as some of our past activities and the fact that we were no longer all that relevant in certain areas, that made for a very difficult program.

Once I left the Bureau, you know, and went to Water Resources Council and World Bank, I must admit, I haven't tried to get involved with many of these activities, but I would guess that type of frustration on the part of Bureau leaders has become even more accentuated than what we felt in the early seventies, I would guess.

Reclamation's International Reputation Is High and Very Visible

The Bureau, internationally–let me just say this, Brit. I've worked, of course, internationally for fifteen years for the World Bank and [unclear]. The Bureau of Reclamation and its people have a visibility internationally in the developing countries that are excellent. Many of those people came and took training in the Bureau of Reclamation's Engineering and Research Center out in Denver and out in the field offices and feel very strongly about the Bureau. Even today, the name Bureau of Reclamation internationally has a pretty strong resonance among people involved in water in the developing countries. So it has a heritage that all of us can be proud of in the great things that have been accomplished, and I certainly am so pleased I was associated with it.

I guess my ***only*** feeling of frustration is is that I was brought back to help make some change, and I feel that we were only ***marginally*** successful in those changes those three years I was here. I wish we could have done more. I think a lot of it was just because of the system which was in place at that time made it extremely difficult to do so. In other words, I think the train had pretty well left the station and was going down the tracks pretty hard at that time, and we were not on board. That was part of the problem.

Storey: But I'm interested that you recognize this. You've talked of the fifties and the sixties, for instance. We were doing pretty well on the Missouri Basin Program, Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program at that time, and then in the late sixties, we had a little cluster of authorizations also that included Central Arizona Project, it included, I believe, Colorado River Storage Project. Yet by the early seventies, within two to five years, you'd picked up that things weren't right, that things weren't going well, and we were going through RIFs[17] because of the planning office functions. I'm just interested in how that was possible to pick it up so quickly.

Storey: Well, of course, you could see back in the days of the [Lyndon B.] Johnson Administration, many bills were passed, such as NEPA, for example, that pretty well spelled out some things that were going to happen. If you look at some of the legislation that was enacted at that particular time, and based upon appropriations,

17. "Reduction in force" activities are undertaken when a bureau has surplus staff that it cannot or will not absorb into the organization elsewhere.

then, you can see the shift in emphasis, and what was happening in testimony up on The Hill. Now there were more and more discussions in the news media and on television about the questioning of the validity of one agency of government doing things to increase agricultural production when another agency was trying to cut it down and with great expense. So it didn't take a particularly astute person to realize that changes were coming about.

You know, when you have momentum, which these programs had in the fifties and sixties, it isn't that they just ***stop*** overnight, but they just kind of come down to a small operation. And this is what was happening. Yes, like the Central Arizona Project, there was certainly a strong political reason for doing that because of the pull between California and Arizona, the feeling that the people in Arizona had to have some sort of compensation for the water which rightfully it was entitled to under various laws to them and in various compacts. So that was one that I think that was really the last segment of the large projects, because this was something that they had been trying out for years, that was needed to rectify really Arizona's claim to some of the Colorado River water. That project was in the pipeline.

". . . at the time I came back here, Brit, we had a pipeline of projects that we were fully funded, I think, to take something like sixteen or twenty years to do. . . ."

See, at the time I came back here, Brit, we had a pipeline of projects that we were fully funded, I think, to take something like sixteen or twenty years to do. We had that many projects in the pipeline. So the Central Arizona Project was one that . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 2. JULY 7, 1995.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2. JULY 7, 1995.

Storey: So C-A-P was there with all the others lined up behind.

". . . it wasn't like all at once this came up . . . because the storm clouds were around and they were developing. But so many of the people that were in leadership felt that, you know, some way or other we're going to weather the storm . . . Well, it just wasn't going to happen, because the storm clouds just got bigger and bigger and bigger, and then, of course, . . . there was a lack of support for that type of program. . . ."

Fairchild: In line. And we had a sixteen-to twenty-year backlog, and with the level of funding at that point in time, the funding was becoming more difficult to come by. You can see that many of these projects on the back end of it were going to find it extremely difficult. So it wasn't like all at once this came up, you know, because the storm clouds were around and they were developing. But so many of the people that were in leadership felt that, you know, some way or other we're going to weather the storm, we're going to go right on through. Well, it just wasn't going to happen, because the storm clouds just got bigger and bigger and bigger, and then, of course, then there was a lack of support for that type of program. So it was coming. It was coming.

When we were supporting the O'Neill and the North Loup Project in Nebraska–that would be in the late sixties–we knew at that time that because of the problems of agriculture production, things like that, these were going to be extremely difficult projects to get authorized and get funded. We ***knew*** that. But ***we*** felt that in the case of our state, in fact, we were so agriculturally oriented because it was so critical to the state water plan, particularly the O'Neill Project and the water supply for Lincoln-Omaha, eventually, that we ***really wanted*** those projects, and we ***really*** went to bat for them. We ***really*** went to bat for them. That's the reason we got them authorized, because we felt very strongly about them. But they were authorized ***only*** with a ***great deal*** of pressure and support, you know. I told you about how the Office of Management and Budget didn't ***want*** them authorized, wanted Nixon to ***veto*** them. We got them authorized primarily because of the efforts of Senator Curtis and some other people.

So that was kind of how this was happening there at last. Even though we were getting a few of them through, it was ***really*** a ***struggle***. And we ***knew*** that. We knew that. We could see that, and we knew that there had to be some changes and we were going to modify those things to really have a reasonable operation for the Bureau and really as a service to the country to utilize this great resource of the Bureau. The Bureau had great resources at that time. Gosh, as I said, the Bureau had all these capabilities. In the international area, the Bureau is looked upon as having a capability second to none in those areas. And so I hated to see that resource just dissipated. I felt we could use it in other areas, and we were not all that successful in redirecting at that point in time. It was coming. It was coming.

Storey: And it was seen.

Fairchild: Yeah, it was seen. It was foreseen. That was one reason why I was going back here, was to help in making that change. We made some changes. We made some changes, but yet we weren't able to make ***enough***. I'd say the train was basically leaving the station at that point in time, and we weren't able to catch up and get ***on.***

Storey: Who were the other assistant commissioners while you were there?

Gil Stamm

Fairchild: Oh, my. Of course, Gil Stamm was in charge of O&M.

Storey: So Gil was the man you had this conversation with?

Fairchild: No. No, it was the man just under him. I'm surprised. It should have gone up through Gil to the Commissioner. Then I never would have seen it. But for some reason or other, the contract got over into planning. I'll give you a little background. For some reason, the contract went over into planning, to Dan McCarthy and Jim O'Brien. Anyway, they initialed off on it, you know, and it came on up to me, and that's where it got stuck. And I asked Jim, because Jim was a good friend of mine, you know, a colleague . . .

Storey: This was Jim Casey?

Fairchild: Jim O'Brien.

Storey: Jim O'Brien.

Storey: Jim Casey had already gone up to The Hill. I said, "Jim, why did you sign off on that?"

He said, "I knew you'd stop it." (laughter) "I knew you would stop it."

Well, I did, in a way, you know. Why it got over to planning, I don't know. But somebody putting out the routing slip probably made a mistake, because it didn't need to go through me, because it could have gone to Gil and on up to the commissioner, you know. But it wasn't going to go anywhere. If the commissioner would have signed off on it, we've had got ***crucified*** in the secretary's office. We really would have. We'd have just got ***crucified***. So the rate was doubled. We still did very, very well. But as I recall, it did go through.

Storey: Tell me about Gil Stamm. What was he like?

". . . typical Bureau of Reclamation official of the fifties and sixties, and not one that would show much leadership in making changes. He was not supportive of changes, because he didn't think it was necessary. . . ."

Fairchild: Gil was very loyal, a Reclamation man. He saw the Reclamation as it was back in the fifties and sixties. I would just say, from that standpoint, he was one that was not enthusiastic about change, but he certainly was involved with the Bureau. He felt very strongly about the Bureau. He was very dedicated working with the local districts and basically getting on with good deals you could get, you know, for the Bureau. So I would say he ***represented*** the typical Bureau of Reclamation official of the fifties and sixties, and not one that would show much leadership in making changes. He was not supportive of changes, because he didn't think it was necessary. He felt that the Bureau [unclear]. But I'd say for his time and day, he would have been a strong Bureau official, not one that would be innovative in new areas.

Storey: What about other assistant commissioners?

Fairchild: I'm just trying to think of their names. The assistant commissioner for administration. Oh, gosh. I should know his name. Anyway, you can check it at that time.[18] He also was not supportive of change, and he was very instrumental in working with committees of Congress, for instance. When we were going for planning money for some of these changes, when he was working with the committees up on The Hill, he was much more supportive trying to get, as he said, money for barrels of cement and yards of earthwork than he was for new plans. I always felt that he was one that did not support the Westwide Study, working with the committee staffs when they started marking it up, because he felt that the

18. The assistant commissioner for administration from 1963-1974 was Wilbur P. Kane, and Donald D. Anderson served in that position 1974-1981.

strength of the Bureau was in building something, not in making these changes in planning. What was his name? It's too bad. I'm sure he was a good man with the budget and things like that. He died a few years back from cancer.

Anyway, I was saying this to indicate that within the Bureau, even though Ellis was saying we had to make some change, that not always was his people thinking along the same line. And I think part of that was because Ellis himself had some duplicity in this thinking, because even though he knew there should be some changes, he wanted to irrigate the desert. He wanted to irrigate the desert. That's only natural from a Salt Lake City/Mormon background.

Storey: Sort of a schizophrenic approach to the . . .

. .

Fairchild: Wellll, maybe, but in a nice way. In a nice way.

Storey: Yeah. I don't mean it in a bad way.

Fairchild: Very, very nice man, yeah.

Storey: There were also chief engineers. Actually, I think there may have been only one chief engineer while you were here.

Fairchild: No, there was two. There was Barney Bellport. Then he left, and then Harold . . .

Storey: Harold Arthur.

Barney Bellport and Harold Arthur

Fairchild: Harold Arthur came in.

"I always felt that Harold Arthur was much more of, how would I say, a gentleman to work with than was *Barney*. . . ."

I always felt that Harold Arthur was much more of, how would I say, a gentleman to work with than was ***Barney***. I think ***Barney*** felt that in his position and all, that he was pretty much in charge of what needed to be done. I didn't work with him directly, so please understand it may not be fair for me to–but Harold Arthur always came across to me as more of a gentleman type that would try to work and think things out.

". . . I just really always felt rather bad that Harold happened to be tied in with the Teton Dam failure. . . ."

And I just really always felt rather bad that Harold happened to be tied in with the Teton Dam failure. Not that I know too much about Harold's technical capability, please understand, because I didn't work directly with him. I didn't have anything to do with that dam. But I always enjoyed knowing Harold Arthur. He seemed like such a solid, good guy. As I understand, because I was out of the Bureau at that point in time, I think he took the responsibility. As I understand, he took the

responsibility for the failure. Now, that's the kind of person that Harold Arthur would be. But it always seemed unfortunate it had to happen during his time at the helm that that happened. He was another what I consider to be a ***very*** pleasant person. But I can't go beyond that talking about Harold, because I really don't know anything about him technically. He was a nice person to be around, and at meetings and at hearings and things like that, he just kind of exuded that good feeling.

Storey: He's still there in Denver doing very well, actually.

Fairchild: Well, that's great. That's great.

Storey: I noticed your title was assistant commissioner for planning and foreign activities. We've talked a lot about planning. Let's talk about foreign activities a little bit.

Fairchild: Well, foreign activity had to do with some of the restriction that . . .

Storey: Actually, excuse me. Let's ***not*** talk about foreign activities. We're out of time.

Fairchild: All right.

Storey: I can't believe it's been two hours. But, anyway . . .

Foreign Activities at Reclamation

Fairchild: Well, let me just say, foreign activities went through the very same thing, because there was a pulling back. U.S. AID funding was going down at that point in time. See, we basically were working to support U.S. AID in these overseas projects. So our program was phasing out in many countries because of that. It was not so much a matter related to the Bureau and its capabilities as it was the funding of U.S. AID. So that was phasing down.

"One of the problems we had at that time was bringing these people back from overseas and integrating them back into the planning positions which also were being reduced in numbers. . . ."

One of the problems we had at that time was bringing these people back from overseas and integrating them back into the planning positions which also were being reduced in numbers. I felt very ***strongly*** that we had a responsibility to these people to get them back into posts, because they went overseas, you know, on assignment from the Bureau, and I felt we had a responsibility to get them back to some position here in the United States. And that was a major undertaking to work them back into the system.

Storey: Let's clean up a couple of little things and then finish for the day, I guess. You mentioned the Papio Watershed Project. Is that Papion?

Fairchild: Papio. P-A-P-I-O.

