

TRANSCRIPT

John W. Keys III Pump-Generating Plant Dedication Ceremony May 12, 2009

Remarks by Ken Lane

Senior Advisor to the Secretary of the Interior, DOI

It is a privilege for me to take part in this event honoring a true leader, and a dedicated civil servant, who understood the importance of mutual respect and hard work. Water issues are rarely glamorous, but water is the life blood of civilization. That is particularly true here in the American West. So in a real sense, today, we honor one of the great stewards of our civilization, John Keys.

Remarks by Bob Johnson

Former Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation

John is...he was truly an honorable man. You know as commissioner, he carried the title honorable and everybody. But John was one of those people that really lived up to that title. He was honest, he was hardworking, he was smart, he cared about people. John loved everybody. If you ever got sick, he remembered birthdays, he was always reaching out to try and help people. Just, he could never do enough for all the people that he knew and for anybody in Reclamation. If there was a way he could do something or for Reclamation employees. And he defined Reclamation people much broader than just Bureau of Reclamation employees. He defined Reclamation people as all the family; the water and power community, the environmental folks and everybody else that had an interest in the Reclamation program. He was liked by all. I don't know any that didn't know and appreciate John. He had a great sense of humor and he was very loyal. And he's truly, truly, an honorable man and he deserves the honor that we are giving him today.

It's truly very highly deserved. I think it is a proper recognition of John Keys. And it's so exciting to know that 50 or 100 years from now people will drive by that pump-generating plant and they are going to see John W. Keys III written on the side and maybe 50 years from now there will be another former commissioner of Reclamation talking about that it's been 50 years since we named for another commissioner and John Keys was on the list. And people will get to see something about John and know who he was and maintain the memory for many, many years so it is very exciting to see that happen.

Reclamation is 105 years old and I don't remember the number of commissioner's that we have had but it's many, many, and there are only 5 that we named facilities for. Fredrick Newell who was commissioner in 1905, one of our very 1st commissioners, was honored by having the town of Newell South Dakota named after him. Charles Wolcott who was the commissioner of Reclamation in 1907 had Wolcott Lake named after him and that's at Minidoka Dam in Idaho. Arthur T. Davis who was commissioner in 1914 had Davis Dam on the Lower Colorado named for him; Elwood Mead who was commissioner in 1924 had Lake Mead named after him. And I want you all to know that I had nothing to do w/the movement to rename Lake Mead to Johnson Lake. And then finally, John Page who was the commissioner of Reclamation in 1936 had the City of Paige Arizona, which is the construction site for Glen Canyon Dam and that was the last time we have named something for a commissioner and that was over 50 years ago.

I also think it's so appropriate that we're able to name something here at Grand Coulee Dam in honor of John. This was a part of the country that he worked in for so many years as Regional Director. He was Regional Director here for 12 years. Commissioner for what, almost 6 years and just made so many contributions. And he loved the Pacific Northwest. He loved the Columbia Basin Project. This facility delivers water to 500,000 acres of irrigated farm land and John was very proud of that. And he was proud of Grand Coulee Dam and being a part of it. I remember John mentioning to me how proud he was as Commissioner to have such a great bunch of facilities that he was responsible for, and I know he was very proud particularly of Grand Coulee and all the things that have happened here with this project.

Remarks by Dick Ericksen

Representing East Columbia Basin Irrigation District, Quincy-Columbia Basin Irrigation District, South Columbia Basin Irrigation District

During John's 5 years as Commissioner, he re-motivated Reclamation as an Agency, calmed the fears and angst of Reclamation's contractors and customers and re-invigorated the Reclamation program. In doing this he reunited the Reclamation family. We are all better off today, for John Keys having passed this way. I think it is very fitting for the Grand Coulee pump generating plant that serves irrigation, hydropower, fish, wildlife and recreation be dedicated in John's memory. Thank you.

Remarks by Norm Semanko

Family Farm Alliance Advisory Committee

It didn't matter if you were the Secretary of Interior or if you were just the secretary in somebody's law office. He treated everyone the same, everyone's views were views that needed to be respected, and valued. Whether you worked for him, whether he worked for you, or whether you worked with him, he treasured his relationships.

Remarks by Kameran Onley

Former Assistant Secretary for Water & Science, DOI

I'm one of those who's looking forward to bringing my 18 month old or when she can walk and talk and bring her out to this dam and show her the plaque of John and show her what individuals and communities can do together when they put their heads together to figure out how to tackle some of these really complicated issues.

Remarks by Dell Keys

Wife of John Keys

Thank you very much, we greatly appreciate this honor, and I'm sure John would too, I think he would be very pleased, he'd be a little embarrassed, in his good old down home Alabama boy way he'd be saying kind of "Oh shucks, you know. I didn't do anything much, you know..." but, he did. He'd be very grateful, we are very grateful and we sincerely thank you for the honor of naming this pump generating plant after John. Thank you very much.