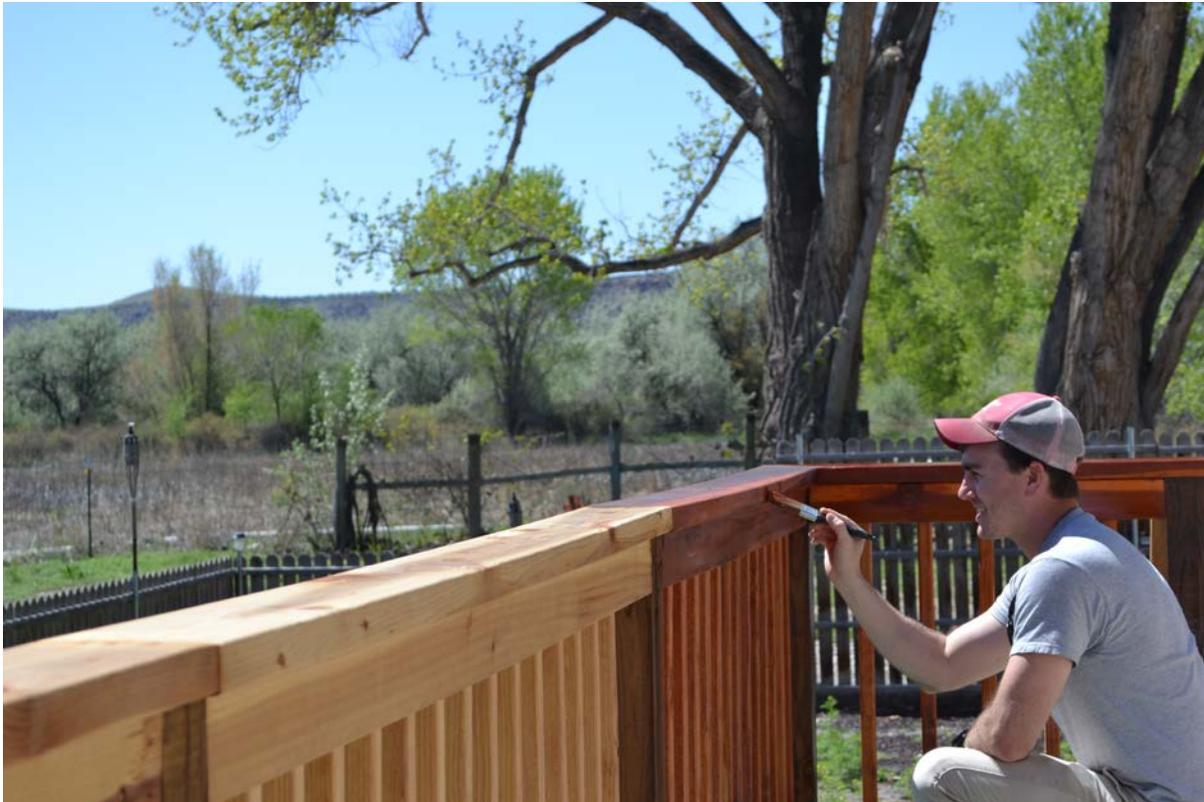


### Western Colorado Area Office Employees Cleanup Wildlife Area Residence



On May 4, 2016, employee volunteers helped with cleaning up and repairing the Grand Junction Wildlife Area Residence. The residence is used by personnel who oversee and managed the wildlife area, by living on site they provide security for the property, facilities and equipment.

Employees stained railing, pruned trees and bushes, cleaned the house, washed windows, swept and washed floors, repaired the irrigation system, installed outlets and so much more! The top-notch cleanup crew consisted of Reece Carpenter, Ryan Christianson, Steve Coverly, Scott Hutchins, Bob Levine, Jenny Ward, and Melissa Werkmeister.

When asked about the project, Land's Group Manager, Melissa Werkmeister said, "Thank you to everyone who helped with this project on the cleanup day, as well as the maintenance and repairs provided by: Ray Cardenas, Don Jacquez, Chris Schottel, Tony Mattorozo, Troy Morton, Phil Ipson, Dee Dee Fowler, and Chain Lock. Without their help, this project wouldn't have been possible. These folks and their supervisors have been amazing in their support and sharing their time and talents with us to



bring this property back into shape.”

**Photos below**



*Ryan and Steve working on water pump*



*Melissa pruning bushes*



*Bob working on irrigation*

**#####**



## Reclamation Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (RAPAC) Annual Training and Events – Foundation for the Future



By Levi Hutchinson, RAPAC Chair

The Upper Colorado Region recently hosted the Budget Review Committee (BRC), Reclamation Leadership Team (RLT), and the administrative professionals throughout the agency during Administrative Professionals Week, April 25-29, 2016, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Commissioner Estevan López gave a brief background of the Administrative Support Career Management Program as a guide to promote peak performance and enhance career development. He then spoke of the important role administrative professionals have within Reclamation and how they help keep priorities and schedules moving – including his. In addition to the BRC and RLT meetings that took place, leaders thanked their assistants and recognized all individual Administrative Support Council (ASC) winners at the annual award ceremony before the Commissioner announced the two Reclamation-wide winners.

Early in the week, personnel from across Reclamation including ASC chairpersons, winners, and Executive Assistants learned more about communication from Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist, Tim Coplin; the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Programs from “Mr. Salty”, Kib Jacobson; and Water Leasing and Rights from Malcolm Wilson and Jeff Painter. Opportunities for the ASC chairs to network, share successes and failures from their perspectives in regards to the program, and game plan strategies to make it better, happened in an open environment. Linda McFarland and Stacy Leitner from Admin to Admin were brought in for a customized morning workshop helping attendees learn how to lead without authority and take control of their career road map.