Storey: Just the way it sounds. Okay.

Fairchild: Yeah. They call it a creek, but when it floods, it goes right through Omaha and it is something.

Storey: Okay. I just wanted to check on the spelling. Did you have any glimmers of why Ellis Armstrong was let go in the second Nixon administration? You talked about his ***reaction*** to it.

Removal of Ellis Armstrong and Jimmy Smith at the Beginning of the Second Nixon Administration

Fairchild: I think maybe for two reasons. One reason, I don't think Ellis was perceived as being a strong leader. I think that was one. I think the second reason is that there was feeling that the changes which the secretary wanted to get done in the Bureau of Reclamation were not happening as quickly as maybe they should. But I think mainly the first, because Ellis did ***not–in*** all fairness to Ellis, Ellis did ***not*** try to develop a lot of brownie points with people at the secretary's level. He didn't try to run to them and curry favors. In other words, he stayed in his office and he did his work. Because of that, I don't think there was a ***strong*** tie, social or technical, between Ellis and the secretary's office. So when the ax started to fall on people, why, here was a man that was vulnerable, and I think that's what happened.

Certainly when Jimmy Smith went, you know, then Ellis was–I'm not sure. I don't know whether Ellis went before Jimmy. They went about the same time. Jimmy Smith, that's kind of an interesting story. Jimmy Smith went on actively and campaigned for the reelection of Richard Nixon, and he thought everything was fine. He'd been out in the western part of the state and came back on our airplane one night. Some people met him at the airport and said, "You're fired." It was kind of heartless timing, it really was.

When all this was going around, I'd say there was a lot of anxiety here in the Department of [the] Interior. Since I was in charge of foreign activities, why, I had a trip planned to go out and see some of our projects around the world and see how they were getting along, right at the time this happened. Anyway, so I went on this trip to visit some of our foreign installations. When I got back, why, the secretary, who was a very nice lady, she says, "Warren," she says, "you notice that the other assistant commissioners said you were crazy to go on this trip at the time all these firings were going on." She said, "I just told them, 'Well, [if] Mr. Fairchild thought if he had any problem, he wouldn't have gone. He knew what he was doing.'" Well, I did. I felt pretty strange about what was going on. I didn't feel ***all*** that threatened, but it happened, you know. There was kind of a feeling, "Oh, my God. You've got to sit in here and protect yourself." Hunker down, you know. But I never felt that way. I never felt that way.

Storey: Well, it makes you wonder why it would work. You know, if you're targeted, the bull's-eye is already there. (laughter)

Fairchild: You're going to get it. And I didn't feel it. And it could have happened. You

know, it could have happened. Sure, it could.

Storey: Who was the secretary then?

Fairchild: Morton.

Storey: Rogers B. Morton. C.B. Morton, I think it is.

The Saturday Night Massacre

Fairchild: It was Rogers. Rogers Morton. A ***nice*** fellow, really a nice fellow. Did you ever hear about the–I think something like the Saturday Night Massacre. But it was the day before Thanksgiving.

Storey: No.

Fairchild: Remember [Walter J.] Hickel got fired, secretary of the interior. Did you ever hear that story?

Storey: Well, I knew that he'd left, but that's about all I know.

Fairchild: Hickel got crosswise with Nixon on something. I don't know whether it was the Vietnam War or what it was. He got crosswise, and Nixon fired him. Of course, the word got out immediately that Rogers Morton, who was a congressman from Maryland, was going to get the job. [Tapping on table] So Hickel was fired on a Wednesday afternoon. [Unclear] from the White House. He's still very active in the Republican circles, but he's a big businessman. He's with Northwest Airlines, something like that. He came over and he started firing people on a Wednesday afternoon just before Thanksgiving. I'd only been here about forty-five days. He started firing people, and that afternoon he fired seven people, seven people that afternoon. Boy, just bing, bing. He just said, "By five o'clock at night, get your stuff off the desk. You're gone." You know. Anyway, come quitting time and supposedly there was nine people on the list, and I think he got either six or seven of them fired.

Anyway, Rogers Morton was coming as secretary of interior. He was coming in. He heard about it, and he told the President. He says, "You've got to stop that." He said, "I'm going to be secretary, so I want no more of that. Let me make the decision."

So, anyway, the word was that on the Friday after Thanksgiving, this man was going to come over and he was going to get the rest of them you know, but he didn't. He didn't, because Morton stopped it. And there's always the question, who were those other two or three people on the list that never got fired? (laughter) See, now, Ellis wasn't on that list, see. None of the people I knew were on that list at that time. But there were people, for instance, in the Park Service, people like that. [Tapping on table] They just really cleared them out. So that was right during the Nixon administration. You know, it can get real–very malicious around here when things like that happen.

". . . there was two waves of firing while I was here. . . ."

Then, of course, after Nixon was reelected, that's when they came over and they started then making those changes in Interior. So there was two waves of firing while I was here. Two waves of firing while I was here.

Storey: In three years.

Fairchild: Yeah, in three years. You know, you can kind of understand why they say, you know, that people come here to these jobs. I think the average tenure is something like twenty-two months, twenty or twenty-two months. I think maybe it isn't even that long.

". . . I went to the Water Resources Council and was there for three years and then over to the World Bank, because I knew that the change was going to happen. I could see that Gerry Ford was going to lose out and [Jimmy] Carter was going to be [president]. . . ."

But, anyway, then I went to the Water Resources Council and was there for three years and then over to the World Bank, because I knew that the change was going to happen. I could see that Gerry Ford was going to lose out and [Jimmy] Carter was going to be [president]. So I just had a chance to go to the World Bank and I thought it was an excellent opportunity so I went to the World Bank.

Storey: Well, I really appreciate your spending time with me today. I'd like to ask you again whether it's acceptable for researchers inside and outside Reclamation to use these tapes and the resulting transcripts.

Fairchild: Surely. Surely. No problem.

Storey: I appreciate it. Thank you very much.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. JULY 7, 1995.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 1. APRIL 10, 1996.

Storey: This is Brit Allan Storey, senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, interviewing Warren Fairchild, a former assistant commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, on April the 10th, 1996, at about nine o'clock in the morning in the offices of the Bureau of Reclamation in the Main Interior Building in Washington, D.C. This is tape one.

I think last time we were getting ready to talk about foreign activities while you were still at Reclamation and how they affected you, or you affected them, maybe, I should say.

". . . the time I was with the Bureau, the foreign program, foreign activities, was on a decline . . ."

Fairchild: Well, of course, the time I was with the Bureau, the foreign program, foreign

activities, was on a decline, and it was on a decline for several reasons. One reason was that there was a cutback in some of the foreign aid money through U-S AID. That was one thing. But also, there was a feeling on the part of many people that rather than have a government agency involved in so much of the foreign activities, that it would be better if we could include the private side, the private consulting firms. And so all of these things had a tendency to cut back the foreign activities of the Bureau.

Countries in Which Reclamation Operated When He Came to Reclamation

At the time I was there, we had a rather sizable group that was in Brazil, we had another group that was in the Philippines, we had a group in Afghanistan, and we were basically closing out our operation in Thailand. They had been basically shut down at that point in time, but just shutting down on the Mekong Delta. So our program was one of cutbacks.

". . . there was always a problem assimilating [returning personnel] back into the organization. . . ."

I think there were several aspects of the program that was interesting. Since we were bringing these people back from overseas, there was always a problem assimilating back into the organization. Of course, you have people that are already in place and you have these vacancies that come up, and, of course, many of them were looking forward to those vacancies when they came about. And so it was not easy to put these people from these overseas assignments back in the Bureau of Reclamation, because they'd been gone for, say, two to six years or something like that, and they'd lost some of their contacts. And in order to make this work, we basically just had to say, "This we're going to do. We're going to put these people in these slots." Otherwise, they would have had a very difficult time of integrating back into the organization. Now, that wasn't true of all people, but that was true for many people coming back. There was a difficult time in integrating them back into the organization. So that was one of the issues, and I think we did a fairly good job, Brit, of bringing them back into the organization. But it was one of recognizing the fact that the federal government's Bureau of Reclamation had a responsibility to these people to assimilate them back into the organization, and because they were from the outside, more or less, coming back in, it wasn't always that easy. But I think we did a reasonably good job of that.

Storey: Does this mean, for instance, that regional directors were being told, "You will hire this man"?

Fairchild: Well, actually, when the vacancies come, we were just more or less saying that these are the spots where these people are going to go. In other words, we just more or less ***put them*** in these spots, because otherwise they probably would have been looking forever for an assignment role, at least some of them would be. So, yes, there was a deal of, I guess you could say, coercion placed upon the regional directors and other people in place of authority that they would accept these people back, because we had an obligation to them.

That was one aspect of it. The other aspect of it, of course, was in kind of wrapping up the programs overseas was to make sure that what we end up with had some relevance to the situation that we were leaving, and we were under kind of a time constraint, both in Brazil and the Philippines, in coming up with programs that were meaningful that we could leave behind. I think that that was a challenge to the people in these foreign spots.

". . . when we first went to Brazil, the program . . . was one of large dams, tunnels and diversions and big irrigation schemes out on the land . . . what we actually ended up with in Brazil was some smaller schemes, direct diversion from the rivers and onto some adjoining land and things like that . . ."

Using Brazil as an example, when we first went to Brazil, the program which was envisioned down there on the San Francisco Basin was one of large dams, tunnels and diversions and big irrigation schemes out on the land, you know, a typical Bureau of Reclamation viewpoint of what should happen. And I'm not saying those weren't appropriate, but what we actually ended up with in Brazil was some smaller schemes, direct diversion from the rivers and onto some adjoining land and things like that, but it seemed like at that point in time were much more practical.

". . . I found it a very challenging program, and it probably had an impact upon my future career in that I found that there was a certain amount of professional enjoyment in working in these countries . . ."

And so there was kind of a winding down of our programs, not that the Bureau ever completely wound down their programs, but there was a diminishing program while I was with the Bureau. I found it a very challenging program, and it probably had an impact upon my future career in that I found that there was a certain amount of professional enjoyment in working in these countries, and, of course, that kind of evolved into some of my later action with the World Bank, where, incidentally, I was responsible for getting the Bureau involved in a project in Pakistan.

Drainage Issues in Pakistan

We may have talked about this earlier, but a major problem with the irrigation system in Pakistan, which is a large integrated system, is one of drainage. In other words, through the decades a lot of the Indus River, of course, had been put out on the land and the groundwater table had built up, and where we had some very serious drainage problems over a good share of that somewhat 35 million acres over there in the Indus Basin. The technology at that point in time was basically one of tube wells that was being developed ***by*** the consulting firms and by the government over there for draining these areas, and they put in these deep-tube wells, and they would drain this area. But what happened with the tube well is that you down to, say, 300 or 400 feet and the quality of the water which you are extracting to bring down the surface water is ***extremely*** poor quality. You might be taking water out at those levels which would be the equivalent of seawater, and, of course, then you would be putting it back out in the drainage ways and be going back down the river,

and that would be causing some further contamination downstream.

So I came upon the idea, along with some people in Pakistan, on what we should be trying to do is transfer the technology from the western part of the United States of trying to install horizontal drains, the pipe, rather than the tube wells. And so we had a project around Faisalabad in Pakistan, and everybody decided with Pakistan that what we would do is that we would put in an extensive program of horizontal drains there, and in order to accomplish this, we thought in the transfer of technology, if Pakistan was agreeable, that they would employ consultants, if you want to call them, or experts from the Bureau of Reclamation to actually come over and to work on that project. And so the Bureau of Reclamation people were there for, I think, four to six years on that project, and the whole program was basically one of transfer of technology to the Pakistanis on installing the horizontal drains.

The program didn't go perfectly from any standpoint, you never can expect to, and there were problems. But on a re-submission, when I was visiting with a member of WAPDA, he was telling me that really the Fourth Drainage Project was coming along quite well–that was the project that the Bureau was involved in–and they're quite pleased with the way things have worked out, and that the quality of water coming out of those drains is much ***higher***, even though it's saline, it's much higher than it would have been if they had put in deep-tube wells. It's a matter of that the deeper you go into the groundwater, the more saline becomes the water in that particular area. And so they are quite pleased, and the program of horizontal drains is kind of evolving and taking up more and more in Pakistan.

So all these things kind of fit together a little bit, you know, and my experience in the Bureau, hopefully I was good for the Bureau, and certainly my experience with the Bureau was helpful to me in my later professional life, like the World Bank, and then I ***pulled*** upon that experience for bringing the Bureau into a drainage project in Pakistan, so I guess it may have worked both ways.

Storey: Yeah. Ken Vernon recognized the same pattern. First, he was with Reclamation. Then he went to AID, and while he was at AID, he would pull in people from Reclamation to do projects. I think he was in Pakistan, also.

