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Central Arizona Project
ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
Carol West
Tape #1
July 8, 2009

This is an oral history interview for the Central Arizona Project. And I'm Pam Stevenson doing the interview. Manny Garcia is our camera operator. And today is July the 8th of 2009. And we are here in Tucson. And, I will let you introduce yourself. Why don't you give us your full name.

I'm Carol W. West. I'm a volunteer in the community, after retiring from the Tucson City Council in 2007.

I like to start with some background information. Can you tell me when and where you were born?

I was born in North Dakota on March 31, 1941.

And, did you stay in North Dakota for most of your early years?

Well, actually I attended the University of North Dakota and then taught English at Central High School. I also got married and my husband and I have moved around the western United States ever since. So, I've lived out of North Dakota more than I lived in North Dakota, because I left there when I was 23.

You say you got your degree there?

Yes, at the University of North Dakota, I received a Bachelor of Science in Education. I then received a Master's Degree in Education at Oregon State University several years later.

So, growing up were you always a good student?

Yes I was until I got to college and then I majored in boys and beer. I realized I had to get back on track.

Growing up in North Dakota, did you grow up in a rural area?

Well, my parents had a farm and we were what is called Sidewalk Farmers. We lived in a nearby town because my parents wanted us to go to public school in town. They just thought those schools were better so we did some of both. We lived on the farm in the summer and in the winters we lived in town.

So, you had both a rural life and a city life?

Well, city life if you call 2500 people city life.

What town was it?

The town was Carrington which is near Jamestown.

So, growing, what did you think you'd be wanting to do with your life?

Well, I was always involved in the political scene, interesting enough. I had a lot of relatives who were in public office. My most immediate goal was to be a teacher. My mother was a teacher. And, even though she didn't say to me that I should be a teacher, I just knew that that was something I wanted to do. I used to line up my dolls and I was the teacher for the dolls or bossed my brother around, so it was probably a natural occupation for me. And, at that time, there weren't the opportunities for women that we have today.

So, what did you want to teach?

Well, I ended up teaching English, writing and those kinds of subjects. I taught the subjects that students all have to have in order to get through high school. I also taught on the community college level in Oregon. I really enjoyed that because the students were much more motivated than my high school friends were.

And, what did you teach there?

I taught freshman writing and what you call Bonehead English. You know, if you haven't done very well in English and you don't do well on the entrance tests, then I had to work with those students. I think I was able to be of some assistance to them, so that they could get through their community college programs.

And...so...then what brought you to Arizona?

Well, my husband took a job here so when we moved to Arizona I decided that I would go in a new direction. I had taught for quite a while and I had an interview at the Southern Arizona Water Resources Association as their Community Coordinator, and that is how I met Mary Beth Carlyle who is still my good friend and mentor.

Well, when did you move to Arizona?

1985. So, I'm almost a native.

So what did that job entail?

At that time, believe it or not, Tucson was just on the fringe of conservation and they hadn't done very much. I became the conservation or Community Coordinator at SAWUA and it was right in keeping with my past experience because it had to do with education. I was out educating the

public about how to use less water. That was my job and it was a very interesting and worthwhile experience.

And what was the most interesting part about it?

Well, I think the most interesting part about it was that we developed a water conservation plan at SAWUA that later, when I became an Aide to a council member, became a part of the city code. I'm very proud of that and that we were able to achieve so much because from then on low-flow toilets, plumbing fixtures in general had to be low-flow. We began to work on a plant list of all kinds of things to try to turn things around so that people were more conscious of their water use.

When you moved to Arizona, did you move here from Oregon?

Yes.

That must have been quite a change.

Yes, it was. It took me about a year to learn to love the desert, but I wouldn't have it any other way today.

And, you say you found that Tucson wasn't into water conservation. Being that it was a desert, did you find that surprising?

Well, I found it very surprising. But I think there was also something else that I hadn't thought about and that is the fact that the water utilities revenue depended upon people using water. There was a lot of growth going on and I think that played into it more than anything else. You do have to plan for the future and since at that time Tucson was very dependent upon growth and groundwater it was essential that they do more to use less.

So, how long did you stay in that position?

Well, I stayed in that position for just the years 1986 and 1987 and then Janet Masques (sp?) was elected to the City Council and asked me to be her Aide. I thought that was a wonderful opportunity to make a bigger splash, shall we say, in the water arena. I was in the background doing all the research and Janet was passing the ordinances. We were a great team.

What were some of the ordinances that you worked on?

Well, one I think was a landmark, because the legislature adopted it too; and it had to do with water transfers. You know, after the 1980 Groundwater Management Act, cities were scrambling to look for additional water supplies, because clearly they were going to have to use less groundwater. One of the ideas that Tucson had was to Raid the Willcox Playa, which of course we didn't think was a good idea at all. Janet and I had the environment in mind and she drafted some ordinance with my help. I remember she was back East in Boston, and we were talking back and forth. She was called back there because of a death in the family. We were talking back and forth about how this ordinance was going to work and it did get passed. Tucson

did stop its efforts to take water from the Playa. It came to the attention of some of the legislators and water transfers statewide were halted. Thanks to what we began here in Tucson.

Are there any other parts of that job that you recall that were particularly interesting?