This year’s field trip focused more on the agency’s on-the-ground efforts instead of visiting a dam. The group boarded a bus and headed south – first to the Provo Area Office, where Area Manager, Wayne Pullan welcomed everyone. Assistant Area Manager, Paul Christensen and Resource Management Specialist, Scott Blake gave an overview on energy efficiency and green building solutions. The Central Utah Water Conservancy District then provided an excellent and very high-tech presentation on Olmsted



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as if you could not only fly over, above, and through windows and walls but see through them with x-ray vision similar to the powers of Superman. This technology is not available to the public just yet, but plans are in place for others to be able to see what the attendees saw very soon. Attendees could visualize historical features that no longer exist to obtain a better idea of what the project once was. Afterwards, the group drove to Deer Creek Reservoir where Outdoor Recreation Planner, Valerie Heath-Harrison gave a presentation on invasive species, recreation rehabilitations, and partnerships. The trip ended with almost a hands-on learning experience from Richard Mingo and Paula Trater from the Utah Mitigation Commission educating us on wetlands and invasive species in regards to the Provo River Restoration Project.

Extended thanks goes out to all of those who helped make this happen including but not limited to Tara Ashby, Melynda Roberts, Beth Fox, Tina Villegas, Public Affairs, Human Resources, Information Resources and many more!

### **Reclamation's Administrative Professional for 2015 – Charlotte Tucker, Lahontan Basin Area Office**



Charlotte worked personally with stakeholders, was polite, competent, proud and excited; exhibited a wonderful attitude, and maintained a high degree of professionalism and exemplary customer service, resulting in positive office morale. A 13-year effort of a partial transfer from a Reclamation storage project comprised of 83,530 acres of Federal lands and irrigation features known as the Humboldt Projects, was completed successfully in 2015. Charlotte scanned records dating as far back as 1934 making them digital identified 300 project folders containing approx. 1,500 records located in an off-site warehouse. Charlotte independently created a tracking system before documents were transferred to the



water district in order to carefully monitor the delivery and retrieval of the secured boxes. Charlotte showed integrity in her work through her professionalism and courteous communications leaving a large footprint of success in the area office.

### **Reclamation's Administrative Services Professional for 2015 – Alisha Daniels, Mid-Pacific Regional Office**



Alisha's individual expertise was fire-tested and proven more than once in 2015. The organization saw a 44 percent increase in Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, many drought related and complex. Alisha reviewed over 50,000 pages both in scope and volume, of information for release. When a determination was challenged by a requester in the District of Columbia Federal Court, her efforts ensured the exemption was solid and the courts found Reclamation in favor of their original decision. Referred to as "one of the best organized filing stations reviewed to date" by the Regional Records Officer, her organizational skills are flawless. As a closely watched metric by the Department, she conducted a complete review of existing correspondence, re-wrote, and added the mandatory language to incorporate the new statutory requirements helping the FOAI program maintain a zero backlog status for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row. Alisha strives to improve her value to the organization and succeeds. Her enthusiasm and determination are wonderful assets to the MP Region.



## Upper Colorado (UC) Regional Winners

### UC Region's Administrative Professional for 2015 – Sabrina Baldonado, Socorro Field Office



Sabrina has been exceptional during the past year with accomplishments including the tracking of all personal protective equipment, ordering cleaning and office supplies, reconciling 16 travel accounts, 8 purchasing accounts, 22 long-term supervisory justification letters, overall construction crew travel costs, fuel and equipment usage, purchases made to support their project along with personnel time plated vehicle accounts. She has immersed herself into FBMS far beyond what's required. She spent time with the crews to fully understand their procedures. By her taking the time to actually learn the work of the crews has

proven to be a huge asset when reconciling travel, purchases, timekeeping, and a better overall understand of their needs including safety. The benefits to the field division not only support their office but also the area office. Sabrina volunteered to assist the Albuquerque Area Office for a month during a personnel gap, helping out where needed including the mail room, the front desk, along with other areas. Sabrina keeps the team alive. She always has a very professional attitude and produces outstanding results.

### UC Region's Administrative Services Professional for 2015 – Melissa Bishop, UC Regional Office



Melissa has a can-do attitude and delivers quality work. She is able to quickly shift her direction at a moment's notice. She has taken the initiative to ignite energy and work on plowing through the backlog of getting documentation electronically led in all our employees' eOPFs. She had completed getting the performance management records uploaded into eOPF where accuracy and completeness are crucial. She is always praised for her resolution of problems in ETAS, HireMe, FPPS, and USAjobs. She volunteers as the divisions Safety Committee rep ensuring employees are trained on the use of carts and chairs to assist those in need evacuating the building in the event of an emergency. She eagerly assumes additional work assignments, took initiative to

update templates and internal operating procedures, willingly works additional hours to complete projects and special data calls, and cheerfully trained a new co-worker. Melissa has a desire to learn all aspects within human resources. As one of the first faces of the region when new employees in the regional office start, she interacts with them and exhibits a great deal of professionalism to the region.

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## National Bike Month – Bike Clinic



May was National Bike Month, and Reclamation and the Department of the Interior are again joining communities and organizations across the nation to support bicycling as a way to commute to and from work. Bicycling benefits our health, reduces traffic congestion, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions associated with automobile use. Many Reclamation employees already bicycle to work, and May is the month to show your support and use of bikes.