Fairchild: He very well could have been.

Storey: And various other places.

Bill Peters

Fairchild: Yeah. One of the parties that was heavily involved in this was, next to the Bureau Reclamation, the person that worked for the World Bank, and that was Bill Peters. Bill Peters at one time was the top soil scientist in the Denver office of the E-&-R [Engineering and Research] Center, and when he retired, he went with the World Bank. Bill was an ***excellent***, ***excellent*** professional, and he was one that went with me and help set up this program. Even though he wasn't an engineer, he's very good on this matter of soil/water relationships. So Bill was helpful in working with

me and developing the program of transfer of technology from what was going on in the western part of the United States to what we wanted to accomplish in Pakistan, so it was sort of adapting that technology to the Pakistan situation.

Storey: Did somebody come to you about Pakistan? You said that you got us involved, I believe. How did that happen?

Fairchild: Well, of course, I was working for the World Bank at the time.

Storey: Oh, at that time.

Fairchild: At that time, I was with the World Bank, and, we were going to appraise this project, this drainage project. And in discussion with WAPDA, Water and Power Development Authority personnel in Lahore, Pakistan, they were ***evolving*** a concern as to the ***technology*** of their drainage program, because they were having many management and financial problems with their deep-tube wells, and so they were ***looking*** to make some ***changes*** in their approach. And so when we appraised the project for the Fourth Drainage Project near Faisalabad in Punjab Province, they indicated very ***strongly*** to me that they would like to try the horizontal drains. So when I took the appraisal mission over there, actually I took over several people from the Bureau of Reclamation, that had been recently retired from the Bureau of Reclamation, I should put it that way, and Bill Peters, and when we ***appraised*** the project, we appraised it as a horizontal pipe drain project rather than a deep-tube well project, which was kind of, in a way, it wasn't the ***first*** one in Pakistan, but it was the first one of any extensive ***size***, so that was really a kind of a first in many ways for doing this. It was a sizable operation.

Storey: But using Reclamation expertise?

Fairchild: Using Reclamation. The whole idea was to transfer the technology developed by the Bureau in the western part of the United States to Pakistan and adapting it to the Pakistan environment.

Storey: Do you remember when that would have been?

Fairchild: Well, that would have been about probably somewhere along around, I would say, mid-1980s was when we did that, mid-1980s, early- to mid-1980s. I don't remember the exact [date], but it was called the Fourth Drainage Project of Faisalabad in Punjab Province.

When I was over in Pakistan in January this year, I was visiting with a member of WAPDA about this, and he was telling me that the project really is pretty well completed now.

Storey: And WAPTA is W-A-P-T-A?

Fairchild: W-A-P-D-A, Water and Power Development Authority. Actually, WAPDA has many of the same operations as does the Bureau of Reclamation, irrigation, hydropower, but now they've got over into other power aspects. But it is the Water

and Power Development Authority for Pakistan, and through the years, quite a few Reclamation people have worked very close with WAPDA on various projects–for instance, like on improved water management, the rehabilitation of the irrigation systems, and many other things. So there has been considerable input of Bureau of Reclamation personnel. And then some Bureau of Reclamation personnel were involved in a technical design and construction of Tarbela. At the time, it was Tarbela Dam. So Bureau has been involved to some extent. I would say, though, now that the Bureau involvement in Pakistan is practically nil, but I think that just gives some indication as to the diminishing program of the Bureau in the foreign activities arena.

". . . the Bureau has had a big impact on irrigation and hydropower around the world, and the Bureau has a very good name internationally, has an extremely good name. . . ."

But the Bureau has had a big impact on irrigation and hydropower around the world, and the Bureau has a very good name internationally, has an extremely good name. A lot of the people in these agencies overseas have taken a lot of pride in saying that they looked upon themselves as being a Bureau ***fellow***, because they took training with the Bureau in Denver in some of the projects. And so the Bureau's image overseas remains this day to be really quite good in these areas, but as time passes and people change, that, of course, also will fade. But it has been a good image.

Storey: Well, when you were with the World Bank and this drainage project came up, how did you approach Reclamation? How did that actual interaction take place?

Fairchild: The interaction probably was more through the foreign activities group out in Denver. At that time, as I recall, a man by the name of Joe Cutchall was quite active in the foreign activities program of the Bureau, and we worked very closely. Of course, we worked very closely also with the commissioner here, and when the agreement was actually signed, a agreement was signed between the Water and Power Development Authority and the commissioner to assign personnel from the Bureau of Reclamation to be located in Pakistan. As I recall, we had, oh, somewhere around four full-time Bureau of Reclamation employees in Pakistan for several years over there, actually giving technical guidance and leadership to this work, and I think that their input was instrumental in the success of the project and getting that technology transferred to Pakistan, where they can kind of do it on their own now at the present time, because that's what we wanted to do. We wanted to transfer the technology. We didn't want to have a continuing involvement of a lot of overseas people involved in this. We wanted Pakistan to be able to do it on their own, and I think we were successful.

Storey: When these people were over in foreign countries doing projects, who was their boss?

How Supervision Works for Foreign Activities

Fairchild: Well, in the case of Pakistan, this project we're talking about, it was a little bit

unique, because there the agreement was ***actually*** between the government of Pakistan, WAPDA, and the Bureau of Reclamation. It was a direct tie. Of course, their administrative and their technical bosses remained with the Bureau of Reclamation. They were administratively and technically responsible to the Bureau. However, they were paid for by the Water and Power Development Authority. And so from that standpoint, they had looked to the Water and Power Development Authority as far as carrying out their program, and, of course, their ability to do that was only possible through the authorities and the capability and the personnel of the Water and Power Development Authority, but their bosses were with the Bureau of Reclamation.

Now, in the project we had in Brazil, as an example, there they were funded by U-S AID, and even though they were still administratively and technically responsible to the Bureau of Reclamation here in Washington and in Denver, U-S AID, because they were paying the bill, they also had an oversight responsibility. And anytime we had, say, some personnel problems, some relationship problems, U-S AID became very much involved in the decision, because, of course, since U-S AID is paying the bill, it was important that we keep not only them happy, but more important, the client country happy with the activities of the Bureau. So in that case, the U-S AID was sort of an intermediary, a contact between our people and the government as far as the administration of the program. But in Brazil, of course, our people were working directly with counterpart people from the Brazilian government, and that's always the way it is. You always have counterparts from the foreign governments working directly with the Bureau of Reclamation people.

But that was sort of an unusual situation there in that Fourth Drainage Project in Pakistan, because basically, for the most part, most all these foreign activities now, the expertise come from private consulting firms, very little from government-to-government type of exchanges.

Storey: I guess I'm having a little trouble visualizing who was telling whom to do what and how all of this worked.

". . . we're there at their invitation . . . and they're the ones that make the final decisions. It's their project, it's their program, and we're there to *technically assist* them in carrying out their undertaking. . . ."

Fairchild: Well, you've got to remember, Brit, that we're working in sovereign countries. A lot of people have difficulty recognizing this. We're there at the invitation of those people, so it's their country, and they have to make the final decisions. Our ability to work with them depends solely upon our expertise and how we're able to translate that into some sort of a coordinated, cooperative manner with them, and if we are not successful in doing that, of course, our value there is zilch. And so we're there at their invitation, on their behalf, you know, and they're the ones that make the final decisions. It's their project, it's their program, and we're there to ***technically assist*** them in carrying out their undertaking.

Storey: So that would make it even more difficult to reintegrate Reclamation employees

coming back from a foreign assignment, because they hadn't really been supervised by Reclamation for that period.

Fairchild: Well, technically and administratively, they were supervised. Yes, they were supervised by us. They were getting their ***paychecks*** from the federal government. They had a unique relationship, though, with their counterparts in these government agencies that they were assisting. And so there were constantly people going out, let's say, from the Denver E&R Center, drainage engineers or design engineers, and working with them. So it wasn't that they were just out there totally on their own. They were not. There were people going out from the Denver office and from the Washington office on a continuing basis, working with them.

But they had left their ***slots*** in their home region, wherever they were, and they had taken this foreign assignment, and now integrating them back into the organization was–I don't want to indicate it was a horrendous problem, but it was a problem that, in all fairness to these people that had gone overseas, that they had a justification to believe that they would be taken care of when they came back.

It's a problem that is not only unique to somebody like the Bureau of Reclamation, but it's also, we had the very same problem in the World Bank. When people go from the World Bank headquarters to a resident mission, once they come back from that resident mission, are reassigned to the Bank, in the case of the Bank, they've got to find a slot within the Bank. I always felt that the Bank should do a better job of actually assigning them a position when they come back, but they've actually got to find themselves a position in the Bank where they will be accepted once they come back home, and a lot of time it isn't always that easy for them to do. So that's one of the perils of a foreign assignment of personnel is your re-entry back into the job market of your parent agency.

Storey: Now, as assistant commissioner, were you overseeing the foreign activities of Reclamation?

Fairchild: Yeah, and we had a person here in the Washington office that was responsible for just foreign activities. Kent Bebb [phonetic] was the last one that I worked with for foreign activities. But then we had a Foreign Activities Section in the Planning Office in Denver that really gave the technical guidance to these groups we had overseas. So there was a unit in Washington, as well as a unit in Denver E&R Center. So at one time it was a big operation with the Bureau. It was much bigger before I came on than when I was here, because by the time I came, actually, as I said, it was on a declining basis, for the reasons which I enumerated earlier. But during the period the Bureau was overseas, though, they did develop a very high profile, and even to this day, they still have many people overseas in high positions that have a great deal of respect for the capability of the Bureau.

Storey: Were there any other countries you were working in, that you recall, besides Brazil and Pakistan?

Fairchild: Well, the Philippines and Afghanistan. We had a small group in Panama at that time, and we were constantly sending individuals out for some specific

assignments.

Work in the Helmand Valley, Afghanistan

The work in Afghanistan was quite interesting. We were there prior to the time that the Communists took over. It was an interesting program down in Helmand Valley in the southern part of Afghanistan, and again what we were doing there, basically we were redesigning and rehabilitating the relatively small irrigation system down there, and drainage was a big program and activity. That was funded by U-S AID.

". . . it was a *good* project, but the people that worked there were *very* isolated. They were *extremely* isolated . . ."

But it was a ***good*** project, but the people that worked there were ***very*** isolated. They were ***extremely*** isolated, and it took a very–I don't want to use the word unusual, but it took a certain type of person that could really ***adapt*** to that isolation in that environment of a developing country and making a go of it. But we had some good people there.

Storey: Did we have problems with that?

Fairchild: Well, I can remember one problem. I won't name names, but the head of our project in Afghanistan was going to be leaving. It was time for him to retire, so he was coming back. We had a man in the Bureau of Reclamation that had indicated to me earlier that some day he'd like to go on a foreign assignment. He was an ***extremely*** capable Bureau of Reclamation employee and well thought of in the Bureau. And so when this man was leaving the Afghanistan post as the director, I contacted this man and said, "This is coming up. Would you be interested?"

He said, oh, he thought that he and his wife would be extremely interested. And so they came into Washington, and I had just returned from Afghanistan and I had slides, and I showed them these slides. I showed them the project, and I tried to impress upon them the remoteness of the project and the desolation and all this that was involved. I thought I had done a fairly decent job, since I had just been there, trying to explain to them that it was not going to be an easy assignment, because you just aren't going to go down the street to the supermarket, you know, because that isn't the situation at all. So they decided they would take the job, they would go over. He and his wife decided they'd go over, that they thought they would like it. We thought this was really going to be a great fit, because they were quite interested in this.

Things did not go well. As I recall, the first thing that happened, they came in on Ariana Airways, and to come into Kabul, there's mountains around it and you had to circle kind of down in. When they came in, they had an extremely rough landing. Some people say that it was such a rough landing that actually one of the motors was knocked off the airplane, it landed that hard. I think that was the beginning of the ***shock*** for the wife. They, of course, went to the Intercontinental Hotel area there in Kabul, and eventually they went down to Helmand Valley,

Lashkar [pronounce lash coo gar], to the project. The homes there were a colony that had been developed specifically for that, and they were fine as homes goe, but there were just rocks and brush and stuff like that. It wasn't like a garden, not at all.

For some reason or other, the wife apparently went into what I call a cultural shock. She is a very fine lady, please understand, very fine people. She was only there just a short time, and we had to bring her home, because she just could not take that isolation, remoteness. I'm trying to indicate that these are not easy jobs, easy posts, a lot of times these people have. Then shortly thereafter, he came back, also. But this isn't saying a thing against the couple, because they were ***extremely*** fine people, some of the very top people in the Bureau of Reclamation, a fine couple, but it ***just*** was not her cup of tea.