Well, it was particularly interesting and very nerve-wracking shall we say. The CAP arrived at the raw (Raw Water Impoundment in 1991). There was a big celebration and SAWUA, of course, was at the head of that. But, what was ironic about that big celebration was that not a single member of the Mayor and Council appeared at that. I was there as an Aide. And, because I had helped at SAWUA...and after all, SAWUA had been formed because there was a rumor that the canal was going to stop at Picacho Peak. We had several other close calls like that because they decided that SAWUA needed to be formed. So, of course, I went to the celebration. And then in late 1992, the CAP water was served to customers of Tucson Water east of Country Club Road. And it wasn't long before every Council office was a museum of jars of rusty, smelly water. The customers were complaining loudly. And, at the same time we had a Water Director who said this water meets all the federal and state guidelines. And that was all he would say. What we didn't know, but I think now looking back we realized that when you use surface water in a system that had always used groundwater, you have to take some of those precautions that weren't taken. You know the chemical equaler, equilibrium was being upset. We had a new water source with more minerals and a different Ph, and so on, rushing through those pipes. Water is a universal solvent. This was an old water system that had been put together over time and none of the pipes were changed. We just connected up those small water companies and let her rip. When the CAP water came through the pipes from a different direction it caused some of that rust and other particles to free up. The rust was what was literally holding a lot of those pipes together. So we started having burst pipes. There were little pinholes in the pipes where you know there were leaks in people's homes, so that was a problem. Of course, you've got a complex biological reaction occurring possibly in the pipes as well. If the water was flowing say in a cul de sac, and it wasn't used very much it would stand there. Even the new chemicals we were using chloramines (sp?) might have interacted with those pipes and caused that fish-like odor that people were experiencing. Rotten fish is how they described it and they said even their clothes smelled like this. Well, this was a nightmare - an absolute nightmare. I can even remember we finally set up a fund to help people with the damages that had been done to their homes. I can remember leaving eastside City Hall with a carload of people to drive to the place which I think it was roughly at Country Club, ironically, and 5th where there was an office set up where they could file their claims. These were elderly people, some of them and I would have to drive them over there, and that wasn't a very pleasant task. By 1994 when things still were tinkering with the chemicals and all sorts of things going on, but yet nothing was improving. The Council decided to stop serving the groundwater, or excuse me, the CAP water until they could figure out what it was that was causing all of this. In 1994, we went back to serving groundwater.

For, for two years they had this bad water?

They had this bad water and you know I'm amazed because there are a lot of people we never heard from. I had the CAP water at my house and I have to tell you that I didn't have a single problem. But, I lived in a newer subdivision and perhaps that was one of the reasons why. The other thing that I found unusual about it was that in some subdivisions a house in one corner of

the street would have problems but two houses down, no problems at all. So, it was an interesting and very mystifying phenomenon.

But, two years of people complaining must have been a lot of stress on the Council.

Yes a lot of stress on the City Council. I think in hindsight it might have been better if we hadn't stopped serving the water in 1994, but had tried to work with people. Part of the problem then was that the water utility didn't communicate with people and also with the Council. And, I think if they had and had worked maybe more with the Phoenix area at that time, it would have been better. They had worked with Phoenix in establishing how they were going to treat the water. But, what no one thought of was the fact that this water would be coming through the pipes in a different direction and that we hadn't served surface water before, where in Phoenix, of course, they had.

So, how could they make a decision just to stop using it and going back to groundwater when they needed the extra water?

Well, that was a big problem and, you know, I think sometimes we elected officials operate on NIMTOO (Not In My Term of Office). And so, I think that's what was happening. There was an election coming up the next year and who would want to run on that kind of a mess. And so, you see by 1995, when the election came around, people wouldn't be thinking about that anymore. I don't but that's perhaps a bit unfair. But, you know, that's one of the big disadvantages of our form of government and that is we have elected officials who have to think just in those four years in which they're elected. The elected officials just can't think beyond that but sometimes it's better if we think in the big picture. I know about that, too.

You've probably seen that happen?

Yes I have.

So, when they made the decision to quit using the CAP water, was that a temporary decision, or what...how did they think that was going to work? Obviously, you had all that water coming down the canals.

Well, I think the way the ordinance was, as I recall or the motion was worded, was until they could determine what the problems were they were temporarily stopping the use of the water.

Were there issues about what to do with the water if they weren't going to use it? Or the...if it weren't going to deliver to the people's homes?

Well, that came later. In 1995, the citizens were pretty upset and they passed the Water Consumer Protection Act. The Act stipulated exactly what we could do with the CAP. We could not serve it unless it met the standards of the Avra Valley Groundwater, which was the best quality water we had with the lowest mineral content. So, it had to be recharged into the stream beds, traded with ag in the mines, or some other type of activity like that. The Council was really ham-strung by this ordinance or this initiative and it overwhelmingly passed. I think it was about three to one. I think the ironic thing though was that the year before, 1994, Tucson Water had some water bonds on the ballot. And do you know that those passed? I think people

knew that the pipes and mains needed to be replaced and that this was the way to do that. We were willing to give the utility that extra funding in order to do that, so that happened. They started replacing the pipes and mains. But, the fact that they couldn't use this water caused all kinds of strife for the elected officials. About that time the Tucson Regional Water Council was born and I had left the Ward Two Council Office. I was tired of dealing with rusty water, shall we say. But, there were other issues, too. And I just thought that it was time for me to do something else. So, I went to New Zealand for six weeks. My husband and I took our tandem bike along. And we were just having a great time over there. We came home and found out about the Tucson Regional Water Council. I was elected, or selected I should say, to be the Executive Director. The job entailed trying to turn around this mess that we had so that people would get over their phobias and fears of the CAP water. It was a formidable task and it also meant working with our federal congressional delegation to make sure that they didn't forsake us at this time. You know, we still needed terminal storage because we are at the end of the canal. And that causes some unique situations for us, should the canal be down. So, we needed that terminal storage reservoir. Every year I would have to go and plead with our delegation to keep a line item in the federal budget for terminal storage because it was urgent. But, at the same time, when we weren't using the water, I had to use some pretty fancy footwork to get that done. And each year I would report on the "progress" that had been made to try to get back to using the CAP water again.

Back up a little bit. What is the Tucson Regional Water Council? You say it was just formed, and what year was that?

1995.

And what...how was it formed?

Well, a group of business people got together and said this is costing us, when we're not using our CAP. A lot of those people were on those in this SAWUA group and it was more of a public education body - non-profit (501-C-3). They thought in 1995 that they needed a lobbying group to make sure that we didn't lose the CAP, and that terminal storage was you know still in the picture. They also felt that it was necessary to turn the community around on this issue. I walked around town saying, CAP water is good for you and that took a lot of courage.