Malcolm Wilson of the Regional Office held an informal bike clinic Friday, May 6, and Thursday, May 12, at the Plaza. It was a clinic for fellow cyclists to show them bicycle basics like chain cleaning, lubricating bikes, fixing a flat / changing a tire, adjusting derailleurs, brakes . . . Or anything folks were interested in that he was able to do. Malcolm brought tools, stand, lubricants, rags, pump, etc., so all anyone needed to bring was a bike and an interest in learning (or just the interest) the basics of their bike and riding. Old clothes or an apron was also recommended.

Attendees were provided a Bikeways Map of Salt Lake City and Malcolm's (inexpert) Top Ten Maintenance Items.

The clinic was well received and everyone was appreciative of Malcolm taking the time during National Bike Month and as part of the [Bicycle Subsidy Benefit Program](#) to provide his bicycle expertise. Here are a few quotes from attendees:



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“I didn't realize how easy it is to maintain a bike. I definitely don't consider myself a pro, but at least now I'm not afraid to touch it.” *Zack Wood*

“I really appreciated Malcolm going through some basic maintenance on a bike. The best part was learning how to repair a flat.” *Shelly Wiser*

“Malcolm, Edica, and I participated in the bike clinic on Thursday, May 12th. It was very informative, he taught us the basics on how to maintain our bikes. This included, how to change a flat tire, how to degrease the bike chain and lubricate it after. Also how to check the brake pads to see if they are worn down, and many more basics. I recommend this class to all novice bicyclist.” *Corine Morales*

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### Malcolm's (inexpert) Top Ten Bike Maintenance Items

1. **Keep your bike clean:** A dirty bike leads to excessive wear on chains, gears, derailleurs, brakes, etc. Cleaning your bike can be as simple as a soft scrub brush with warm soapy water and then a rinse and towel off and allow it to dry. Don't use high pressure spray as you can get water in bearings. Don't forget re-lubricate after this. **Store your bike inside and dry.** A good idea is to check your tires for little embedded chips and slivers. These can work their way into tires and cause a flat. You can ease them out with a finger nail or pointed tool.
2. **Keep your tires inflated to the proper pressure:** The maximum pressure is listed on the sidewall of the tires. I usually keep mine at 10 psi below the max. Low tire pressure makes it harder to pedal, will wear your tires faster and you'll be more likely to have a flat.
3. **Check your brake pads:** Worn brake pads won't stop you! If you can no longer see the grooves in the pads, replace them.
4. **Clean, check and adjust your brakes:** Dirty (or wet) brake pads won't stop you efficiently, lead to excessive wear of your rims or discs and may cause squeaking. If your brakes are still squeaking after cleaning, the pads may need adjusting. Make sure your brakes actually stop the bike well before levers are fully depressed. Adjust the cables if not. The pads should be adjusted so they fully, evenly and flatly contact the rims when the brakes are applied.
5. **Clean and lubricate that chain!:** Any time you hear a squeak, you are hearing metal wearing metal away and destroying your chain. Cleaning the chain gets the sand and grit out of it, which otherwise wears the chain (think sandpaper). Modern chain lubricants don't hold grit as much as oils, but in a pinch oils (even vegetable oil) is better than wearing the chain down.
6. **Lubricate derailleurs and brake mechanisms:** Again, if they are not lubricated, they will wear excessively and they won't shift or brake effectively. A *little* bit of lubricant will do – wipe off excess so dust and dirt don't stick. Just don't let them get dry and stiff.
7. **Adjust your seat height:** A quick rule of thumb is when you're sitting square on your saddle (seat) with your leg fully extended, your heel should just reach the pedal. Having a seat height too tall results in your hips moving too much, and a sore back, and too short results in sore knees and less power to your pedals. If you're into long rides (touring, racing) it's a good idea to do/have a bike 'fit'. This entails adjusting the seat (height, angle, position), and handlebars (height, stem length, angle) and will make your rides much more comfortable and efficient. [Argonaut Cycle Coaching](#) as a great bike fit calculator.
8. **Check the chain wear and replace it if worn (stretched):** You can have a bike shop do this or there's a simple tool to check. Worn chains wear your sprockets, then you'll be replacing them.
9. **True your wheels or have them trued:** An out of 'true' wheel is one that 'wobbles' either side to side or up and down. Either way, it will result in inability to break properly and safely,



excessive wear on brakes and an unsafe and uncomfortable ride. In the extreme a wheel could collapse under you. This is a task that is not hard to do; however, it takes some patience and a spoke wrench. If you're not up for it, have a bike shop do it for you. But don't let it go.

10. **Do the above regularly and service your bike or have it serviced at least once a year!**

Here are some great references:

- [Top 10 Bicycle Maintenance Tips](#)
- [How to Care for your Bike](#)
- [101 Bike Maintenance Tips](#)

## Photos Below



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## Western Colorado Area Office Participates in Water Festivals



By Justyn Liff  
Public Affairs Specialist  
Western Colorado Area Office

In May 2016, employees and retirees of the Western Colorado Area Office participated in two water festivals. The first festival was the Children’s Water Festival in Durango, Colo. at Fort Lewis College on Wednesday, May 4. Over 700, 5<sup>th</sup> grade students attended the festival and the Western Colorado Area Office taught the “Colorado River Journey” where students learn about the Colorado River water diversions, water sources, and water quality.