I only use that as an example of how it isn't always easy for people to come in and to ***adapt***. It isn't just a matter of the professional background of the individual, but when you're taking a family with you, there's a lot of adapting of the family to the environment. And some posts are much more difficult than other posts, and the post in Afghanistan was a particular hardship post, it really was. Maybe I didn't do as good a job explaining to them the hardship as I should have, but I ***thought*** I did, because I had photographs of the area and I tried to explain to them. But apparently I was not able to ***convey*** the ***extent*** of the isolation and what they were going to be up against there. But others just loved it out there, other families just loved it. So, you know, you never can tell.

Storey: It's a mix of personalities and various other things.

Fairchild: That's right. No reflection upon the individuals whether they like it or whether they don't.

Storey: I like to further pursue the Westwide Study. It was done under your supervision. Wally Christensen, I think, headed it, or was one of the heads.

Westwide Study

Fairchild: Wally was head of the Westwide Study, yeah.

Storey: You mentioned before that you would change the way you had done it.

Fairchild: Well, I think what I was talking about was at the very beginning, as I look back on it, what I would have wanted to have insisted on was reaching a better understanding with Congress as to what was intended and what they saw the reasoning for the Westwide Study, because once the Westwide Study was authorized, it was just, as I could see it, just like nobody then wanted to take responsibility for it.

It kind of looked like it was a political thing that was put into the Central Arizona Project, and I think it was to placate some of the people in the Northwest *vis´-à-vis´* those in the Southwest. At that time, there was this feeling that, oh, the

people in the Southwest, California, Arizona, are going to steal water from the Northwest. And so when the Central Arizona Project came up, this, of course, was an issue, "Well, this is just one step. Eventually they're going to come up and they're going to take water from us." So I think that was put in–and I can't say this to be a fact as an act. But certainly it was put in, I think, more for political reasons than it was really for wanting the study to really be undertaken, to become a meaningful one.

It seemed to me, in retrospect, if we could have sat down with the people that were involved in Congress that were responsible for putting that particular section in the act and reached an understanding with them exactly what they had in mind and what they thought should come out of it, I think we probably would have had greater support for the study. But once it got under way, you know, then there's all sorts of . . .

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. APRIL 10, 1996.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 1. APRIL 10, 1996.

Storey: So you had people taking sides, the people . . .

". . . we had the agencies. . . . they saw the Bureau of Reclamation in the lead role . . . there was always a question as to just how wholehearted they were in their participation. . . ."

Fairchild: Well, yeah, and what they wanted to come out of the deal. And then we had the agencies. We had people like from the Corps of Engineers and the USDA Soil Conservation Service, and they were working with us on this. Of course, they saw the Bureau of Reclamation in the lead role, and, well, that's kind of like putting one agency over some other agency, when they also have responsibilities in these areas. So there was always a question as to just how wholehearted they were in their participation. And the Water Resources Council, that I eventually went to and headed up, there was a strong feeling on the part of the director at that time and some of the people, "Well, really, this type of a large macro study in the western part of the United States should be headed by the Water Resources Council. It should not be headed by one agency." And so there was the problem within the administration agencies of the government.

". . . up on The Hill, after the study was authorized, it was kind of interesting. The budget committees really did not feel this was something that they were very strongly behind, and . . . there was *always* a struggle to . . . get it funded properly. . . ."

Then up on The Hill, after the study was authorized, it was kind of interesting. The budget committees really did not feel this was something that they were very strongly behind, and whenever we went up to the Congress to get appropriations for the Westwide Study, there was ***always*** a struggle to get it funded, get it funded properly. And so that kind of support did not evolve up on The Hill.

". . . within our agency . . . people that questioned exactly where this study was

going and what was going to come out of it . . . this was a chance to probably start evolving the Bureau into new ways of water management and new programs . . . there were . . . those in the Bureau that really questioned whether or not this is the kind of thing that we should be really looking at and should be changing. . . ."

And then, also, within our agency itself, there were people that questioned exactly where this study was going and what was going to come out of it, because the commissioner and myself and people in the secretary of interior at that time saw that this was a chance to probably start evolving the Bureau into new ways of water management and new programs and things like that, and we saw it sort of as a vehicle for doing that. And so there were, of course, those in the Bureau that really questioned whether or not this is the kind of thing that we should be really looking at and should be changing.

So I would just have to say that there was not a real understanding as to really what were the ***objectives*** of that study, and because of that, this kind of lack of understanding, it just seems like to me that we were never able to really bring all these energies of the agencies and the states and the river basin commissions and Congress and private enterprise together into a meaningful mix that could lead to a really substantial and significant Westwide Study.

". . . I think the personnel we had working on it were some of the very top planners in the Bureau of Reclamation . . ."

Having said all this, I think the personnel we had working on it were some of the very top planners in the Bureau of Reclamation, and I have the greatest regard for people like Wally Christesen and Ed Barbour and others. I think they just did a magnificent job. We certainly had some good cooperation and leadership by the regional planning offices and the district planning offices. So it wasn't that the Bureau planners themselves were not dedicated and were not trying to do a good job, but I think there were so many divergent views and so many agendas that other people had for the study, and the lack of direction from Congress as to really why they authorized the project in the first place, I think made for a very tenuous situation as relates to this project.

And under the circumstances, we were not as successful in coming up with a plan as probably we should have been. This was truly an opportunity for the Bureau to evolve some changes, which would help get it, maybe, into some of the changing values of our country as relates to improved water management and some of the water quality and the environmental aspects which were coming up on the scene. Since we were not all that successful, probably the Bureau missed a big opportunity in that project in sort of laying out a blueprint of where they were going to be going in the western eleven states.

And I don't want to indicate it was a failure. It was not a failure, but it was not as good as it should have been. For that reason, I guess I'll have to take my responsibility for it.

Storey: How was it received and how did you publicize it? What did you do?

". . . that project has had very little impact as such on the management and development of the water resources in the West . . ."

Fairchild: The actual completion of the project happened after I went to the Water Resources Council, and so I'm really not in that good a position to say how it was received. But I would say that, looking at it from afar, that that project has had very little impact as such on the management and development of the water resources in the West, which is unfortunate, because it should have had, and it could have had. But the environment at that time just was not such that we were able to bring these forces together, and maybe it wouldn't have been possible anyway. But it seemed like to me, though, that if there could have been an understanding reached with the congressmen and the committees that authorized the project say, "Now, you tell us exactly what you have in mind here and what you see as coming out of the study," I think we would have had a better chance then of conveying that on to the people that were cooperating with us and working with us on the study.

The study was actually under way when I came with the Bureau. It was just getting started. The personnel had been selected, and it was under way. Being new upon the Washington scene, I just assumed, rightly or wrongly, that the objectives and the guidelines were well understood and we were on our way; and in retrospect, I find this not to be the case. So it was unfortunate. It was a good study, but it did not result in the type of a program that would have been good for the Bureau, for the Interior Department, and for the West. At least that's my opinion.

Storey: You mentioned before that Reclamation was changing, Reclamation recognized it needed to change. Could you talk more about that? In '68, we had the last major multiple authorization of projects in Reclamation, the C-A-P [Central Arizona Project] and all those little projects up in Colorado. But there were still individual projects being authorized here and there, and one would ***think*** that it still had the feel of the old Reclamation. Why wasn't it recognized that changes needed to be made, and what were, at that time, the changes that were perceived that needed to be made?

It Was Obvious That Change Was Coming for Reclamation but Change Was Difficult

Fairchild: Well, in 1968–of course, I didn't come to the Bureau until '70. But you're right in that there were still authorizations coming forward, but it was becoming obvious they were becoming more ***difficult***. The funding was lagging, and the pipeline of projects that we had, the project we had in the pipeline, from the time of the initiation of planning through authorization was anywhere from fourteen to twenty years. And so the pipeline was dragging out longer and longer and longer, and it was becoming obvious to many people that many of these projects that were in the pipeline, unless something was done, were never going to see the light of day.

"There was changes coming about in the planning procedures. There was a real question about how the projects should be planned and about the discount rates

that should be used . . ."

There was changes coming about in the planning procedures. There was a real question about how the projects should be planned and about the discount rates that should be used and about the basin accounts and how appropriate they were for funding of projects, and so a host of questions were coming up at that particular point in time.

". . . there was . . . *momentum* that was still going, and there were people within the Bureau of Reclamation that saw that these were still the continuation of the golden years of the Bureau of the 1950s, and they saw very little need for change. . . ."

But you're pointing out very well the dichotomy, though, that existed within the Bureau and the Department of Interior, and throughout the nation as a whole. There were people up on The Hill that had specific projects that they were quite interested in pushing through–for instance, like the Central Arizona Project–and they were successful in getting those through in the latter part of the 1960s, and, of course, they now are pretty well constructed. So there was that ***momentum*** that was still going, and there were people within the Bureau of Reclamation that saw that these were still the continuation of the golden years of the Bureau of the 1950s, and they saw very little need for change.

But there were others that could see that there was a change that was coming about, because also in the late 1960s there were many of the environmental, much of the environmental legislation was passed, like the NEPA, the National Environmental Protection Act was passed, and all these things were starting to come on the scene. There was the evolution of the Water Resources Council of new planning procedures. And so it didn't take a very astute individual to see that the values of our country was changing, because we were having more and more people saying, "Well, why is it that we're paying farmers to cut back on their production, and here we're financing the Bureau of Reclamation to increase production? How does that make sense in the U.S. government to have actually a non-metrically opposing objectives in a program? It doesn't make sense."

And so there were these evolving values and changes which were coming about, and there obviously were some changes up on The Hill, with new congressmen coming and going and with the passage of some of the old stalwarts that were supporting the Bureau of Reclamation program. And the new people came in in some of these congressional committees. They were not as strong or they actually had divergent views as to what should be going on in the West. So this is a period of transition, and you could see it. If you were just looking and listening, you could see it and you knew it was happening.

The question was during this transition, how you were going to have a smooth transition and where were you eventually going to end up with an organization such as the Bureau of Reclamation. There were, of course, many different voices at that particular time, and even in the Bureau there was very strong feelings as to, "Well, the future of the Bureau is to irrigate the West. We can't be too concerned about

water quality, fish and wildlife, parks, and things like that," even though we were doing some of it at that time. But our mission is to irrigate the desert. That's our mission. It was just almost like a religion to many people.

That particular program was not going to eventually generate that kind of support and finances from The Hill. It was just sort of a ***collage*** of changing things that were coming about and different viewpoints. Within the Department of Interior–for instance, the secretaries and the under secretaries and the assistant secretaries at that point in time–they knew that it was going to become increasingly difficult for getting the kind of authorizations and the appropriations for the Bureau as in the past, and so they felt very strongly there should be some changes.

Other Bureaus Wanted Reclamation to Fail

Then in Interior, there were also agencies that were hell bent, if you pardon the expression, on just decapitating the Bureau, because for years the Bureau of Reclamation was really ***the*** agency within the Department of Interior and kind of rode roughshod over the Fish and Wildlife Service and others and went directly to The Hill and Senator [Carl] Hayden and people like that that got through Appropriations. It didn't make any difference what other people thought. And so there was also agencies in the Department of Interior that were just very anxious to get their payback from what they saw as sort of roughshod treatment by some of the officials in the Bureau of Reclamation in earlier days. So this was kind of the environment that was coming at that point in time.

Liked the Professionals at Reclamation but Was Frustrated Because of the Cutbacks in Reclamation

Professionally, when I came back, I enjoyed the Bureau. I found the people to be extremely technically sound and very professional, and the Bureau period was one I will always cherish, the years I spent with the Bureau. But ***professionally***, it was probably one of the most ***frustrating*** periods in my professional life, not because of the technical and the relationship with the Bureau people, but it was a period of cutback because of these things that were happening. It was being exemplified in the cutbacks in the appropriations for planning, and we were getting severe cutbacks in the planning budgets of the Bureau of Reclamation. So we had to cut personnel. We had to consolidate offices.

Didn't like Having to Reduce Staffing in the Planning Offices

All my life, up to that time, I had been involved with an expanding program and seeing things moving and a momentum built up, and here, for the first time in my life, we were being thrust upon as a necessity for some RIFs, reduction in force, of good planning people, good planning people. We were forced to consolidate some planning offices, and it's a kind of program that is not nice. You don't like an environment like that. So while we were trying to make this shift through like the Westwide Study and get the Bureau involved in other things, at the same time we were having to cut back on some of our planning personnel. It was not a happy time for a lot of our people out in the field, because they could see these cutbacks,

and there really wasn't much we could do about it.

But there was also people, of course, within the Bureau itself that thought it was a lot more important to sell the number of barrels of cement we were going to be putting in a dam than it was to be continuing a planning program which was more or less were leaning towards changes. And so there were people within the Bureau, some of them the administrative office of the Bureau, that were not really all that supportive of the Westwide Study, for that very reason.

