

# SAN MIGUEL PROJECT NEWS

SAN MIGUEL WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT  
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## OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

### OFFICERS

*George Mike Young*  
President  
*R. Tillmon Reed*  
Vice President  
*William L. Raley*  
Secretary  
*Dan Noble*  
Treasurer

### DIRECTORS

*George Mike Young*  
*R. Tillmon Reed*  
*Dan Noble*  
*Carlos Cornforth*  
*William E. Bray*

During 1967 your San Miguel Water Conservancy District board members put forth a great deal of effort towards promotion of the San Miguel Project. You were represented at the numerous activities of the following organizations:

1. National Reclamation Association Convention
2. Colorado Water Conservation Board
3. South West Water Conservation Board
4. National Rivers and Harbors Congress
5. Colorado River Association
6. Dedication of the Silt Project
7. Colorado Water Congress
8. Congressional Hearings

Board members attending the activities listed above, spent many hours, both in traveling to and attending meetings without remuneration for their time. They are reimbursed only for their out-of-pocket expenses.

Income for the San Miguel Water Conservancy District is derived from a half-mill tax levy. In 1967 this amounted to \$909.27 from San Miguel County and \$571.80 from Montrose County for a total of \$1481.07 on 1966 levies.

A fund drive was initiated during 1967 in cooperation with civic organizations and businessmen throughout the San Miguel Basin, whereby our share of \$2500 was raised toward a statewide lobbying fund of \$60,000. This lobbying fund is administered by members of the Colorado Water Conservation Board.

Lew Williams and Tillmon Reed testified before the U.S. Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee on May 5, 1967 in Washington, D.C. on behalf of the San Miguel Project.

### Where do we stand?

Through the efforts of interested citizens and the San Miguel Water Conservancy District, the San Miguel Project remains firmly attached to the Colorado River Storage Bill, despite aggressive efforts to remove it.

The political battle has been a long, drawn-out, complicated process involving conflicts between not only California, Arizona, and Colorado, but some within our own Colorado water organizations and State Legislature. However, at the Colorado Water Congress meeting in Page, Arizona in October 1967, Felix L. Sparks, Director of the Colorado Water Board indicated that for the first time Colorado is pulling together towards one goal.

A knock-down, drag-out battle was averted when Senator Carl Hayden of Arizona abandoned efforts late in the first session of the 90th Congress to go around Congressman Wayne Aspinall's House Interior Committee by attaching his pet Central Arizona Project bill to the House passed Public Works Bill. Aspinall opposed Hayden's Central Arizona Project on the grounds, quote: "There is insufficient water in the Colorado River to guarantee feasibility of the C.A.P. and I will not take an infeasible project before Congress. When the Upper Basin puts its water to use, the C.A.P. and the needs of California will require an augmented water supply. Consequently, the Senate-passed C.A.P. bill is not in the Basin interest without Hualapai Dam and/or water import feasibility studies." Unquote.

Senator Henry M. Jackson (Washington), had previously scuttled effort to implement "Import Feasibility Studies" to the Colorado River Basin. A possible solution to the augmentation problem is a proposal by the Department of Interior to phase in desalination plants along the California coast, at a rate commensurate with growing, long-range water needs; with these plants producing up to a total of 2-million acre feet of water. It has also been proposed that the U.S. Government and not the various Colorado River Basin States, be liable for the treaty obligation to furnish Colorado River water to Mexico. If these proposals are practical, the long, overdue Colorado Basin water account would be settled.

Congressman Aspinall was critical of the desalination proposal, as he contended present technology is a limiting factor. Despite these problems, an air of optimism hangs over the Colorado River Basin legislation in the second session of the 90th Congress. On December 28, Interior Secretary Stewart Udall said at a press conference that he thought the outlook for action on the bill in 1968 was very encouraging. Directly thereafter, Rep. Wayne Aspinall announced that Interior Department witnesses would be heard on the measure on January 30-31 in the House Reclamation Subcommittee. Aspinall estimates mark-up on the bill will be Feb. 1-2. It is likely to continue into the first full week in February.

Compromise conferences among representatives of the seven states of the Colorado River Basin continued last month, notably in Las Vegas, Nevada Dec. 7. According to Ben Avery in the Phoenix Republic Dec. 10, a new draft of HR 3300 is being composed by Felix Sparks of the Colorado State Water Board, with advice from spokesmen for other States, for submission as a proposal to Cong. Aspinall, who introduced HR 3300. The Denver Post reported Dec. 14 that the Colorado State Board approved in principle the major changes in HR 3300 which Sparks will recommend to Cong. Aspinall. These will be reviewed with Congressmen from other states, it is expected, prior to final mark-up of the HR 3300 bill for floor debate.

Just what bill will emerge from the House Interior Committee no one can say now. Almost certainly, it will authorize the Central Arizona Project, Hooker Dam and the five Upper Basin Colorado Projects, which include the San Miguel Project. This does not mean that money for these projects will be appropriated. Both Aspinall and Rep. Thomas G. Morris (D. New Mexico) have cautioned that funding is going to be tight for water projects in future years. So even if a Colorado River Basin Bill is authorized in 1968 this would not be a green light to funds in future years.

Authorization of the Project would add another rung in the ladder and move us that much closer towards solving the water needs of the San Miguel Basin. The many man-hours and dollars spent by the directors, interested citizens and the San Miguel Water Conservancy District will have been well spent.