The second festival was the Western Colorado Children’s Festival in Grand Junction, Colo. at Colorado Mesa University on Monday, May 16 and Tuesday, May 17, this water festival in the largest in Colorado. Nearly 2,500 5<sup>th</sup> grade students attended the festival where Western Colorado Area Office employees and retirees taught the “Colorado River Journey”.

Thank you to the Western Colorado Area Office employees and retirees who helped this year: Mike Baker, Susan Behery, Fredrick Busch, Ryan Christianson, Dan Crabtree, Justyn Liff, Marc Miller, Kevin Moran, Carrie Sheata, Jenny Ward, and Melissa Werkmeister. An extra “thank you” goes to retired Western Colorado Area employees Mike Baker and Dan Crabtree who love the Water Festival so much they volunteered their time!

**Photos below**



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Volunteers



WCAO employees teaching the Colorado River Journey

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## The Reclamation Experience of a Lifetime The Upper Colorado Regional Liaison



By Nick Williams  
UC Region Liaison

Have you been on the receiving end of a phone call or email with a “Washington Office request” from the Regional Liaison? If you have received one recently I was very likely the sender. For the past 2 years I have been detailed from the Upper Colorado Region to Reclamation’s Office in Washington, DC, as the Regional Liaison. Part of my job has been to make sure leaders here in Washington have the information they need to address issues and make decisions. Requests from the Washington office may often seem unreasonable, either by what is being requested, the timeframe to complete it, or both. The request may be overly vague or broad and you may not get much help when you ask for more specifics. While requests from the Washington Office are generally expected to be turned around very quickly the opposite often seems true when the region needs approvals or reviews at the Reclamation Washington Office or Department of the Interior levels. There may be many questions about just what is going on in the black box that is the Washington Office. If you are curious about the Washington Office then I offer the following Q&A’s in the hope that they will provide some context and insight.



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**Q: Why do the Regions have liaisons in the Washington office? Why is it a 2-year detail versus a permanent position?**

**A:** I believe the liaison has two primary purposes. The first is to be an information conduit. The liaison is usually the central point of contact for the Washington Office on Upper Colorado (UC) Region issues. While the liaison may not be able to answer questions or provide information on the spot, the liaison knows who to contact in the region to get that information. The second purpose is to be a “fly-on-the-wall”. Once, when introducing myself to a lobbyist who represents several Reclamation stakeholders he remarked “Oh, you are one of those Reclamation spies!” The liaison attends meetings with the Commissioner and Deputies, Department leadership, and stakeholders with lobbyists. Many meetings also have the “meeting after the meeting”, or during conference calls, the conversations that happens when the line is muted. The liaison is a participant in these communications and relays important points to the region leadership.

Liaisons are typically region employees who commit to a two-year detail in the Washington Office as opposed to a permanent employee of the Washington Office. There are many reasons for this arrangement and some of the advantages include the liaison having an understanding and familiarity with UC Region issues and region personnel having a familiarity and trust of the liaison. The liaison is more likely to be invested in the issues that are represented. The 2-year limit also provides an opportunity for development as the liaison interacts with region, Reclamation and Department leaders, gains exposure to a wide range of region issues, and sees the “big picture” for Reclamation’s mission and vision. Once the 2-years are complete, another liaison receives the same opportunity.

**Q: Why do some issues rise to the Washington level when others remain at the Region level?**

**A:** Every effort is made to address issues at the appropriate level, be it area office, region, or when necessary, the Washington Office. Here are some of the more common reasons an issue might be elevated to Washington:

- External sources such as stakeholders or Congress may bring issues to Washington. Stakeholder groups frequently travel to Washington, DC, to meet with members of Congress and agency officials. These may be courtesy visits or they may be appealing to the Commissioner’s Office on a particular issue. When Congressional offices get involved in an issue they typically contact the Washington Office directly.
- Politics are often motivation that bring issues to the Washington level. High-profile issues or issues that align with political objectives are likely to receive attention from the Washington Office.
- Especially complex or controversial issues also often rise to the Washington level. The region may ask for assistance on these issues or the nature of the issue may necessitate involvement from those above even the regional director.



**Q: Why do requests from Washington often have such short deadlines?**

**A:** As the saying goes: “A lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part”. The “need it yesterday” approach in Washington, real or perceived, is usually due to circumstances beyond the control of the liaison. I can think of a few instances that illustrate this:

- A stakeholder group, such as an irrigation district, requests a meeting with the Commissioner with less than one week’s notice (it is general practice by the Commissioner and Deputies to accommodate meeting requests). In order to prepare the Commissioner for the meeting briefing materials from the region is requested. That material must generally be received in Washington more than 24 hours in advance of the meeting so it can be reviewed and distributed the day before the scheduled meeting.
- A Department official accepts an interview request from the media and talking points are required to prepare the official. If the interview request happened less than a week in advance of the interview date then it compresses the time the region has to prepare the talking points.
- A Congressional Committee hearing on proposed legislation is scheduled. The region is required to draft testimony for the Department witness a week or more ahead of the hearing so it can proceed through Bureau, Department, and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reviews and approvals. Often the agenda for a hearing isn’t even finalized much more than one week in advance of the hearing so it leaves little time to prepare material.

These are just a few examples. The UC Region handles these types of requests better than every other region, due wholly to the efforts of Jayne Kelleher, Ameer Andreason, and every author of the region’s monthly issue papers. These efforts are immensely valuable for keeping the Washington Office informed.