"There was still support for these specific projects, like the Central Arizona Project, to get them built, but there was not a great deal of support for some of these planning initiatives for changing and evolving the Bureau of Reclamation. . . ."

There was still support for these specific projects, like the Central Arizona Project, to get them built, but there was not a great deal of support for some of these planning initiatives for changing and evolving the Bureau of Reclamation. And so we were going through a reduction in force and closing out of some offices, and, of course, that's been going on constantly. Since I've left the Bureau of Reclamation, it's been kind of a continuing thing.

Well, I hated to see the technical capability of the Bureau squandered. I felt that the Bureau of Reclamation had a reservoir of expertise that could be of great value to our country, and what I was seeing, that there was more or less a dissipation and squandering of this resource. That was more or less the leading edge of it at that time, and I really was sorry to see that occur. Of course, it's continued, and even though I have not been closely associated with the Bureau, but I think it's probably still even continuing today. But there was this reservoir of talent that I always felt could have been utilized in some better way for the benefit of our country. At its peak, the Bureau had a great name as far as the irrigation projects and dam building and hydropower and things like that, and that was the image that many people overseas still remember the Bureau as having.

But this change that was coming across our country was having an effect on the agencies of government, on our people. It was a force that was not going to be stopped. And so there were those that felt that an agency such as the Bureau of Reclamation could continue what they did in the last ten, fifteen, twenty years that made them so popular and so successful, and others said, "No way. The value system of our people are changing, and if agencies cannot change with it, then they are going to become the dinosaurs."

So that was the debate at that particular point in time, and it was an interesting debate. Unfortunately, it just seemed like to me that at that point in time we were not able to really develop a niche for the future for the Bureau to fit into these changing times, like I would have liked to have seen it be able to do. Maybe it just was not possible to do so. Maybe there were just so many things, that it was not possible, because there were certainly many people within Interior and elsewhere

that did not want to see the Bureau evolve into a continuing mobile organization. They were just perfectly willing to see it more or less wither on the vine. And so it was a frustrating period, but one which I'll always remember with a great deal of fondness for the quality of the people I worked with with in the Bureau.

Storey: Do you remember how Commissioner Armstrong was talking about these kinds of issues at that time?

Ellis Armstrong and Change at Reclamation

Fairchild: Well, Ellis was a very fine, deeply religious person, very ***dedicated*** to the Bureau of Reclamation. I would have to say that Ellis recognized that there was going to have to be some changes, but basically he came from the old school. I remember he told me once, he said, "You know, Warren, the greatest thing you can ever do in life is irrigate the desert." And so he felt very strongly about the old programs of the Bureau.

"He recognized that changes were going to come about . . . But there were powers above him that were much more aware of this than Ellis was willing and able to accept, and so I would say that he was a somewhat reluctant purveyor of change in the Bureau. . . ."

He recognized that changes were going to come about, and that was one of the reasons why I came back. But there were powers above him that were much more aware of this than Ellis was willing and able to accept, and so I would say that he was a somewhat reluctant purveyor of change in the Bureau. He was hopeful that the Bureau could continue its past ways of being a large construction agency and a program of operation.

And he was, I think, kind of sad to see that probably these things could not continue, but he wanted them to continue. And so the consequence, even though he would certainly go along with efforts to change into new venues for the Bureau, it wasn't one that he relished. It was not one that he honestly relished, because he liked the Bureau the way it was, and I think a lot of that comes from his background. You know, coming from Utah and what the Bureau and the irrigation and that kind of development has meant to states like Utah, that he just felt that it's a program that should continue in its present form forever. But again, these changes that were sweeping our country just wasn't going to make that possible to continue at that level.

Storey: Was there anybody above Ellis that you can particularly pick out who was interested in Reclamation?

". . . Jimmy Smith, was extremely supportive of the Bureau, but he . . . saw that the Bureau just had to change . . . But he was trying to do it in a way that would actually encourage growth within the Bureau. . . ."

Fairchild: Well, the assistant secretary right directly over us, Jimmy Smith, was extremely supportive of the Bureau, but he was one of those people that saw that the Bureau

just had to change, just had to change. And he was, I think, encouraging that. But he was trying to do it in a way that would actually encourage growth within the Bureau. But there people higher up in the Department of Interior that knew that there had to be some changes, were not particularly dedicated to the Bureau of Reclamation at all.

And then–I'm having trouble with names. When Jimmy Smith was no longer assistant secretary of interior, the man that came in was a man from Wyoming. You have to help me if you can. Jack something or other.[19]

Storey: I don't know who the assistant secretary was.

Jack Horton as Assistant Secretary for Land and Water Resources

Fairchild: But anyway, he was a very good man. And Jack also, coming from Wyoming, was, of course, loyal to the Bureau, but I would say that he felt much more strongly that the Bureau was going to have to change and change dramatically.

". . . the pressure really was building from higher up within the Department of Interior for this change. It was coming more from them than it was within the Bureau itself. And then, of course, you get on up to OMB. The Office of Management and Budget was extremely, I'd call them *hostile* towards the Bureau of Reclamation in those days. . . ."

And so, yeah, the pressure really was building from higher up within the Department of Interior for this change. It was coming more from them than it was within the Bureau itself. And then, of course, you get on up to OMB. The Office of Management and Budget was extremely, I'd call them ***hostile*** towards the Bureau of Reclamation in those days. The budget of Reclamation that was coming out of them and the programs coming out of them were extremely poor and negative. So the best bet was, of course, activities up on The Hill, where clients in the field would come in and lobby for their own projects and programs.

". . . later on there was a change in administration and Jimmy Carter came in. There was even a further diminution of Bureau of Reclamation activities, because President Carter was much more interested in the environmental causes . . ."

So the atmosphere within the administration was not supportive of a strong continuation of the Bureau's activities at that time, and it continued on into succeeding administrations. After I went over to the Water Resources Council, and then, of course, then later on there was a change in administration and Jimmy Carter came in. There was even a further diminution of Bureau of Reclamation activities, because President Carter was much more interested in the environmental causes than was even the administration up to that date.

So these things have had a continuing mounting effect. It isn't something that just happened overnight. You asked, "How could people see this coming?" Well,

19. Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land and Water Resources Jack O. Horton served from 1973 to 1977.

if you just would see how the articles that were coming out in the newspaper and the news media and would see the people that were being elected to high positions and their points of view, it was obvious that ***change*** was on the horizon, and it was coming rather quickly. So that's just the way it was.

Storey: You mentioned that there were other agencies that would just as soon have seen us go away in Reclamation.

Fairchild: Yeah.

Storey: Do you remember any specific instances?

Felt Fish and Wildlife Service Field Staff Inappropriately Opposed the O'Neill and North Loup Projects in Nebraska

Fairchild: Well, let me give you an example. I would say that the people at the environmental agencies–I'll call them the environmental agencies, and the Department of Interior were certainly of that type. A couple of projects were authorized while I was with the Bureau of Reclamation for Nebraska. This was the O'Neill Project and the North Loup Project, and they were authorized. In other words, they were passed by Congress and they were signed by the President and they were funded. As far as I'm concerned, then that should have been the policy of the administration of the federal government for implementing them. That should have been their policy, because they were authorized projects.

But at the very time that was happening, there were officials–and I'll be very candid with you–in the Fish and Wildlife Service and others out in the field that were ***actively*** opposing these projects, generating opposition among the environmental community against these projects, even though supposedly the new administration had signed off on them and said, "This is something we're going to do." And interestingly enough, while these people were actively opposing the projects authorized by Congress and signed by the President, they were out in the field fighting them, and nothing was ever done to those people for fighting and opposing the projects.

So, yes, there certainly were individuals in agencies within Interior, and within other departments. I'm sure the Council on Environmental Quality was not enthralled with the Bureau of Reclamation's activities back in those days, even though we were trying to make some changes. That's just the way it was at that point in time, and I would guess that probably after I left it became even more so.

The Legacy of Reclamation in Development of the West

It's kind of an interesting evolution of what's happened to an agency such as the Bureau of Reclamation from its golden era period back in the fifties and the early sixties to the situation which it has today. But that doesn't mean, though, that there hasn't been a great heritage which has been left ***by*** the Bureau in the West, the great dams and the hydro projects and the generation of power and the lands which are being irrigated. So there is a heritage of the Bureau that Bureau personnel all

can be extremely proud of. I go out and I visit those projects today and I marvel at them, and I think they've been wonderful projects. I think they really have, for the most part, have been very instrumental in improving the quality of life for people in the West, and that was what they were intended to do. And so from that standpoint, the Bureau has served a very useful purpose, and I think it has had a great deal to do with the development of the West. Of course, that was one of the objectives of the Bureau of Reclamation.

Storey: When you came in, one year–well, it was the year after, maybe I should say, NEPA was passed, National Environmental Policy Act, and you were the head of planning, right? What kind of effects on Reclamation's planning process did you see NEPA causing? You mentioned this lengthening of the pipeline to get projects done. We had the Colorado River Storage Project stuff in three years. Within three years, we were building it in the fifties. And by the time we get to '70, you're saying we have a planning process of fourteen to twenty years long.

The Effects of NEPA on Reclamation's Planning Processes

Fairchild: Yeah, the pipeline. Well, certainly NEPA extended that purpose. In other words, once you got these projects up to a certain stage, then you had to go back and you had to go out and make these environmental assessments.

My preliminary view of that was, we have a plan authorizing a project. There, of course, may be a lot of annexes to it, but the plan itself ought to be maybe an inch thick. But then we come up with an environmental statement assessment that would probably be five or six times that great. I think my immediate reaction at that time was, "Yes, this is something that has to be done, but it appears there is an overkill." I think that was probably my reaction at the time, and that I was unhappy–I guess that's the way to put it, or distraught. No, I think maybe unhappy. I wasn't distraught–with what I considered unnecessary delays brought about by that. In other words, I felt that it could be done in a much simpler manner than was being required. I think that would be my immediate reaction.

At the same time, I saw that the planning procedures which were evolving from the Water Resources Council as being a much more ***positive*** and desirable activity, because there you actually were planning and looking at alternatives, and you were emphasizing two objectives, economic objectives and environmental objectives, and you're letting out plans accordingly, whereby the decision-makers could see what are the . . .

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. APRIL 10, 1996.
BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. APRIL 10, 1996.

Storey: This is tape two of an interview by Brit Storey with Warren Fairchild on April the 10th, 1996.

Fairchild: Even though NEPA was, I think, a very desirable program, it always seemed like, to me, that it went too far, it put in too many requirements.

I always remember one of the senators up on The Hill made a statement that impressed me at one time. He said, "You know, when we passed NEPA," he said, "we didn't intend that man would be looked upon as being outside the environment. We thought that NEPA would say the ***environment*** included man." But he said that he felt that where NEPA had gone too far was it was like man was on the outside, and that we only looked at things as related to other than man's activities and anything man did was bound to be wrong on the environment. And he said as he recalls the discussion on NEPA was that man was going to be looked upon as being ***part*** of that environment in what he did and was not to be excluded from it.

Even today, I'm involved in an independent environmental panel on a big hydro project. I'm very cognizant and very supportive of environmental objectives. But many times, it just seemed like to me that the trends had been so ***extreme*** in some of these areas that ***rational*** judgment based upon good planning had just been thrown out the window.

"When I see that people in the agencies and in the environmental organizations oppose any sort of risk analysis or cost-benefit analysis to environmental projects, it really worries me, because in my view, all programs and projects of the government should be subjected to that type of analysis . . ."

When I see that people in the agencies and in the environmental organizations oppose any sort of risk analysis or cost-benefit analysis to environmental projects, it really worries me, because in my view, all programs and projects of the government should be subjected to that type of analysis, some sort of risk or cost analysis. Otherwise, how are you going to know what the ultimate effect and ultimate impact are going to be?

Right now, of course, this is a ***real*** discussion and debate in the U.S. Congress around the country as to whether or not there should be this type of analysis on environmental programs and projects. I feel very strongly that there should be, and I think it really will strengthen the environmental movement if they were done, because otherwise, what you're saying is that, "Well, now, look, this is the way it's going to be. Regardless of the cost or regardless of what's involved, it's going to be done at this level, and there's no argument. This is it."

To me, this is not rational. After all, all sound planning is, is just rational decision-making. That's all it is. I really think that the environmental movement can be strengthened considerably if the right kind of analysis is put into their program, whether it's the regulations or whether it's actual projects that they're carrying out, and eventually it's going to come about. Eventually it will be done. In other words, to me it doesn't indicate ***logic*** to say, "Well, now, this is the standard which is going to be developed. This is the standard we're going to develop for whatever it may be." And making that standard at a certain level, without any rational reason as to why it should be at that level rather than, say, one degree down or one degree up, that's the standard.