And after all those years of dealing with it as bad water. So, then how was the...Tucson Regional. What region did it encompass?

Well, you know, there isn't just Tucson that had a large allocation of CAP water, but there were other entities in the region who were small water companies. There were municipalities like Marana, Oro Valley, and Green Valley that were involved. When they formed the organization there were people from those communities also who were involved. Of course, one of their fears was that I was going to side with Tucson Water. That was very difficult because I had the best interests of the community at heart, but at the same time I wanted Tucson Water to succeed in this debacle that they were in.

And, how was it funded?

Well, by contributions from the business community and it was a 501-c-4. We walked a very narrow pathway because I couldn't just get out and advocate exactly. I had to be careful in the choice of words I used. I can't think of any job I've had where I learned more and it was more rewarding. It was a wonderful experience and I enjoyed working with the business community and so many of those people are still my fast friends.

And, it sounds like you had, over the 10 years you'd been here, become quite a water expert.

Well, I suppose I thought I was but, you know there's always still more to learn and I at least realized that.

Did you ever think when you moved to Tucson that water would be a focus of your life here?

Well, actually I'm the kind of person that likes to get involved. I learned about the initiative that was on the ballot to form Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. I thought that was a very good idea, so I circulated the petition. I was also a member of the League of Women Voters. So when I went for my interview at SAWUA, I very proudly announced to them that I was working on the ADEQ Initiative. They were not in favor of that initiative as I learned later but they still hired me, so I guess it didn't hurt me that I was there talking about that.

Had you been involved in environmental issues, or water issues, in North Dakota? Or Oregon? Or other places you've lived?

In North Dakota my father was an environmentalist of sorts, although he didn't know it nor did I. I suppose some of that rubbed off on me. In Oregon, of course, everybody is an environmentalist. I don't think I was cognizant of it, although I was certainly interested in their land use landmark land use code that they established. You know, where they put borders around their cities and all that. We were living there at the time that that was done. And there were a lot of local issues that came up. I was very active in politics in Oregon. So you know, it was bound to come up. Of course, working in a community college, there were certain things there that came up that were a part of it. I think most of my real environmental consciousness came while I was at SAWUA.

Well, and coming from a farm family, it seems water's always an issue for farmers.

Yes, it is. We had dry land farming, so some years my father had good crops, other years he didn't.

So, you didn't have to deal with irrigation?

No, because that just wasn't in the cards, like it is now and the farm I grew up on now has a good source of water. But, it didn't at that time.

Getting back to the Tucson Regional Water Council. What were the major issues that you dealt with on that as the Executive Director?

Well, certainly getting back to the use of CAP was the formidable one. We also helped to elect the CAP Board members from Pima County. We interviewed all of them and because, of course, that was a 501-c-4, you can't just come out and advocate for certain ones. But we did, and widely publicize their qualifications. I remember going to Green Valley to their Community Council and talking about the CAP Board. What it does, who they are, and so on and so forth. Because it's the CAP Board is sort of under the radar of most people's experiences. And, of course, CAWS (Citizens Alliance for Water Security), which was the group that put the issue on the ballot, was very active in getting some of their members elected to the Board. And that was something that we were really fearful of. As a matter of fact, one of their members did become a CAP Board member. I think in some ways maybe that was a good opportunity, because I think he learned some things just by being on the Board. After all, he was in here in Tucson, so he had to listen to the 10 folks from Maricopa County and the person from Pinal County. And I think there was some learning going on which may have softened some of his stance.

And who was that?

The CAP Board member was Bob Beaudry who continues to live in our community, but he's not very active in political issues at this time.

Like you mentioned the CAP Board is as you said under the radar. I think the only time people ever think of it maybe is during those election years. And they go, what's this?

Yes, and it's near the end of the ballot, so, if you're a voter that's confused or a little bit tired out, or you may not even get that far on the ballot. If you don't know, you're probably going to vote, or at least a lot of people operate that way.

And it seems like, for many years, the people that were elected were retired congressmen, retired governors. People who had name recognition in some other way. When they went down the list of people, they'd go, well, I guess I, I know who Williams is.

Yes, name familiarity.

And, have you seen that changed?

No, I don't think it's changed. Except I think in this last election here anyway the people who are running for the Board were a little more visible than they have been in the past. I think that was good. I got a lot of emails urging me to vote for certain people and I sent a few out myself I must admit. I'm happy to say I was successful.

Did you ever think about running for the Board yourself?

Well, I had some people approach me, but, it's a six-year term, and my husband the long-suffering husband, you know, was getting pretty tired of all this. We wanted to do more traveling. We have children and grandchildren spread all over this country. I wasn't getting to see them. In fact, one of my grandchildren didn't even know me when she saw me, and I felt

terrible about that. She was only two years old, but I thought, I've got to do something about this. I decided that being a CAP Board member wasn't in the cards for me, and there are certainly other qualified people in the community who could do this job.

So, as the Executive Director of the Regional Water Council...how long did you do that job?

Three years and then I thought there was going to be a vacancy on the Council in this ward, and my mother had always pushed me to run for office. She said why are you always the campaign manager? You ought to be running. By this time my children were grown up and I didn't have that worry anymore. We were happily ensconced in this community. I thought if I can go around and say to people CAP water is good for you, I certainly have the courage to run for the City Council. In 1999 I decided that I would run and I was elected in November of 1999.

So, was that a big decision for you to make, to run?

Well, sometimes I'm rather impulsive. So, I just jumped right in and I didn't have the sense to worry about it. I never once thought what if I lose? I was just determined. I walked in every single ward, and met all kinds of people. I'm still running into people who say, oh, you came to my door when you ran for office. And I may not remember, but I'm good at saying, "Oh, yes. I did that."

So, how, how was it different being on the City Council as opposed to being a staff person?