**Q: Why do Washington reviews and approvals take so long?**

**A:** Well, what would this bureau be without a little bureaucracy! Joking aside, if an approval is needed in Washington then there are likely several layers of review that accompany it. If the approval is at the Commissioner or Deputy level, then there may only be a few levels of review. If the approval is at the Department level (e.g. Secretary, Deputy Secretary, or Assistant Secretary), the review and approval becomes more complex and lengthy. There is certainly some inefficiency in this lengthy process but there are also advantages. Impacts that might not be clear to the office drafting the correspondence might be evident to the attorneys, legislative, policy or budget specialists who review it.

**Q: Why must briefing/issue papers be limited to just one-page?**

**A:** I think this question is best answered by a former Deputy Commissioner who once told the liaisons, regarding the length of briefing papers, that he needed to be able to harvest the important information from that paper in the time he walked from his office to the conference room. The Commissioner and Deputies are extremely busy, and while they sincerely would like to know more about each of the issues they are pulled into, the reality is there isn’t time to do so. I occasionally see briefing material distributed here in Washington that includes multiple briefing papers and attachments. I have no doubt that the information is valuable and relevant but also know that it is too much. If there is too much information provided then the Commissioner or Deputy may not know where to begin and my observation is when that happens they simply don’t.



## **Q: What was your experience like as the Region Liaison?**

**A:** Okay, so this question is really here as an excuse for me to share my thoughts on the liaison experience. I can sum these two years up very simply – it has been great. I have most enjoyed the relationships and interactions with people in the region and here in Washington. I know firsthand how capable and professional the UC Region is and will miss being able to work with so many people in the region and area offices. I have also enjoyed the exposure to the region’s issues, projects and programs. We are engaged in such interesting projects and I found myself wanting to know more about all of them. The downside is there wasn’t time to learn more and I was only able to scratch the surface. I gained a better understanding of Reclamation as a bureau and what it means to this country, particularly the people in the west.

On a personal level my family and I have really enjoyed the DC area. Having never traveled to the eastern U.S. before this trip, I was very excited to be in the area. There are so many iconic sites to see within a very short distance and so much history that even two years wasn’t enough. Still, we made the most of the time and crossed off many of the places to see from our list. That list includes the monuments and museums at the National Mall, the big cities of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, beaches on the Atlantic, the Outer Banks, Gettysburg, Niagara Falls, Florida and Disney World and much more-it has been a lot of fun! It was even worth the hassles of the infamous traffic.

If you made it this far I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this and wonder if you may possibly have interest in the Regional Liaison position. If you do please feel free to contact me, or other past and current liaisons about the position and our experiences. Besides the 2-year position there are regularly opportunities to sit in for the liaison for one or two weeks at a time.

In recognition of Nick’s efforts and valuable service as the UC Region’s liaison, here are some quotes of gratitude:

"We have had some really good UC Liaison's during my time at Reclamation. Nick definitely fit right in, and probably set a new standard. He was amazing at anticipating requests and giving us a little head start. He leaves really big shoes to fill. After spending a few days with Lee touring around the Albuquerque Area Office, I'm sure she's up to the task." *Mary Carlson, AAO*

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## **In the Upper Rio Grande, the More We Know, the Better the Flow**

*If we can all put our heads together and make improvements to the forecast process we need to do it.*  
Travis Smith of the San Luis Valley Irrigation District. And so we did.

Most of the streamflow in the Upper Rio Grande and Conejos River is generated by snowmelt runoff that occurs during the months of April through September. Colorado water users divert water for agriculture from April to November. Because of the lack of storage, water users rely very heavily on the streamflow forecasts at the beginning of the irrigation season. Since the Rio Grande and Conejos River systems are so over-appropriated, the only way to ensure that Colorado’s compact obligation is met is to curtail, or shut off, some Colorado water users. So, getting the forecast wrong can be extremely costly—an error rate in the April 1 forecast can translate into millions of dollars lost that year from reduced agricultural productivity.



To improve seasonal water supply forecasts on the Upper Rio Grande River, the Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative partnered with the National Center for Atmospheric Research, and the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB). As part of this research project, the CWCB worked with the Conejos Water Conservancy District (CWCD) and Riverside Technology, Inc. to help more effectively administer the Colorado River Compact and manage water.

Official water supply forecasts used to rely solely on regression models, with very limited information about runoff timing. Since 2009, the CWCB, Colorado Division of Water Resources (DWR), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and National Weather Service's West Gulf River Forecast Center (WGRFC) have worked to improve the snowpack and water-supply forecast information made available for the Upper Rio Grande Basin. A major success has been hydrologic models that include snow and rainfall-runoff modeling. New ensemble streamflow prediction (ESP) starts with the current conditions from the hydrologic models (i.e., soil moisture and snowpack) and generates potential runoff hydrographs, assuming the upcoming weather will follow the same patterns as in historical years. This tool allows for better planning, including "what if" scenarios (What if this year were similar to 1984? Or what if it turns out to be more like 2015?). As ESP forecasts are weekly, the DWR can make incremental changes to the curtailment values throughout the month, thus avoiding large changes at the beginning of each month when the official water-supply forecast is released.

In another facet of this program, the Conejos Water Conservancy District joined with DWR, CWCB, NCAR, NASA, WGRFC, and Riverside to use a mobile X-band radar for more accurate snowfall and snowpack input into these models. Nathan Coombs, CWCD said, "Working with the scientists and new technology has built confidence in the forecasts and has put more water at the head gates of our users."