I see that the environmental movement is going to go through, also, an evolution, and I think rational analysis and risk analysis and benefit-cost analysis is

going to become part ***of*** it; and I think as we do that, I think it's really going to strengthen the environmental movement. But it's interesting the ***resistance*** on the part of some people, because some people say, "Oh, anyone that wants this kind of analysis, what they want to do, they want dirty water or they want bad air." If the program has merit, rational sound planning will prevail and show its soul. It's only if it does not stand the crucible of analysis, that it'll go by the wayside. And if that's the case, they should, they should. And so it's interesting.

My feeling is that, over a period of the next few years, this type of analysis is going to come about to all sorts of environmental programs, and I think they'll be strengthened. I think it'll be a much better for them. But right now it's a fierce battle, and what I consider the demagoguery, probably on both sides of the issue, is extreme. Nobody wants dirty water. Nobody wants bad air. But the question is, at what level, at what cost, at what risk? Right now we don't know. We just say, "Well, this is it." In other words, are we going to do secondary and tertiary treatment on water and half a mile downstream we're going to dump it out into the ocean? Or are you saying that the quality of water that we're putting in the stream is going to be higher than the receiving stream?" things like that. I don't know. I question that. That doesn't mean that we should have poor quality water or air, because I think those are ***really*** essential that we have good quality water and we have high standards as far as air quality. But there needs to be a rational decision as to ***what*** those should be, and they're probably going to vary from area to area. In other words, they probably should be a lot more site- and region-specific than they are today. So the environmental program also is going to go through a period of evolution, too, Brit, and I think it will end up being much stronger because of it. That's ***my*** view.

Storey: Commissioner Armstrong went outside Reclamation and he sort of plucked you up out of Nebraska and brought you to the agency, and therefore you were an outsider. (Fairchild: Um-hmm.) Did you sense that? Did you sense a lack of cooperation or anything like that, or were you accepted, or how did that work?

Did Not Feel He Was an Outsider When He Was Brought into Reclamation

Fairchild: I can only give you ***my*** view. My view is I was accepted, and to me, looking back on it, I think it rather remarkable. But the people I worked with were just really great. They were great in being cooperative, but they were also great as trainers for me. In other words, they helped me a lot.

Why Some People Who Come in from the Outside Have Problems in the Federal Government

One of the problems people have when they come in from the outside, Brit, as I view them, is they come in, like from state government or from private enterprise, and they come in on a white horse and they feel they have all the answers, you know, and they figure that, "I'm going to take a big sword and I'm going to cut this and I'm going to do that." They do that for a couple months, and they're out there on the limb all by themselves. Many of them then go back home disillusioned and rejected.

". . . the people in the planning area of the Bureau of Reclamation, by and large, they had been in the forefront of some of these things that were coming about, some of the environmental change of values and things like that, and they could very well see that changes were imminent. . . ."

But when I came in, the people in the planning area of the Bureau of Reclamation, by and large, they had been in the forefront of some of these things that were coming about, some of the environmental change of values and things like that, and they could very well see that changes were imminent. And so they were looking forward to having somebody come in and to work with them in this area.

". . . it's my view that I was extremely well accepted, and I would have to say that the people that I worked with were just a great group of professionals, some of the finest people I've ever worked with . . ."

So [it's] my view that I was extremely well accepted, and I would have to say that the people that I worked with were just a great group of professionals, some of the finest people I've ever worked with in my life. And so, no, I never ever felt that there was anybody that was in the least bit uncooperative or, say, stabbing me in the back. Not at all, not at all. It was just the reverse, and that's one reason I guess why I feel so strongly about the Bureau people. They're just a great group to work with, just a great group. And the ones I worked with were the ones, of course, I knew best, and from that standpoint, the personal relationships were just fine. I couldn't expect a better group of people that would work with me. Maybe it's unusual, but it really was a very pleasant relationship with all these people in the Bureau. I can't recall a single individual or single experience that was personally antagonistic or the least bit revolting in any of my relationships with the Bureau planning personnel, per se.

Storey: But not very satisfactory in getting things done, I gather.

Fairchild: No. I'll tell you, I really honestly think that they were as frustrated as I, you know, because they were seeing that we were not being successful, we were not being successful, and making some changes that would hopefully evolve the Bureau into a new role in the water field.

At that time, you know, a lot of the areas–for instance, like on water quality–were still not fully assigned and some of the environmental things were not fully assigned. I honestly was hopeful that within the Department of Interior that the Bureau's expertise could kind of go off into those areas. But it seemed like that whenever we would try to kind of move off in those areas, that there was kind of a roadblock. Either the secretary's office or some agency was there trying to cut us off, and this is one thing I was referring to earlier. And so there was that. But at that time, we were hopeful, those of us in planning, that some of these new areas that we could move into, whether it was flood plain management or whatever it would be.

Reclamation Developed a Total Water Management Program

One area that I think we really were quite successful in evolving, and that was an area of total water management. I think we initiated a program there that has been followed-up quite well by the Bureau in the water management of their systems, and this was basically, a lot of it was developed out in California. So that program has come along quite well.

But in answer to your question, ***I*** think I was just extremely well received by Bureau people in the planning area, and I still have many friends that worked with me at that time. And so I think there was a professional and personal relationship that I'll always cherish.

Storey: Now, this would have been during the first Nixon administration, if I'm recalling correctly.

Fairchild: Yeah.

Storey: And I've been told that Ellis turned in his pro forma resignation at the end of the first term and it was accepted, much to everybody's surprise.

The Nixon Administration Accepted Ellis Armstrong's Pro Forma Resignation

Fairchild: Well, let me tell you what happened. In the second administration, all appointees turned in a resignation. I have mine. They gave it back to me. I have mine. So everybody did it. All the assistant commissioners in the Bureau of Reclamation, as an example, turned in their resignation, along with Ellis. All they did, they'd just pick them up. If they didn't want you to come back, they'd just pick them up. And so obviously somebody higher up in Interior or in the White House decided to pick up Ellis' resignation.

I know at the time it happened, I don't know the details as to what happened, but I know the day that it happened Ellis called me into the office, and in a very roundabout way he told me that this was happening. He tried to put a good face on and indicated that probably he was going to be all right, but I kind of read between the lines that he knew he was on extremely thin ice. And so it wasn't just Ellis. Every appointee in the federal government submitted a resignation, and those that were not picked up, they were sent back. I still have mine in my files. It's kind of interesting. One-liner, just a one-liner, "I hereby resign ~~my resignation~~ from the Bureau of Reclamation."

Storey: Did they ask you for that resignation?

Fairchild: Everybody was told to file a resignation. Every appointee, every C appointment was told to submit one. So you didn't have a choice. You didn't have a choice.

Storey: This was before the SES, wasn't it?

Fairchild: Yeah, that's right. Every Schedule C appointee, it didn't make any difference what level, was asked to submit a resignation. ~~And those they decided to keep, why, then~~

~~you were out.~~ I mean, those they decided to keep, they'd send you back the resignation, and, of course, you continued on. Those that they didn't want, they just kept and said, "Well, nice knowing you."

Storey: But you did not ever hear ***why*** this happened?

Fairchild: No. I'm really not privy to those details. I would assume that there were those within the hierarchy of the administration at that time [who] did not think that the things they saw that should be changing within the Bureau of Reclamation weren't happening under Ellis' leadership maybe as quickly or as fast as they might have. That may have been it, but I really don't know, Brit.

Storey: But you left soon thereafter.

Fairchild: Well, yes, I did, because what happened was, of course, a new assistant secretary came in, and the director of the Water Resources Council left. He went back to California. So the question came up, what to do with the Water Resources Council? I'm really sorry I can't remember the assistant secretary's name. Jack,[20] from Wyoming.

Storey: Jack from Wyoming.

Assistant Secretary Jack Horton Wanted Fairchild to Become Director of the Water Resources Council If the Administration Decided to Strengthen the Council

Fairchild: Yes. Anyway, we visited about it, and he said, "Warren, if the decision's made by the administration they want to strengthen the Water Resources Council, I want you to go over there. But," he says, "if the decision is that the Water Resources Council is not going anywhere, I don't want you to go."

A short time thereafter he said, "Well, we're going to try to make something out of the Council. We'd like to have you go over and become the director of the Water Resources Council."

And so that decision was made by–see, the secretary of interior was chairman of the Water Resources Council, and so more or less unilaterally, and, of course, it was a promotion to, at that time, GS-18. I went to the Water Resources Council. So my movement from the Bureau had nothing to do with the administration at that time. It was one of the decision as to ***what*** to do with the Council, and once they decided, "Well, we're going to try to make something out of the Council" at that point in time, why, they said then, "Warren Fairchild should go over there and head it up," and I did.

I spent three years there, and I felt they were three rather successful years in my federal career. We were able to do many things at that point in time. The new planning procedures had just been adopted by the federal government, and one of our major jobs was implementation of those planning procedures. We also had

20. Jack Horton.

several ***major*** river basin studies we were undertaking. We were expanding our program of financial assistance to states. We developed a ***very*** close relationship with the state organization called the Interstate Conference on Water Problems, and we set them up as more or less an advisor to the Water Resources Council, and we felt that it was very important that we have very close relationships with the state agencies in the water field.

The Section 80 Study at the Water Resources Council

And so that wasn't the reason why I left. And then, of course, the reason I went to the–well, I would just add that, in the dying days of the Water Resources Council when I was there, as far as ***my*** time with the not the dying days of the Council because they continued after that, ***my*** dying days with the Council, because it continued after that, was that we had a Section 80 study. To a degree it meant to change some of the policies in the water field as relates to cost sharing, planning, and many other things. I honestly feel that if we'd had a little more time, that the recommendations of the Section 80 would have actually come into being, and I think it would have been a ***great*** thing for agencies such as the Bureau of Reclamation, the Corps of Engineers, and others. But time ran out on us, time ran out on us.

Realized the Water Resources Council Was Declining and in Early Summer of 1976 Began Looking for Another Position, and on Opportunity Came up at the World Bank

I could see this was happening, and so about early summer I started looking around, because I felt that there was going to be a change in administration, and that's when the opportunity came up for me to go with the World Bank. And so I–well, I guess not reluctantly, but I went to World Bank, and I, of course, was there until I retired.

Storey: That would have been in '76.

Fairchild: That was in '76, that's right. I honestly think with the leadership of the assistant secretaries and the secretaries of the various agencies that were in the Council at that point in time, if we'd had another year, if we'd had another year, I think the recommendation of the Section 80 study would have probably come into being and found a way into law. And it would have been a great thing, because really what we were doing is, we were setting up policies and things like that, that in many ways were going to set us right with the times and more or less eliminate the stranglehold that, to some extent, that the Office of Management and Budget was having over many of the policies and the financing of agencies, such as the Corps of Engineers, Soil Conservation Service, Forest Service at that time, and the Bureau of Reclamation.

Storey: But you had a ***national*** perspective rather than a Western perspective in the Water Resources Council?

Fairchild: Yeah, that's right. We were a nationwide course, yeah. The Section 80 study was a

study authorized by Congress, really to more or less update the federal water policies, put them all together. The Water Resources Council was responsible for it, but a lot of the work for that, interestingly enough, was done by the Corps of Engineers. We had people from the Water Resources Council work with them, and, of course, we were responsible for them. But it was really a multi-agency program, and it was ***very interesting*** to see how these assistant secretaries worked together to come up with this program which they were agreeing on, but it was in the dying days of the [Gerald] Ford administration, and it was never able to get it ***out*** of there and up The Hill so that it could be enacted.

". . . we ran out of time, and, of course, on September 1st, I ran out on the Water Resources Council and went to the World Bank, because I could see that things were going to change. . . ."

And so we ran out of time, and, of course, on September 1st, I ran out on the Water Resources Council and went to the World Bank, because I could see that things were going to change.

The Carter Administration's "Hit List"

Of course, it's kind of interesting, Brit, that one of the thrusts in the election–one of them. I'm not saying it's a major one, but there were many–was certainly a strong ***environmental*** tone to President Carter's campaign. Actually, they came up with a hit list of projects for the Corps and the Bureau and projects like that that they were going to ***kill***, and the transition, the group that came in–of course, I was gone at that time. I know it was a great ***shock*** to many people in the Bureau of Reclamation, and even in the Department of Interior, some of the members of the transition team and where they came from. I remember one of the Bureau officials, a top official, said, "Well, remember, Warren, this is just the transition group. When the big boys come in," he says, "we'll be okay."

"I'm not saying that Jimmy Carter was any more strong about making those changes than, say, Ford and Nixon and people preceding him, also, and people following Carter. But again, it was a *trend* that was unmistakable. . . ."