Well, staff people are always in the background. You know, you give your council member the information, but then, you have to hope that he or she uses it to your advantage. But in this case the buck stopped with me. So, it was different. And you have to have very broad shoulders and a very strong backbone. Particularly in this community because we really like to beat up on our elected officials. I think because the Council is the most visible and our legislators are up in Phoenix. So, we don't bother them so much. But the local elected officials really take it on the chin. You have to learn to deal with that with a sense of humor. And, you may feel that the criticism is unfair, but it's good to listen to it and try to adjust your stance if you need to. If not, you need to remain firm.

Well, what were the issues in 1999 when you ran for office?

Well, of course there were issues. On that same ballot our friends from CAWS had put another, even more stringent item on the ballot. And, I think the voters realized that they had what they needed. Tucson Water was beginning to listen to them. They were out in the community talking with people. They had had a very strong Ambassador's Program in 1998, in which they went out to four different neighborhoods and talked to them about the water. We actually had some experimental systems set up so that people could taste water and use it in their homes and see which type of water most appealed to them. They also went out, I think, to malls and shopping centers and had taste tests. By the end of 1999, they had a pretty good idea of what it would take to get back on the CAP water again. But that cost us a billion dollars to do all of that. That's a big chunk for a community that doesn't have much money in the first place. That issue was going along pretty well. The fact that the people said to CAWS we have what we need thank you and defeated their next initiative that was a good sign that we were getting on the right track again. But, there were other issues in the community, having to do with a shopping center,

where people wanted all the roads closed, so that you couldn't get into the mall from the back. You know, that made a lot of sense, didn't it? And so, we were dealing with that. Then there was a big (can't understand word) ordinance that had been passed that was rather controversial. So, you know, Tucson is always swirling with controversy. That's what keeps it going and if there's not some controversy going on we're not doing very well. So those were the kinds of things that were going on. The Council at that time I thought was pretty easy to work with. We had a pretty good group of people that had the best interests of the community at heart. And I think we moved together, or worked together in a pretty positive way for awhile.

You mentioned CAWS had some initiative that was defeated?

In 1999 it had more astringent water quality standards. I just don't even remember what those were. You know, time dims the memory on things you want to forget, so I don't remember what those were. But, at least the public said, enough and we need to get back on track. I can remember going door to door in an area where they'd had the CAP water and a woman recognized me and she started screaming in my face about the CAP water. I listened to her and then I told her what had happened since. I watched her visibly change in her demeanor as I explained to her and the fear was all over her face. By the time I was through talking with her, I think she had some understanding anyway, that things were going to be different. And I promised her that they would be different. I then had to deliver on that and of course, we had started up the recharge project out in Avra Valley (Central Avra Valley Storage and Recover Project) where we were storing our CAP water. That was part of the reason that we had such a big expense. You had to put the water into those basins, and then pump it back up if you were going to use it and blend it with groundwater (which is what we're doing to this very day.)

When did that start?

Oh, gosh I think around 2000.

So, it hadn't started yet when you first ran?

No. I think they were making the initial applications to the state to get the permissions to recharge the water, and so on. You know, that all takes time. So, it was kind of underway, but the basins began to be filled after I was in office. I remember going out for that big celebration as well.

So, what were you able to tell this woman that...when she recognized you and started talking about CAP water, what were you able to tell her that had changed to reassure her?

Well, I think just talking with her and admitting, first of all, the problems. But, giving her some idea of what had caused those problems and what the city was doing about that. I think that's what she needed to hear. You know, people are busy and they don't pay attention to what is going on in the newspaper. The information is sometimes alarmist, because as you know, we've got to sell papers. So, I think having this personal time with her, to talk to her, was worth a lot. It was probably good for her to hear and for me. I learned more about what some of her fears were and that was important for me to know.

Sounds like you've spent a lot of time one on one with your constituents.

Yes, I almost wore myself out. I worked seven days a week. This room was always full of people.

I'm glad it's not today. So, getting elected to the City Council, was that a big change in your life?

Oh, absolutely because I believe so strongly in public service. Whatever the citizens in this ward wanted was my top priority. I just felt that's why I was elected to serve them and to represent them and I tried very hard to do that. Well, maybe I went overboard. At least my family thinks I did. I was going to be effective; I had to know where they stood on issues. We had a lot of meetings and a lot of field trips. In fact, I took some of them out to the CAVSARP. The second time I did it I had so many people that wanted to come, that we took two big Sun-Tram buses.

To where?

To the Central Avra Valley Storage and Recovery Project and by that time, the second project, the Southern Avra Valley Storage and Recovery Project had started. I wanted them to see why their water rates were being raised. How is that money being used? I felt that was important and that I was accountable to them. And you know, seeing is believing and so, taking people on these field trips I felt was very important. I used to take them to the landfill, too because I felt that was important.

Those are parts of our lives that we don't think about sometimes.

Well, what I found was that people laughed and laughed about the fact that I was taking them to the landfill. But, you know, landfills today are pure science. It isn't just filling a hole with garbage and hoping and praying you wouldn't contaminate the groundwater - which, of course, we had done. So, that was a, a water issue in a way, too. And I found that I had people that would go several times. I remember I took a busload of 43 people one time. That was the biggest group I ever had.

To go to a land fill?

Yes, to go to a landfill.

So, as you were on the City Council then when they started to re-use, or use again, the CAP water, was that a major issue?

You know, I don't think people even know that it was happening. One day they got up and turned on the tap, and here was this water that they had said was a good blend. And I think it's worked quite well. I can't think of any time when I had anyone complain to me about it.

So, they didn't make a big deal...obviously, probably that they were suddenly one day going to use CAP water. It sort of gradually happened?