*Katie Schulz, a student at Adams State University, showing NASA's mobile X-band radar.*

These new applications will benefit watersheds and will serve as starting point for future 'gap' filling radar deployments. Coordinating with local, state and Federal water prediction and water management partners is vital to provide the data needed to keep the Upper Rio Grande flowing smoothly and effectively.

For more information, see <http://southernrockieslcc.org/project/modeling-systems-to-inform-water-management>. Or visit the Southern Rockies LCC Conservation Planning Atlas: <http://ow.ly/4mURfr>

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## **Safety Front and Center - Food Recalls and Listeria**



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No doubt many of you have heard about the massive food recalls that have taken place the past several months. Turns out, there have been several multistate outbreaks of Listeria infections and the evidence has pinpointed a number of frozen vegetable products produced by a single frozen food producer at one of its major facilities in Pasco, Washington. However, the products from this suspect plant, are sold in hundreds of products under dozens of brand names.

So what are the risks? The bacterial outbreaks that have caused these recalls is called Listeria monocytogenes. It causes fever, stiff neck, confusion, weakness, vomiting and sometimes diarrhea. It can be fatal in severe cases and effects some people more than others. If you are pregnant, have a weakened immune system, have had an organ transplant, liver disease, diabetes, cancer, or renal disease, you are at an elevated risk if infected with Listeria.

What has been recalled? We all could have recalled frozen vegetables in our freezers at home. The recall is massive. There are hundreds of products that are effected. Rather than listing them here, the best thing for you to do is to visit the following website:

(<http://www.foodsafety.gov/recalls/recent/listeria.html>)

At the time of this writing, there were 21 recall notices posted at this site dating from April 23, 2016, through May 23, 2016. Each notice contains a list of products that has been recalled. You should consult each list and compare product names to those frozen foods you have in your freezer. If you know (or think) the items you have in your freezer are on the recall list, make a list of the product brand name, product name, Universal Product Code (UPC), package weight, and the “Best if used by” date. If there is a Manufacture Code on the package include this in your list. Then re-consult the website to see if the products in your freezer are listed in any of the notices.

What should I do with recalled items in my freezer? Do not eat the product if you know that it has been recalled. It is recommended that you seal the recalled products in a plastic bag and either return them to the store you purchased them from or throw them away. It is also recommended that you wash out your freezer with soap and water because the listeria bacteria can survive in a freezer for many years. This makes listeria monocytogenes unique from other bacteria and troublesome to eliminate.

For more information on understanding the food recall process, check out the [Food Safety News](#) website.

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## LGBT History Month



On April 7, 2016, C. Kai Medina-Martinez, University of Utah's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Resource Center Director came to the Upper Colorado Regional Office to provide three hours of Safe Zone Training. The training session was developed with three main objectives:

1. Educate individuals on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual (LGBTQIA) issues relating to gender and sexuality and how one may intervene when they witness discrimination.
2. Create visibility of people who can provide resources to LGBTQIA community members and their allies.
3. Ways to create a safe environment in the community and workplace free from transphobia, homophobia, heterosexism and cisgender bias.

For resources and information on LGBTQIA, visit the [LGBTQIA Resource Center Glossary](#) website.

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# UC Region Big Picture Issues from the Front Office

## Build Better Teams Using Value Engineering Methods

By Jay Bytheway  
Chief, Engineering Services Group

When I go out to conduct Value Engineering Meetings one of my main tasks is to bring the team to a common understanding of the project. The tool I use to do this is called function analysis.

When I talk about function I am not talking about some dreadful equation your algebra teacher made you graph but rather what something does. And function analysis is the study of what something or someone does to contribute to the economy and to society. Think about it, when you go to purchase something you are purchasing it because of what it does for you or someone you care about. In other words you are purchasing it for its function.

In Value Engineering functions are named by using one verb and one noun. The following is an example of function names:

- Conduct Current
- Transmit Torque
- Agitate Clothes
- Select Cycle
- Clean Teeth
- Coat Surface
- Modify Flow Range
- Imprint Memory
- Block Flow

When I present the list above, I frequently ask the team what they think the function “Imprint Memory” is for. Many are surprised when they find out that “Imprint Memory” is a function of fish migration and is therefore an important biological function.

After teaching about function naming I caution the team not to confuse function with activities both of which can be described using a verb and a noun. I then show the team the following list which shows the difference between the two.

Function	Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Indicate Direction</li><li>• Transmit Torque</li><li>• Select Cycle</li><li>• Clean Teeth</li><li>• Coat Surface</li><li>• Modify Flow Range</li><li>• Imprint Memory</li><li>• Block Flow</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Install Sign</li><li>• Turn Shaft</li><li>• Turn Knob</li><li>• Brush Teeth</li><li>• Paint Wall</li><li>• Close Valve</li><li>• Construct Channel</li><li>• Construct Dam / Shut Gate</li></ul>

