



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Ruidoso hosted our 49th Annual New Mexico Water Conference in mid-September, a beautiful time of the year to be in the mountains. Our nearly 200 participants particularly enjoyed our evening banquet out on the patio.

This year's theme, *Water Desalination and Reuse Strategies for New Mexico*, was kicked off by Senator Pete Domenici, a driving force behind New Mexico's desalination efforts, especially the new Tularosa Basin National Desalination Research Facility. Although Senator Domenici was unable to attend due to Congress being in session, he sent a videotape with his remarks. The Senator said his goal is to give groups in New Mexico an opportunity to implement new technologies to address the state's water needs. He foresees "...that much of the development, testing, and manufacture of the next generation's water technology will occur in New Mexico if we are vigilant..."

The conference covered technical issues related to emerging desalination and reuse programs as well as policy related issues involved in using this resource. Of special interest this year was the panel discussion moderated by Bill Hume, Governor Richardson's Director of Policy and Strategic Planning. Mark Fesmire from the New Mexico Oil Conservation Division, Matt Lavery of PNM, Paul Saavedra from the Office of the State Engineer, and Frank Yates, Jr. of Yates Petroleum Corp. discussed the use of produced water; water which emerges from the far depths of oil and gas wells, which historically has presented a disposal problem for the oil and gas industry. The panel discussion is contained in these proceedings.

As always, the success of the conference is due in large part to the input received from the Water Conference Advisory Committee. We look forward to planning next year's milestone conference – our 50th – to be held on the New Mexico State University campus, where the first 20 or so annual water conferences were held. See you there!

M. Karl Wood
Director

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Photos by Stephen's Photo Service