It gradually happened and it blended at first, but I don't remember. Forty-percent CAP and sixty-percent groundwater, and then they've just gradually raised it. Eventually, of course, because we were recharging that water into the ground, you'll have it be fairly consistent CAP water. But, that'll be a, a few years yet, I think. The most important thing about this is that we haven't been using all of our CAP allocation and in this time of drought, that's just urgent. I really pushed the Council before I left to commit to using all of the CAP water by 2012. And, I hope that will happen. It's meant that they've had to put some other priorities aside at Tucson Water. But at the same time, I think it's vitally important that we use that water.

Using Tucson's part of the water?

Yes, Tucson's allocation.

Using it for recharge is considered using it?

Well, the federal government doesn't think so because they quibble with us about that but I think as we bring it up; blend it with the groundwater, that certainly counts. I think we're up to about sixty-percent now, so, you see, we have a ways to go, but we're getting back to that. I think almost all citizens now realize how important that is. In Tucson, every five years you've got a new crop of people so you have to start all over again with the public education. One of my concerns was that this public education continues, because I think a lot of times people take this for granted when, in fact, they shouldn't.

Well, some people have said all Arizonans seem to take water for granted?

Well, I think so, and I think we're absolutely fixated with water. Look at all the fountains we have and all of those kinds of things. It shows our fascination with water and I was just in Las Vegas and I think they take the prize. I've never seen so many fountains and so much grass in all my life. Every housing development has this and they seem totally oblivious to the fact that this is a finite resource. So, I was a little taken aback. I hadn't been there for quite a while, but I have a son living there now, so, I imagine I'll be there a few more times.

Actually I just did some oral history interviews up there about a year ago. And they do have programs paying people to get rid of the grass.

Yes.

Even paying golf courses to reduce the amount of grass.

Right.

So they're trying. The fountains are using recharged water. It's not the best water.

Yeah, they're using some alternatives. So, that's good to hear.

Although they have the fountains, they're not using the drinking water for the fountains.

Well, that's good to hear.

Yeah. Reclaimed water I guess they call it. Well, how long did you serve on the, the Tucson City Council? You were elected in 1999?

Yes, I served for two terms and, I decided that two terms was a good time to bow out. I had some things on my agenda that I wanted to get done. I had gotten those done. And I thought it was time for someone else to step up and resume the job and particularly because I wanted to spend more time with my husband and my children. So that seemed like a good time to finish.

How over those eight years then did issues change?

Well, I think the issues had a lot more to do with growth, land use planning, and transportation. Those were all big issues while I was on the Council. Of course, we dealt with some of those, and not with others. I think it takes a long time sometimes to take care of some of these things and certainly Tucson was no exception to that.

So from your perspective, water wasn't the only thing you were dealing with?

Right. I was quite active in the Arizona League of Cities and Towns. I got a good perspective of what was going on state-wide. And one of the things that are a problem for all of Arizonans, including its cities, is the fact that we've never diversified our revenues. We are heavily dependent upon the Sales Tax. In fact, Tucson's property tax is capped in the City Charter. So, you know, when you get about three million dollars a year in a billion dollar budget, that's pretty light and some of that has to change. It's going to be very difficult to change that both on the state-wide level and the local level. So, those are some of the things that I was dealing with and I think the present Council will have to continue to deal with. In fact, right now, with the recession, I think it's become even more difficult.

So you left before the recession?

Yes, and I'm so glad I did. I wouldn't want to make some of the decisions that they've had to make this year. It's been very difficult.

Was being a Council Member what you thought it would be?

Yes, I think it was because I was an Aide and I watched what my predecessor had done. And I think she prepared me for what was going to happen. I think as a result I knew the kind of staff that I wanted to hire, and I had an exceptional staff. My staff worked harder than I did and together I think we did a lot of things for the people in the community.

Is there any one thing that stands out that you're proudest of?

Well, as I mentioned already as an Aide we got the water conservation ordinances into the City Code. Well, I guess some of the things we did with our parks because we increased the number of parks on the east side and that was very important. I was able to get an affordable housing

trust fund established, because the federal funds are diminishing and we need to do more locally to make sure that everybody has a place to live. Diversifying our revenues and yes, I did vote for the garbage fee. I had an interesting experience with two good council members were ousted because they joined me in voting for that garbage fee. Later, I had a woman in my ward tell me that she didn't like it one bit that Council Member X voted for the garbage fee. I said to her, well, you know, I voted for it, too, and she said, yes, but you told me ahead of time that you were going to do it. Which I thought was pretty interesting. So honesty sometimes pays, even though it's difficult.

Explain a little bit, what was the garbage fee issue?

Well, Tucson had not charged for garbage. Way back when we had told people that that was a part of their property tax burden. Well, when you think about the cost to manage solid waste it's way more than 30-million dollars. It was what our property tax was bringing in a year and that was if that was in a good year. The people were impatient to start recycling so for six years the city had a pilot recycling program. Well, I thought it was time to get rid of the pilot, and to call it what it really was. We started charging two dollars for a pickup and an extra pickup for trash and yard debris and that kind of thing. At the same time we put in the recycling program, which saved about two million dollars a year. Before we had two garbage pick ups a week and that second pickup probably less than 60-percent of the people used. So these trucks were using gas, driving all around. We had staff that was working on that. It just seemed like that was a way to be more cost effective, more efficient. We put that in first and I can still remember that one of my constituents wrote a song to the tune of "Roll Out the Barrel," and sent it to me. They were so thrilled. This was the first ward to get the recycling program. And they recycled like no one else. The program had an eighty-five percent participation which is just phenomenal. Usually you think it's pretty good if you have fifty or sixty percent. Here was eighty-five, and I think now it's over ninety-percent of the people recycle. So, we did that the first year. But, it turned out that we were having problems with the budget after 2001 and 9/11. Tourism was one of our ways to generate sales tax and the sales tax was not generating the way we had hoped it was. We had to consider a garbage fee which would give us an additional 20-millions dollars. So, we went out again. I went out to every corner of the ward, and said, this is what's going to happen, and I'm going to vote for it. And, I must say, that after I did vote for it, I had very little fall-out. But there were other Council members that suffered then the next year when they were up for re-election. But I think it still showed uncommon courage, and they were looking out for the best interests of the community when they voted for that. By 2007 it was pretty well part of the deal. So, I think if I'd run again, people wouldn't have held me to that.