Well, it was just part of the evolution. I'm not saying that Jimmy Carter was any more strong about making those changes than, say, Ford and Nixon and people preceding him, also, and people following Carter. But again, it was a ***trend*** that was unmistakable.

Storey: Do you remember the person who told you that?

Fairchild: I don't recall right now, but as I recall it, it was somebody that was pretty high up in the Bureau of Reclamation. There was a feeling that the hit list and the people that came into the transition program for Department of Interior, that they really weren't going to be representative of what was going to happen in subsequent months. But they were. And no reflection on them, Brit. This is just how a country evolves through time, you know, and it more or less reflects how people see things to be done by the government.

Like now we're going through another period of some evolution that's going to affect many programs and projects and the way in which we do things. We may not like it, those of us that are directly involved, but that's just the healthy way a democracy works, and we should be very thankful that we do it in such a tranquil and democratic process. If an agency or an organization cannot adapt itself to these things, they're going to find themselves in some difficulty.

Storey: Now, when you say a Section 80 study, I presume that's Section 80 of some act that directed you to do this.

Where the Section 80 Study Came from

Fairchild: It was Section 80 of an omnibus political act at that time.

Storey: Was this a budget bill?

Fairchild: Yes, it would have been a budget bill. It was, as I recall. It's been some time ago. But it directed the Water Resources Council to make these studies.

Storey: And how was Reclamation involved in the Water Resources Council, if at all?

How the Water Resources Council Was Set up Regarding the Work and the Staffing

Fairchild: Well, directly and indirectly, indirectly in the actual policy input. The secretary of interior was the chairman of the council, but he basically ***delegated*** that authority to the assistant secretary–assistant secretary for water and power. OK. Now, they had two organizations in the Water Resources Council. We had the council members, and the assistant secretary would sit on that when the chairman was not there. And then we had the council representatives. The council representatives, these were ***technical*** people.

Storey: Staff, basically.

Fairchild: Yeah. We met quite frequently, once a week or every other week, the council representatives, and they were a great group of people. And the representative of the Department of Interior at that time was Jack Jorgensen, who was in the assistant secretary's office. So the representatives, we'd come and meet together, and I would chair those meetings as the Director of the Water Resources Council. Actually, we had pretty good leeway in the decisions and how we went forward, and, of course, once we hit some real strong policy issue or budget issue or something like that, of course, then we'd have a meeting of the council members.

The Section 80 was headed by the council members although the Council representatives certainly were the one governed its day to day operations. So the Bureau of Reclamation, their input was in through the assistant secretary for water and power, and when you get into matters like planning procedures or specifics of a study invariably there'd be a ***technical*** person from the Bureau of Reclamation that just set on those particular task forces to make those studies. And so it was through

the Department of Interior mechanism that the Bureau of Reclamation was involved in Water Resources Council undertakings. So in the case of Section 80 studies there'd be technical people from the Bureau of Reclamation were involved in things like cost-sharing studies and planning studies and things like that. But they'd do it under the leadership of the assistant secretary for water and power.

Storey: Let's see if I understand this. You had the Water Resources Council. (Fairchild: Right.) And then you had you as the director of the representative.

Fairchild: No, I was the director. And so my responsibility was to direct the activities of the council on a day to day basis and carry out the policies of the council members. So, then we had under there, then to assist in carrying this out what we called the council representatives. And these were the technical people. And these are the ones that I basically worked with more or less on a continuing basis. And it was a *good* operation, Brit, it was a good operation. And we had some great people on that council of representatives. And I still have contact with some of those people– now to this day.

Storey: Were they staff in the sense that you hired them and . . .

Fairchild: No, no, no. I did not hire them. They were employees of specific departments and agencies. (Storey: Detailed over . . .) And they were detailed to work with the council on a part time basis. In other words, they were not full time. They would come, and they would meet, and we'd have meetings of council representatives, and then we'd have specifically subcommittees, task forces, and some of them would chair some of those task forces. They would undertake various studies. And so, really, it was a–we had eleven representatives. So it was a relatively big group that we had on there. Interior , Agriculture, Army, Commerce, H-E-W at that time, E-P-A, oh, you know, Federal Power Commission was on there. So there's quite a group. And then, of course, then these were the technical people, and then, of course, you'd have a counterpart at the cabinet level that made up the council members.

Storey: But these technical people were actually sitting in the Water Resource Council's offices.

Fairchild: When we had a meeting they would. We had a great big table over there, and we'd come and we'd meet around the table, you know, probably once a week. You know, or every other week. And we'd have an agenda of things we had to take up. Whether it was allocation of grant funds to states or whatever it may be. Or a matter of approving or disapproving various studies, you know, for the river basin commissions. We would sit there, and we would deliberate on those. But then once those deliberations were over, then they'd go back to their own agencies, and they had specific assignments that they carried out in their own agency or own departments. So they were not full time at the council. But there were people *in* these agencies that were constantly, though cooperating with, I mean other representatives, that were constantly working with us, though, on various studies. And so the agencies were ***quite good*** to assign people in the stage we undertook. But, again, there was always kind of a tenuous ***balance*** between the council and the

agencies that made up the council because, of course, the agencies didn't want to have somebody like the Water Resources Council in a position to sit on top of and direct exactly what they were going to do. So they'd go back so far, and once you start impinging too much on their prerogatives then they would have you pull back. So you can only go, really, basically, as far as the departments and the agencies would encourage you or tolerate you to go in giving an umbrella approach to their operations. So it was kind of an interesting balancing act.

Storey: Yeah. How were you going to get a report out of this when you didn't really have any staff there?

Fairchild: Oh, we had staff. Water Resources Council always had staff. We had staff too. Oh yeah, we . . . it wasn't a big staff. I would guess probably that when I was there, I imagine we probably had somewhere around forty-, fifty staff people. And then, of course we worked very closely with river basin commissions.

Storey: So these agencies would be doing studies. These would come in to the staff who would then be working on them.

Fairchild: Yeah, that's right. (Storey: OK.) And, then, of course, our staff would be working with their staffs on some of these things. And so, yeah, the council was just not a representative . . . (Storey: It wasn't just you.) *No*, that's right.

Storey: It was almost the image I had.

Fairchild; Yeah. No, no, no, no. We had a good staff–good technical staff. That we'd carry out our own program, and, of course, invariably all these were carried out in conjunction with the departments and agencies that made up our membership.

Storey: Who was your right hand staff person?

Staffing at the Water Resources Council

Fairchild: Well, our deputy at that time was Reuben Johnson. And he's still living in the Virginia area. And Reuben, his background was from the Corps of Engineers, interestingly enough. So we kind of picked our people, you know, background to kind of give a representation. We had one of the assistant directors I had was actually an ex-Bureau of Reclamation employee. Another assistant director was from the Corps of Engineers. We had some people that worked with us heading up divisions that were from the U-S-D-A. So then we brought some people in, of course, from . . .

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Storey: . . . Reclamation people on there.

Suggested Dee Walker Move to the Water Resources Council from Reclamation

Fairchild: Yeah, we had several. And so we were kind of scattered about. Fact of the matter, one of the parties from the Bureau of Reclamation that came over when I went over from the Bureau of Reclamation was Dee Walker. And he come over with me because I recognized his capability here on the Bureau of Reclamation so I encouraged him to come to the Water Resources Council. And he worked there, and he worked a lot on policy matters, and he had a great deal of responsibility in the Section 80 study. And after I left the Water Resources Council, Dee eventually also left the Water Resources Council, and he went with Department of Defense–primarily the Army, and his last assignment he was deputy assistant secretary for environmental cleanup of the Army installations around the world. So, he was a ex-Bureau of Reclamation person. And he, of course, made his contacts to the Army as he worked with the Water Resources Council.

Storey: How did it come about that you went to the World Bank, in detail, I mean.

Looked Toward Moving to the World Bank as the Administration Change Approached in 1977

Fairchild: Well, as I said, I recognized that there was probably going to be a change in administrations, and director of the Water Resources Council was an important post in the administration. And so I knew that there would be a change. Some people thought well, they could weather the storm, but I knew that wouldn't be possible at the Water Resources Council. So I started looking around, and a place that immediately comes to mind was the World Bank. (Storey: Why.) Well, because it was a international organization that had many water programs around the world, you know. And, with my foreign activities I had had some contact with them–some World Bank people. And a Bureau of Reclamation person was in the bank, and I told him he was looking around, and he said, "Well," he says, "let's see what we can do."

Storey: This would have been Ted Mermel?

Moved to the World Bank to Run a Master Planning Program in Pakistan

Fairchild: No, no, no. This was an engineer. Ted came over as a consultant to the bank a long time after I was there. Ted's quite a guy. That's another story. But, anyway, so this man, who is a very good friend of mine, kept his eyes open, and there was this master planning program that was going on in Pakistan, and it wasn't going all that well. They were having some problems with it. And the man that was in charge of it, as far as the overall responsibility for that and many other things, he was not happy the way it was working out. And about that time there was the master planning program starting out in Egypt, and some way or the other he kind of encouraged the man that was in charge of the Pakistan program to transfer over to Egypt master planning from water operations, and this left the opening for Pakistan. And he wanted me to head it up, and so that's one reason I got so actively involved in the Pakistan operation was because of this master planning program for water resources in Pakistan back in the 1970s. So when that opening come up they hired me to head up that study. (Storey: That was in '76.) Yeah, that was in '76.

Storey: And, how long were you there?

Fairchild: Well, I was there until, well, with the World Bank, I retired, I think it was in '89, officially from World Bank. But, I retired on a Thursday, and on Friday went back to work as a full time consultant at the very same desk, very same secretary, very same operation–I did that for about another three years. And, then after I kind of phased out on a full time basis I did part time consulting work for the World Bank (Storey: After '92) Yeah. And now why just recently, they've asked me to be on this independent panel for the environment and resettlement for the Ghazi Barotha hydropower project,[21] and that's a multi-, well, a several billion dollar project. And depending, of course, on my interest and my health, that'll probably, could be five to seven years working as an independent environmental panel on this project. And we were over there in January. We're going back on May 8th, spend a couple weeks there and probably go back in September. And we actually are not directly responsible to the government or to the World Bank or anybody else, but what we're there to see is to see that the environmental policies and understandings that were developed between the international financiers and the government are taken care of. Are being administered fairly and also then the resettlement is being handled in an equitable manner as far as affectees. And then, of course, if there are some things that come up that need to be changed then we'll make recommendations for those changes. And so it's a very interesting undertaking, and right now it fits in real well with my lifestyle. I spend a few weeks there and comment upon some reports that have come about–like yesterday I was working on the computer, that was what I was doing was actually commenting on some reports that came across my desk from some consultants. So I find that to be a kind of an interesting way of continuing my interest in the water management area, and also it kind of stimulates and keeps an old man a little younger.

Storey: Um-hmm. Well you mentioned the Pakistani drainage project. Were there other projects where you got Reclamation involved in World Bank activities?

How the World Bank Would Interact with Reclamation When it Needed Reclamation's Expertise

Fairchild: That was the only one. I got the World Bank directly involved in–I mean got the Bureau of Reclamation. The Bureau was involved–individuals, not as teams, were involved. Bureau people were involved on a technical panel for the construction of the Tarbela Reservoir,[22] as an example. And so the Bureau personnel had been used on other things, you know. As, for instance, other Department of Interior agencies, most likely Geological Survey, had been doing quite a little bit of work in Pakistan. And so the Bureau has always had some specific individuals, and what the World Bank does, they can get a letter agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation in which certain financial and other conditions are worked out whereby a person working for the Bureau can spend, we'll say, oh, thirty days a year carrying out an assignment for the World Bank. And that's a very common thing to have done. It's not as prevalent as it was, say, five years ago. Lot more of that was done five years ago

21. This project is on the Indus River in Pakistan.
22. Tarbela Dam is in Pakistan on the Indus River.

than it is toApril 2, 2013day.

". . . the bank's not doing as many large water projects and technical undertakings as they were, say, ten years ago. . . . but they are spending more and more of their investment money on education, on some of the environmental programs . . ."

Because, among other things, the bank's not doing as many large water projects and technical undertakings as they were, say, ten years ago. And again, part of that is a trend nationwide because the bank, even though it is still doing some big projects like this several billion dollar hydro project that I'm working on, but they are spending more and more of their investment money on education, on some of the environmental programs, and the environmental considerations of this hydro project are *very* very significant and important. That's one reason why I'm on this panel.

Storey: Somebody told me, I've forgotten who, that pay at the World Bank is very good.