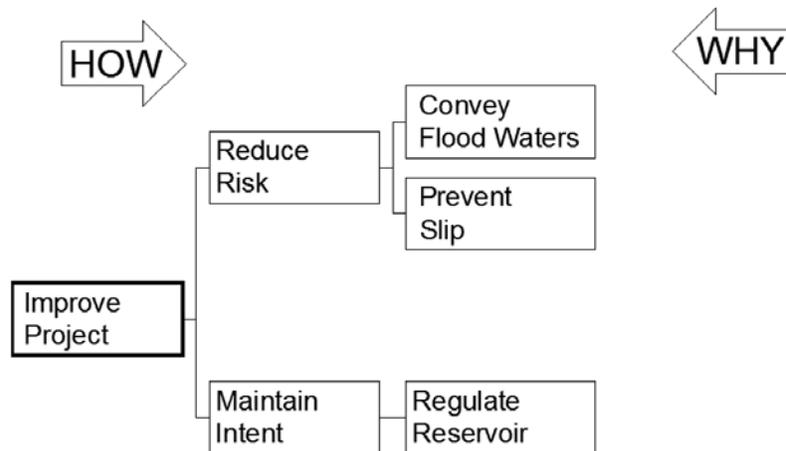


Since Reclamation projects are complicated, they have many functions which stem from the project's basic function and therefore the list of functions in a typical Value Engineering study can be on the order of thirty or more functions.

To help the team make sense of all the functions, they must first identify the basic function which is the function that best describes the project as a whole. Then a diagramming tool is used to relate all the functions to the basic function and to each other in a logical manner. The diagramming tool that is most frequently use is the FAST diagram. FAST is an acronym for Function Analysis System Technique.

The FAST diagram is constructed by asking HOW a function is performed working left to right and WHY a function is performed working right to left. It must make sense in both directions to all team members in order to work.

The FAST diagram below was for an existing dam that needed some upgrades. The maximum savings potential from the Value Study when compared to the original upgrade design was \$15,910,000. Sometimes the best solutions come from simple but accurate diagramming brought about with teamwork.



Nothing brings a team together better than the activities of function naming and constructing a FAST Diagram (Function Analysis). These activities are ways to get people from different backgrounds to communicate with each other and hence they are team building tools.

Effective teams are diverse teams. If we have a room full of engineers on a value team we are going to get solutions from the perspective of an engineer. If we have a room full of salesmen we are going to get salesmen solutions. However, if we have a diverse team we have the potential to come up with something really amazing.

The problem with diverse teams is they typically do not communicate well with each other. Functions and FAST Diagramming create a common language so that diverse teams can communicate and produce amazing results as long as the team strictly observes all the rules that go along with function naming and FAST Diagramming.

I would like to conclude with a quote from Steve Jobs.



*“Innovation has nothing to do with how many R & D dollars you have. When Apple came up with the Mac, IBM was spending at least 100 times more on R & D. It's not about money. It's about the people you have, how you're led, and how much you get it.”*

Steve Jobs

It's about the people you have” – a great diverse team

“How you're led” – A facilitator trained in innovative techniques

“How much you get it” – Understanding the problem and possible solutions (Function Analysis)

## Who's New

### Bryan Lawlis

Albuquerque Area Office – Hydro Technician



Bryan Lawlis, the new Hydro Technician in the Technical Services Division of the Albuquerque Area Office, comes to us from U.S. Geological Survey. After 4 years there, he saw an opportunity for a new challenge and a promotion at Reclamation. Bryan's special interests include fisheries and hydrology, and his hobbies include collecting cactus and breeding rare Australian knob-tailed geckos. He lives with his wife, Jessica, an urban planner who is finishing her Master's degree in urban planning and landscape architecture, and their two dogs, Khan, a brindle Bullmastiff, and Kayla, a Pit Bull/Mastiff mix.

Bryan enjoys reading National Geographic and watching comedies. His favorite movie character is James Bond. Bryan likes alternative reggae, such as 311, Sublime, and Iration. In his free time he enjoys hiking on the Bosque or at Fourth of July Canyon in the Manzano Mountains, with his dogs. Bryan describes himself as outgoing, and his favorite quote is from Caddyshack, Bill Murray as Carl Spackler, “So I got that going for me.”

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## In Transition

### Key Ellis Retires



The Four Corners Construction Office is losing a great lady to retirement. Kay Ellis, Administrative Officer for the Four Corners Construction Office, after almost 30 years of Government service, has decided to retire.

Kay was born and raised in the remote Surprise Valley area of northeastern California. Kay grew up in a ranching family and actually started her early education in a two room schoolhouse nestled between Eagleville and Cedarville. Kay's first encounter with Reclamation began in 1965, when Kay was 11. Kay wrote a letter to the President of the United States, Lyndon B. Johnson, about consideration of Surprise Valley as a potential storage site for Columbia River water. Kay received a personal letter of appreciation from the then Commissioner of Reclamation, the extinguished Floyd Dominy. Mr. Dominy served as Reclamation's Commissioner from 1959 to 1969.

Kay has had a long and impressive career in Government Service, but Reclamation has always held her heart. She began her career as a Clerk Typist, GS-3, with the U.S. Forest Service in Wise River, Montana in 1987. She quickly moved up to the position of Business Management Assistant and transferred to Tulelake, California in 1991. In 1994, Kay accepted a position with the Soil Conservation Service in



Dorris, California. In 1996, Kay began her career with Reclamation at the Klamath Basin Area Office in Klamath Falls, Oregon. Kay lights up with delight whenever she speaks of her time there and all the memorable “Reclamation Greats” she worked with, to include Karl Wirkus (retired Pacific Northwest Regional Director), Mike Ryan (Great Plains Regional Director), and Dave Sabo (retired Reclamation Power Director). While at the Klamath Project, as Administrative Officer, she had several occasions to meet with Secretaries Bruce Babbitt and Gale Norton, as well as Commissioners Eluid Martinez, Bill McDonald and our most favorite John Keys III.