How did that garbage fee work? Is that added on?

It's added on to the water bill and that was the big problem. People didn't understand that this was more efficient. It allowed for just one bill by doing it this way and the sewer fee from Pima County is also on the water bill. Even though we tried to communicate with people about how that would work, they didn't get it. And it was very, very difficult. We had some fallout over that fact that it was on the water bill. In fact we had an initiative about that where they wanted to separate the bill, if you can imagine, even though that was going to cost more money. Fortunately that initiative in 2007 went down and we are in a city of initiatives.

Well, looking back I've seen the questions. I've got some of these generic questions. Let's start going through some of those. Just in general. Looking back over the, you know, the history of Arizona and the projects that made Arizona what it is today, what do you see as the most important projects?

Well, I think if you're talking about just the state in general they have the same problem state-wide that we have locally, and that's diversification of our revenues. The legislature needs to work on that because right now, as you know we're in huge debt. The other thing is I don't think Arizona's been very strategic about economic development. What is it that we want to be? That's a conversation that needs to occur state-wide and we need to decide are we going to be an optics state? Are we going to focus on health care and the related occupations? Astronomy is important locally, and we developed some of that. But is that something that we should consider more state-wide and so on. In addition, that means an educated work force and when you have 50-percent of your Latino students dropping out of high school during their years of high school, that's a pretty significant number. I just was reading some information because I'm on a Charter School study right now. We need to ask our employers what they need in the way of work force and provide them with students who have those skills. Of course, water and land use should be concerned and we should be concerned about those hand in hand and I don't think we have been. We've just let things happen.

It seems like the biggest industry in Arizona has been growth?

Yes, and I think right now that's calling into question because people are staying put. They can't afford to move.

It was just a couple years ago they were predicting that Tucson and Phoenix would grow together as one megatropolis, or whatever they call it. Do you think that's still going to happen?

I don't think while I'm still alive it'll happen. It could sometime in the future though.

Of course, growth means water.

Yes, and other services.

As you look at the milestones in the Western water history and the water history, I guess, of particularly Tucson where you've been located. Which parts of those do you think have played a part.

Well, certainly in bringing the CAP to Tucson because I was a part of SAWUA. And that brings up the funniest story. We were out at Sandario Road in 1986 because the canal had reached Sandario Road. It was a big deal and SAWUA had a big celebration out there. We had congressmen; and we had the mayor of Tucson. We had all kinds of dignitaries. And, of course, one of the other SAWUA staff people and I were in charge of this. We didn't have a very big budget, so we soaked the labels off the Cold Duck, so they wouldn't know that they weren't drinking good champagne. I think we were naïve and I think they probably knew it wasn't good champagne. We had bought this enormous cake from La Caves Bakery. Nice white frosting on the top. Of course, it was sitting on a table right next to where the canal was coming in. The mayor of Tucson was given one of those bottles of that fancy champagne to break against the tire

of the bulldozer. The bulldozer started up and of course did a little digging and as it did, all the dirt blew onto the top of that white cake. We still served the cake even with grey frosting. But people just kind of grinned and bore it. I've never forgotten that story. I still love to...when I see the other person that was involved in that we still have a good laugh about that. A little bit of Arizona dust.

You mentioned we talked about that celebration. The other celebration was the CAP water actually came here in 1991?

Yeah.

You say that the City Council...the people...didn't go to that?

They didn't go.

Why?

Well, that's an interesting question. I guess we'd have to ask them. When I think back on that I can still remember whoever were in charge of that asked if the Council members who were there would like to come forward and say a few words and there wasn't a single person that came forward. I finally stood up to acknowledge that I was there. I was an Aide to a Council member. It could have been that they had this sometime when the Council had something. I don't remember. But, I just remember how significant that was, because a year later, when the mess started they knew ahead of time that this was going to bring ill-will to them. I don't know, but they weren't there.

But people were there for the canal, but not for the actual water.

Right.

But, like you said, maybe they weren't sure it was a good thing.

Yeah, I don't know what it was. I honestly don't.

Well, initially it sounds like Tucson wanted the water extension?

Yes. Well, at least the business community did. You know, they showed a lot of leadership over the years. From 1955 to 1961, Mayor Don Hummel worked with the business community, because, again, there was a rumor that the feds were grumbling about bringing that water to Tucson because it was going to cost so much money. And even back in the 40s, I think, because we were so late in signing the Colorado Compact. There have been at least three times during our history when the business community, especially, came forward and said, look, we've got to do something about this, and we've got to make sure this water comes here.

**Central Arizona Project
ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW**

Carol West

Tape #2

July 8, 2009

Some of these questions are kind of broad, but in talking about water, and your dealing with water, what are the greatest problems that you confronted? Or challenges?

Well, I think the fact that we are a desert community, and we have a limited supply of water, is a big issue. And I think it's becoming an even bigger issue now with the drought and also with climate change. And, for me, one of the things that I'm really concerned about is, you know, Tucson started out with 136,000 acre feet of CAP, and then with the Indian Water Rights Settlement, SWARZA we got about eight thousand more. We were lucky enough to receive that so, we're up to about 144,000 acre feet. But there is an overall allocation in the Tucson Active Management Area, of over 260,000 acre feet. The Indians, the small water utilities, the state lands all have allocations. And yet, much of that is not being used. And that's a concern to me. And, one of the reasons of course, is the lack of infrastructure. But, I think, to, that in some cases, it just, you know, it just hasn't been feasible. So, we've got to do something about that as a region, I think. To make sure more of that water is used. If you don't use it, you lose it. I know that California has phenomenal growth. You know, the Lower Basin is all growth areas. And, we're fortunate that some of the Upper Basin states haven't been using all CAP, so we get some water in storage in Lake Mead and Lake Powell. I don't know what we'd do otherwise. So, that's a real concern to me it's how we can get more of that allocation in this.