Why World Bank Pay Is Good

Fairchild: It is. It is. Back in the period when there was rampant inflation, and it was difficult to keep the salary of the civil service up with the rate of inflation, the World Bank was able to maintain their salaries at that level because, you see, the World Bank, they generate their own income for their personnel from their investments. And they borrow money on the world bond market, then they make it available to the countries around the world–the developing countries at cost plus a carrying charge. And so the bank has always shown a fairly good profit. Now that's true of most all their investments, but there is another, what's called the "item money" which is a grant money funds to the World Bank for the poorest of the poor developing countries. And those countries get that money without interest, but most ***all*** the bank's investments are loans based upon the ability of the bank to sell their bonds at a low rate of interest around the world–whether it be on New York or Geneva bond markets or Tokyo, or wherever it is.

". . . yes, the compensation for bank staff is very good. The bank is a *good* place to work. They take *good* care of their personnel as far as salaries and travel. They are very efficient and effective at doing this. . . . *But*, you know, for some years I would be traveling 150 days out of the year overseas. And you pay a big price for that kind of travel. . . ."

But, yes, the compensation for bank staff is very good. The bank is a *good* place to work. They take ***good*** care of their personnel as far as salaries and travel. They are very efficient and effective at doing this. They really are. ***But***, you know, for some years I would be traveling 150 days out of the year overseas. And you pay a big price for that kind of travel. So I don't want to indicate it's just all glory a (Storey: You mean you pay a big price personally.) yeah, personally. Yeah, you really do, and I really–travel never was of that much interest to me, although I just accepted it. But the hardest part about a trip going, say, to south Asia, is the flight over. And it isn't that I have any fear of flying. I don't have any at all. But it's such a ***hassle*** anymore to fly. It's a hassle. (Storey: It's very tiring too.) Yeah. If I can just get

there. Once I get there I thoroughly enjoy working with those people. But getting there ***is*** a–seems like it's getting worse. Maybe it's because I'm getting older. But I think there's just more people traveling. It seems like there's so many people in the airport. Every plane is completely full, you know, and so it's the travel aspect of it I don't–I accept. Don't necessarily enjoy, but I accept it as a way of getting there. And I really have enjoyed the World Bank effort.

Storey: But a lot of Reclamation people seem to go to the World Bank. (Fairchild: Through the years I've known a lot.) Aren't there concerns about retirement benefits and that sort of thing being affected?

How the U.S. Government and the World Bank Deal with Issues like Retirement

Fairchild: I"ll tell you, a lot of . . . the U.S. Government and other governments have really worked out a good program of retirement with the World Bank. And some people, of course, have retired ***early*** from the Bureau of Reclamation and then gone to World Bank and worked a few years with World Bank. But there is a program whereby you can actually retire–you can go from the Bureau of Reclamation to the World Bank and the World Bank will continue to pay your retirement through the civil service, and so you just build up your own retirement within the civil service while you are in with World Bank. And it's a very good program, and then once you are able to retire from, say, civil service, you may decide to retire from the civil service when you're with World Bank, and then you start your World Bank retirement program. And the retirement program with World Bank is very comparable to the ***old*** retirement program with civil service. So as far as there being any financial loss in retirement, because of going to World Bank by Bureau of Reclamation or other Federal employees, that's just not the case.

Storey: So that's not the case. Well in that case, tell me what they are looking for. what kind of people go from Reclamation over there?

How Staffing and Projects at the World Bank Have Changed over Time

Fairchild: Well, this is changing, again. This changing scene. Say back ten-, fifteen-, twenty years ago, the World Bank was involved in a ***lot*** of rather sizeable water projects–construction of dams and diversions and tunnels and irrigation projects, hydro projects, and things like that. And so, at that time, the bank was looking specifically for high professional, technical people in the areas of, say, construction or design, or whatever, maybe or planning. So that was people that the World Bank was hiring or getting on a part time basis.

Now the bank is having fewer and fewer of those projects. And so there's less opportunity for technical people from organizations such as the bureau to work for the bank. Now the bank is looking more for people that have expertise in the financial and economic areas, and some of these, let's say in education, and some of these other areas. And so the trend has also changed with the bank. And the bank, because of ***need*** and I think recognition on their part, but also because of pressure, the international environmental community, the ***bank*** is ***extremely*** cognizant of the environmental impact of their operation around the world. And so any project or

program that goes forward with the bank today has got to be well-analyzed as far as its environmental impact. And this ***panel*** that I am working on, this independent panel, was actually one of the grants worked out with Pakistan to go forward with this project, there would be a panel such as I am on to make sure these environmental considerations are fairly implemented. So they are looking for very unique capabilities in specific areas now. And, of course, that varies from programs to programs.

Storey: So, would you anticipate there are going to be fewer Reclamation technical people going over there.

Fairchild: Yes, yes. That's already happening, Brit. Yes, I would guess there's very few that are involved today. Very few.

Storey: Who are some of the people from Reclamation that went over that you know?

Fairchild: Well, there's Jack Phelan who was over at the Engineering Research Center. (Storey: Spelled?) P-H-E-L-A-N Jack was a design engineer with the bureau and has done, did, I think now he's basically fully retired. I think he's still living. But he's done a lot of work with the Bureau of Reclamation. There's others that come to my mind also, but that's the kind of person the ~~bureau~~ [World Bank] was looking for in those days. (Storey: The World Bank was looking for?) Yeah, World Bank, yeah.

". . . we're really not building very many dams around the world any more. . . . what the World Bank is emphasizing now is improved management of existing infrastructure. . . ."

And, but again, we're really not building very many dams around the world any more. What we're . . . in the water field, what the World Bank is emphasizing now is improved management of existing infrastructure. That really makes sense. That really makes sense. And so, again some of the experience, you know, I had with the Bureau of Reclamation, but more importantly the experience I had with the Soil Conservation Service years ago when I was out of the college, on the farm programs, you know, has been ***extremely*** valuable to me in my work with the World Bank. In other words, actually knowing how you lay out an irrigation system on a farm. You know, knowing a little bit about the irrigation distribution systems and how do you improve the water management program and your timing of deliveries and all of these things, you know. Those are really very important aspects, now, of many of the bank's programs. You know. Because you know, if you can improve the water management at many of these existing structures, you can make the existing water supply go so much further than it has heretofore. And so that is one area there is quite a bit of need for the bank is people that have capability in the area of improved water management.

Storey: What haven't we talked about that we should?

Fairchild: Well, I think we've pretty well covered the waterfront. My question is is what's going to happen to all of this, Brit?

Storey: OK, why don't we do that after we finish?

Fairchild: Alright, because I'm kind of curious about that.

Storey: Gil Stamm became commissioner while you were still at Reclamation. What was he like?

Fairchild: No, that was right after.

Storey: Oh, you had left by then.

Fairchild: Yeah, he had not been ***appointed***.

Storey: But he was assistant commissioner, right?

Fairchild: Yeah, he was assistant commissioner for operation and maintenance.

Storey: Tell me about him. What was he like?

Gil Stamm

Fairchild: Gil, well, I'd put it this way, Gil was a very dedicated bureau employee that was very interested in seeing the bureau being maintained in basically its original state. And I think that was just natural from his background. He worked out in the field in operation and maintenance and the systems out there, and he was never involved with planning. And so, I didn't work directly with Gil, but I would say that I don't . . . even though Gil was a good technical person, and I'm sure a good administrator for the O&M program, I don't know of any indication of where he really felt or showed any great leadership in trying to evolve Reclamation into new areas of activities. I don't believe that was his cup of tea. So I'm being very careful what I say. I'm not trying to deride the man because I think he certainly was very dedicated to the bureau and wanted to see the best for the bureau. But I would not consider him as being particularly innovative and aware of changes that were being thrust upon the agency. So, I hope that's a fair appraisal of him.

Storey: Okay. Speaking about Floyd Dominy.

Floyd Dominy

Fairchild: Floyd Dominy. Yeah, my knowledge of Floyd was not of a real personal nature. Because see, when I came back here, he was no longer with the Bureau of Reclamation. I knew him when I was heading up a state agency in Nebraska. And, of course, I would say that our professional relationship at that time was quite good because we were very interested in getting the Bureau of Reclamation involved in more and more projects in Nebraska. And, of course, he was interested in doing the same. And so, from a relationship standpoint, even though it was not of any great

extent, I would have to say that it was good. And so, what I know about him is, a lot of it is hearsay, and a little bit about when he came to Nebraska, some of the things he did do. I must say that when he did come to Nebraska the Bureau of Reclamation people really jumped. He was ***the boss***. And ***they knew*** that. I remember, I never told this story earlier, I was at a reclamation meeting up in the north-central part of the state. Floyd was going to be the principal speaker, anyways he was going to show some slides. Floyd had some *excellent* photographs, and things just did not work out well. I don't know whether it was the projector didn't work or the screen wasn't right or things like that, and I, tell you, I felt sorry for the regional director. He just was jumping around there just like a kid trying to get all this worked out because Floyd, of course, was *extremely* irritated. The fact that they just didn't have this set up properly. And I think you might say that "he was in charge. He was in charge wherever he was." And so, any of the stories are so readily available about Floyd and his operation here, you know, I guess are pretty well known and things like that. My only feeling was, is that Floyd Dominy was in a position in the '50s and '60s to make some changes in the operation of the Bureau of Reclamation which apparently he didn't think was necessary–which he didn't think it was necessary because things were going so well because of Senator Hayden and others up on The Hill that he didn't feel it was necessary and that things were going so well that "Why fix something that ain't broke." And if Floyd Dominy, with his great ability, and he apparently had a great brain and memory, I think he could have ***really*** put the bureau in a great position for the latter part of the century–if he would have just seen that there was that opportunity. But, for whatever reason, he didn't seize upon it, and he continued to do those things which was so successful for the bureau in the fifties and sixties and which later have just fallen out of favor. And sometimes, you know, time runs out on you and it gets too late. I think there was a ***time*** when he could have really have made some changes which would really have set the bureau on the right track. So from that standpoint I think that I'm disappointed. Now about his personal life and how he used the Bureau, that's for others who would know him personally. All I know is just stories. But he was a ***leader***. He was a leader. And I just think it was a shame that he didn't use that capability to really, we'll say in the '60s, make some changes that could have ***really*** set this organization on a little bit better tangent for the future.

Storey: Now you had mentioned that there was a Dominy legacy in an earlier interview, and that's what I was sort of interested in exploring.

Felt Other Bureaus and The Hill Blocked Initiatives to Take Reclamation in New Directions

Fairchild: Oh, well, I think that the legacy was in Interior and up on The Hill. Because he was so strong, and this I felt like, he was so strong, and because of his strength he would override so many people, including people within interior, even assistant secretaries and secretaries, you know go directly to The Hill that that legacy had built up within interior and within these agencies. The place for . . . really, these agencies were not displeased to see the bureau fall from favor and, in fact, were most anxious to contribute to that fall. And I think that was one of the things, Brit, that made it extremely difficult–I came back here, along with others to move into some of these areas because every time we tried to move we were blocked. We were

blocked, not necessarily for good reasons, but I think we were blocked because of some of the image of the bureau and some of the heritage of the bureau from past operations. We just . . . every time we'd try to . . . say well, this an environmental area, or this is a flood plain management area, or this is something else we should move into, water supply, there was someone standing in the way. And I had to really feel that part of that was just a resistance that had been built up within these agencies and some of these committees up on The Hill through the years that ***now*** things have changed so that we can really get restitution, so to speak. I think there was an element of that. I really think there was.

Storey: Did Ellis Armstrong or anyone else ever discuss this with you, by chance?

Fairchild: Oh, yeah, I think there was some just general discussion in the hallways about things like this, and I think it's pretty well understood that this was a situation. And so yeah, there was that legacy. And so the legacy with all this fine development that came about during this period, there is also this legacy that because of the way some of these things were carried out that left a environment that made it difficult to change. And, so, you know, that's something that I guess all of us have to recognize and live with. But it was here. It was here. It really was here, particularly within interior.

Storey: Anything else we ought to talk about?

Sees Changes Coming in the Environmental Area

Fairchild: No, I, not at all. I would just emphasize though that this–I think the changes are going to come about in the environmental area. They're slow, but there kind of a little torturous right now–some of the development. I think we're going to see some changes in the environmental area which *I believe* is going to strengthen the environmental movement. It's going to put it on a much more substantial ground. And that's when they do a better job of planning and analysis and are going to look at the risks and the benefit-costs and things like that. What so many of their leaders have been reluctant to do in the past, and to me that's just . . . I think it's just not sound. It's really politics that's kept it from being. And so, I'll be interested in seeing if this doesn't evolve in the next three years. And in the long run I think it will be good for the environmental movement.

Storey: Um-hmm. Well, I appreciate your coming in today and spending time with me, and I'd like to ask you whether or not you're willing for the material in these cassettes and the resulting tapes to be used by researchers.

Fairchild: You certainly have my authority to do that, yeah.

Storey: Good, thanks very much.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. APRIL 10, 1996.
END OF INTERVIEWS.