

Restoration Program Hosts Biennial Science Meeting, Honors Keys Award Recipients

On August 22, Donald E. Portz, Program Manager for the San Joaquin River Restoration Program, presented two John Keys Awards at the program's 2018 Science Meeting in Sacramento, California. The two-day meeting was an opportunity to showcase river restoration-science generated through the program and was attended by over 100 biologists, hydrologists, engineers, and other participants interested in San Joaquin River restoration efforts.

This year's theme, "Collaborating for the Future," in addition to highlighting collaborative program actions, included speakers from other river restoration projects to broaden information sharing and experiences.

In keeping with the meeting theme of collaboration, Keys Award recipients were recognized for their joint efforts in implementing 21 Century runoff forecasting tools for the San Joaquin Watershed.

Following in the wake of a five-year drought, a collective effort unfolded to improve water management opportunities within the San Joaquin watershed using the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Airborne Snow Observatory -- which applies cutting-edge LIDAR and hyperspectral data to accurately measure Sierra Nevada snowpack. Drawing on this technology, a diverse range of stakeholders, including environmental organizations, water users and governmental agencies, rallied behind a common vision to increase user benefits in an already stretched watershed.

The John Keys Award honors the memory of former U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner John W. Keys III. Keys was well-respected for his 36 years of federal service that focused on finding solutions to the complex issues involving managing water resources. The recipients of this award are an excellent example of employees, governmental, and non-governmental customers that exemplified outstanding business practices, communication, collaboration and partnering achievements that contribute to building and strengthening relationships.

The award winners are: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation: Chad Moore; Rufino Gonzalez; Emily Thomas; Jerry Herman; National Aeronautics and Space Administration – Jet Propulsion Laboratory: Tom Painter; Judy Lai-Norling; U.S. Department of Agriculture -- Agricultural Research Service: Danny Marks; Scott Havens; California Department of Water Resources: David Rizzardo; Friant Water Authority: Jeff Payne; South Valley Water Association: Dan Vink; Sierra Nevada Conservancy: Liz Van Wagtenonk; The Bay Institute: Peter Vorster.

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Other individuals closely involved with ASO activities include: Reclamation: Kaitlyn Willems; Craig Mayfield; Christian Buenrostro; Gil Reyes; Friant Water Authority: Steve Ottemoeller; Alexandra Biering; National Aeronautics and Space Administration – Jet Propulsion Laboratory: Kat Bormann; Michael Joyce; Lorraine Sposto; Cristina De Cesare; Dan Berisford; Elizabeth Carey; Hannah Haugen; U.S. Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Research Service: Mark Robertson; Andrew Hendrick; Ernesto Trujillo; Micah Sandusky; Micah Johnson; California Department of Water Resources: Frank Gehrke; Mike Anderson.