Do you have any ideas about how that might be done?

Well, I think some granddaddy is going to have to come forward with a lot of money and build some pipelines. I'm being facetious in a way, but in another way I'm not. We've been paying for our CAP water, even though we haven't been taking all of it, since 1994. And that's costing the public a lot of money. Of course, some of these other small water companies, I'm sure, are paying for theirs, too. But, they need to come forward and figure out a way to build the pipeline so that the water can be used.

So, when you say "we" you mean the city of Tucson.

Yes.

Do you think...if it's a matter of building pipelines, are there plans to do that? So they that they could maybe apply for the federal stimulus money or something like that.

Well, you know, I was talking with someone about that, and they doubted that the stimulus money could be used for something like that. I think transportation is going to fare better on that than water systems. Although, certainly I know that there are some systems that are looking into this. There's quite a controversial project involving Green Valley where there's a mine that wants to go in, and they've offered to build the pipeline down to Green Valley in exchange for their support of the mine. That's like asking Solomon to judge. So I don't know that anything will come of that. I think we'll see agriculture possibly diminishing even more in this region. And that will help in some ways if we're using less groundwater. But, it still doesn't solve the overall problem of all those allocations. Of course, with the state lands, I suspect as they're sold, that that water goes along with the land. So, they would have to figure out a way to get the water

to, or at least look at forming some agreements with other governments who are next to the canal, that could use that water in exchange for other regions using more groundwater or something like that. There are certainly some exchanges that have been and can be done in that regard.

In the water issues that you've dealt with over the years, who have you seen as your greatest allies?

Well, I guess in Tucson I'd have to say it was the business community. I mean, they've stepped up to the plate time after time because they, of course, realize the importance of water. They can't continue to do business if people aren't living here. So, it's in their best interest, of course. But, I think they have the best interests of the community at heart, too. They want to stay here and not move away.

And, who have been your opponents?

Well, the CAWS group certainly. The Citizens Alliance for Water Security and some of the far left environmental groups who don't want to compromise. I remember going and talking with them about the CAP. The TRWC Board thought I was crazy to even approach them, but I thought, I really should go and see where they stand. Well, they started talking to me about compost toilets and things like that that would conserve water rather than using water. Which, you know, I had to hand it to them because it certainly was something I needed to hear.

What sort of groups are those that you went and talked to?

Well, you know, the Sky Island Alliance and Earth First, and some of those groups, are very active here. I felt it was important to reach out to them and find out where they were on things, and talk with them and I did.

You're talking about some pretty far out ...

Yes.

Earth First...

Yes. But I still felt that that was important.

Because some of the other ones I can think of that were active in water issues, was the Audubon Society?

The Audubon Society their Executive Director was on the TRWC Board for awhile. And understood that, you know, we weren't going to have an environment conducive to birds and beasts and people if we didn't use this CAP water. Very common sense approach but I think it's always important, when you have opponents, or people who disagree with you, to sit down with them. Because every time I've done that, I've learned something. I remember that my Council member, when I first met with them, thought I was crazy to do this. I said, no, I'm trying to understand where they're coming from. Why they feel the way they do. I continued that when I was a Council member. It's just important to understand where those people are. You don't

have to agree with them. My belief system is strong enough so that I can meet with those groups take what they have to offer. If there are criticisms or proposals that they have that are worthwhile, I'll look into them. I think that's a part of being a citizen, and, especially, being an elected official.

Do you come away feeling like maybe that they've listened to you, and they've learned something from you?

Well, who knows? I didn't see them changing their stance on things, but if that's what you're interested in knowing. At the same time, I thought you know it was good to hear from them and Tucson Regional Water Council had a face for them. It was my face and whether they liked that or not, I don't know. But, at least they agreed to meet with me.

I think the fact that you would meet with them says something, too. That at least you're somewhat open-minded?

I tried to be.

So, I guess that was one of my next questions what was your role in finding solutions to the challenges and problems that you dealt with?

Well, I think one of the most significant things that we did as Tucson Regional Water Council was to turn the press around. They were very much in the CAWS camp. CAWS had a media person that was very good and he knew the sound bites, where the rest of us sort of plodded along and we wanted to stop and explain. Well, when the public is emotionally disturbed, they don't want you to stop and explain. They want little simple sound bites. And we finally caught on to that and I think that helped. In fact, I can still remember sitting in an editorial meeting explaining our vision for the future and the cartoonist, Fitzsimmons, was there. Didn't say a word and he sat there the whole time and I started to see cartoons that were signaling that he understood the importance of the CAP and our community. Now, I think there were other factors that helped change his mind. But, he was a powerful ally from then on. And, I really think we have him to thank for a lot of the changes that were made because I saw that begin to happen and that was hard work. It meant comparing articles and sitting down with editors and saying, look. Here's what this article in the *Republic* says about the CAP. Here's what your article says. Let's compare these two and look at how, how, how to be more objective. You know, I don't mind an opinion piece. But I want it on the opinion page. I don't want it on the news page. And that was something I felt was important. And I think that was a significant contribution. Now, others felt we should have done a whole lot more. And, in fact, some of our members in 1997 tried to overturn the Water Consumer Protection Act. It was too soon, and people just weren't ready. I tried to tell some of them and they did a separate of TRWC, of course, because they had to remain separate. But, it didn't work. So, they learned a valuable lesson. That you have to wait until the time is right to make these changes. And the time still wasn't right.

And water issues, and particularly water law, are very complex. So, as you say, trying to get it down to a few words in a sound bite that the public can understand is a real challenge.

It's a real challenge especially here where people are so emotional. I think you could walk out on the street and still find people that are very emotional about water issues here. It wouldn't surprise me one bit.

Any particular issues that you think they're emotional about?