Before joining our Four Corners Construction Office, Kay went “tropic” and transferred to the Pacific Islands, Fish and Wildlife Office in Honolulu. For three and a half years, Kay and her husband Jim enjoyed getting to know the local people and the flavors of the Hawaiian Islands. Kay, however longed to return to the Mainland and to Reclamation. In 2006, she transferred back to Reclamation’s Four Corners Construction Office and moved to Farmington, New Mexico. To assist her family, Kay took a brief position as Administrative Officer with Reclamation’s Columbia-Cascades Area Office in Yakima, Washington. In 2013, she returned to the Four Corners Construction Office (FCCO).

Kay and her husband Jim plan to remain in the Four Corners. During my interview with Kay for this article, she teared up when expressing her gratitude for Reclamation and all the friends she has made. In our walk down memory lane, we discussed some of her memorable experiences. Breaching of the A-Canal Headgates and receiving a piece of what is now known as “suspicious” mail on 9/10/2001. Flying from Honolulu and landing in Farmington which, up to that time, was a site unseen, but feeling immediately that she finally was “home”. Working with great people including, but certainly not limited to Karl, Mike and Dave, Mike Deming, Rick Ehat, Rick and Ann Gold, and so many more who have since retired. Additionally, time spent working with and getting to know so many both in the Upper Colorado and Pacific Northwest Regions over recent years. We laughed together when she told me that when she was getting to know folks at the FCCO, she immediately “took to” Jaye Decker (aka, the resident curmudgeon). Now, the two of them are entering retirement at the very same time. Go figure!!

Kay told me, “I can’t imagine working any place with better people than the Bureau of Reclamation. They are, and always will be, my ‘family.’”

Kay is now looking forward to having time to spend time at some of the local Southwest sights, and to be with her family and grandchildren who live many hours away, as well as other things that have been put on hold due to the time constraints created by having a career.

Kay will be missed, but never forgotten. Thank you Kay for your service.

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## Frank B. Chavez 1941-2016



Age 74, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, April 13, 2016 at his home in Socorro, NM. He was born in Los Chavez, NM on July 27, 1941, to Tiburcio and Rosina Chavez. Frank was a resident of Socorro since 1972. He worked for the Bureau of Reclamation, retiring after almost 32 years of service. Frank proudly served in the US Navy from 1962 to 1965. He enjoyed hunting and fishing and feeding his birds. Frank was a member of the Eagles Club and a Chicago Bears fan. Every morning he enjoyed working on Crossword puzzles and solving the Cryptoquip. He was a devoted family man and spending time with his grandchildren was very special to Frank.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his brothers, Preciliano, Simon, Arthur and Tibo; and his sister, Mary Helen Cordova.

He is survived by daughter, Renata Chavez and companion, Tim Townsend; good friend & ex-wife, Nellie Chavez; sisters, Corine Apodaca, Gregorita Chavez, and Nelda Coe and husband, Ron; grandchildren, Brianna Garcia and companion, J. B. Gonzales, Deysha Townsend and Damian Townsend

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### What Is the Media Saying About Reclamation This Week?

[Water Conservation Funding In Senate Spending Bill Will Benefit Rivers And Fish](#)

[Quagga mussels spreading across Arizona](#)

[What Would It Take for Donald Trump to Deport 11 Million and Build a Wall?](#)

[Interior Department not forthcoming with data, critics say](#)

[The largest farm on the Navajo Nation in northwestern New Mexico has headed into a second week with no irrigation](#)

[Is it Time to 'Unplug' the Colorado River?](#)

[Boats to be inspected at Elephant Butte Lake](#)

[New Ogden Canyon Siphon finished on time with no injuries](#)

[Whitewater release a go for lower Dolores River](#)

[Water flow to double in middle Rio Grande](#)

[San Juan National Forest considers projects targeting wildfires, mussels](#)

[Why New Mexico Resorted to Suing EPA for Gold King Mine Spill](#)

[New Mexico Looks to Avoid the Same Fate as Lake Powell. Starts AIS Inspections](#)

[Two New Mexico reservoirs get \\$1.4M for invasive species](#)

[Proposed smaller boundaries at Navajo Lake State Park would add lots of work to San Juan Co. sheriff's office](#)

[Be wary of pollution at Lake Nighthorse](#)

[Flows Increase on the Rio Grande, which may help river recreation](#)



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Glen Canyon Dam high scalers by Chad Douglas

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## Reclamation Trivia

Here's this week's set of questions:

1. Duane retired in **1994** after **33** years of excellent service to the Bureau of Reclamation.
2. There were roughly **150** high school student that participated in the Fairchild Challenge Event.
3. Approximately **163** volunteers, representing over 30 **federal**, **state**, and **local agencies** and **businesses** were on hand to make sure the day exceeded the expectations of the eager anglers – despite the weather.

Last week, We asked,

1. The liaison has two primary purposes, the first is to be an \_\_\_\_\_, the second is to be a \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Bicycling benefits our \_\_\_\_\_, reduces \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ associated with automobile use.



3. How many 5<sup>th</sup> grade students attended the Western Colorado Children's Festival in Grand Junction? \_\_\_\_\_

Last winner was – **Beth Fox**

Please use this [link to send your answers](#). To be fair we will draw names from the winners and one person will receive a prize. We will reach into the prize bin for something suitable for the winner...as long as supplies last.

[Return to UC Today](#)



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