Well, I think there are still people that don't like the CAP water. I think there's a tremendous number of water that drink bottled water. Never mind that that water isn't regulated so well as our CAP water is, but they just feel more comfortable. I have a friend who comes to my house and I know I better have a bottle of water in the refrigerator, because she's not going to drink from the tap. And, you go to an upscale restaurant here and they always want to serve you that bubbly water. I remember going out for dinner with another couple to Vantana to celebrate our anniversaries. And, I said, I will have tap water. And, guess what? Everybody else at the table said they would, too. And it wasn't just because it comes, quote unquote, to us free. It was because we were committed to drinking our local water.

That's an interesting place to make that point.

Yes. It was. I probably went right over his head.

Well, looking at your work relation to the CAP, what accomplishment in relation to the CAP are your proudest?

Well, I think the fact that we got people to overcome their fears and phobias about the CAP water. For the most part you know, I'm contradicting what I just said, I guess. But, the fact that we've got people pretty well accepting the water at this point I think was a major milestone and certainly a lot of different groups worked together to get that done.

Is there anything that you would have done differently?

Well, that's an interesting question. I would have hoped that we could have provided more public education before we ever served the water. And, why we didn't realize that surface water was going to be different than groundwater, I don't know. But we didn't. And, I think those were two big problems. I also wonder a little about the Council stopping the service of the water in 1994. I wish there had been some way to work, to get them to continue and to serve it and to work on this problem. But, at the time, everything was just so difficult. I tell you we had all these groups, including CAWS, working against us and making jokes about the CAP water. And, you know, that was just common around here. And so, when you're in that kind of an atmosphere, it's very hard to be courageous.

You know, it's interesting you mentioned Fitzsimmons as being someone that could turn that around. When you talk about jokes, you don't think of the cartoonist as having that power.

Yes. I think he still is a power to be reckoned with. If there was some issue today that I needed help with, he'd be one of the first people I'd call.

Looking a little more broadly just at the whole western water issues, how have you seen those issues change during your career with water?

Well, I think we all used to be very possessive of the right to use the water. I think now with the drought conditions and the growth and all that, we really have to be compromising with other governments, including Mexico. And, I think some of the things that the CAP did to solve some of those problems with the environmental groups on the border that's been a significant accomplishment. But, I think we're going to have to be doing more of that kind of thing. I think the decision in December, with the previous Department of Interior head getting the seven states, Basin States, together to talk about conserving and sharing. And I don't know if that agreement has unraveled. I hope not. I think it's kind of iffy at this point, but the fact that they even agreed to get together I think was most important. I think we're going to have to do a whole lot more of that working together to solve the issues in the West.

The whole region.

The whole nine yards and the whole seven states.

Has there been any real surprise for you regarding the CAP and Arizona's use of the Colorado River water?

Well, I think moving here and the fact that I lived on the confluence of two rivers in Oregon, and the grass was always green. And so, it was a real shock to move here and learn about this massive water project. Three-hundred-and-thirty-one miles from Lake Havasu all the way down to Tucson. Why, I just couldn't envision it. I think even people back East can't envision it. And at the same time, in North Dakota, a very good friend of mine was working on the Garrison Diversion Project. You know, they have a big dam up there. And, of course, CAP was getting most of the money, and he was pretty angry about that. He said; discuss that with me, that Garrison was getting the short shrift. Well, they didn't have the population growth or the needs that Arizona had but I couldn't exactly say that to him.

Of course, that was a long time in the planning. As you mentioned, people were planning for it in the 1940s.

Yes.

...the construction didn't even begin until the 70s?

Right.

On, long-range planning?

Yes.

Well, what issues relating to Arizona's water issues do you think are most critical today?

Well, I think the fact that we have this phenomenal growth. One of the things locally that I think has been an issue, and we so badly want more economic development. And we've considered

some intensive water use as far as some of these manufacturing plants goes. And I think that's something we have to guard against in the future unless they can use the reclaim water, of course. That's difficult, because you want your people to have jobs. You want your young people to stay here. But, at the same time, we have to be guardians of the precious water resources that we have. Of course, the drought and the climate change that is apparent. All of that is a part of this, too. And so, you know, we just have to, I think carefully and use our water wisely. Also, if we don't use it somebody else will have it.

You mentioned the, the mining interests that are looking at the need for water. How do you feel about the trade-off for, you know...with the jobs and the economy that mining would bring, but yet it is pretty water intensive?

Well, I think it's a tough call. I think that you know, we still....copper is something the world needs. Many of our water pipes, so on and so forth, are made of copper. So, we have to have that. But I think we also have to be careful where we site these mines. And, one of the things that I think is also important is that there be restoration after mining has taken place. Now, I know Phelps Dodge has done some work in that. I'm sure Asarco has, too. But, it, it does scar the mountains and cause concerns for people. On the other hand, we've got a lot of unemployed people that used to work in the mines. We either have to re-educate them, or allow some in other occupations that is or allow mining to go forward. I've taken sort of a neutral stance on that, because I see both sides. It's a difficult issue, I think.

And any many of the issues dealing with water are, are complicated and difficult. One of the ones we need to talk a little about...the Arizona Water Bank. How do you see that going?

Well, I think back in 94 or whenever that was done, that was pretty forward thinking, because we weren't using but about half of our CAP allocation in Arizona. The one-point-five million about half of that, that is. And so, if we left that in the river, certainly California was going to snatch that up. So, I think the fact that we took that water and stored it each year was a very good idea. However, now, with this drought municipal and industrial users may need to use that water. And so, we might be banking less. We've been making people, I think, in our communities, feel more secure by saying, well; we can store water for the future. Well, we can store it all right, but we might end up having to use it. And so, the Water Bank would be storing less water.

And, they've been doing some interesting things with the Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District and the growth of people enrolling in that.

Yeah, you know, I have a hard time with that. I've had a hard time with that since the very beginning. Because I think it gives a false sense of security particularly when we aren't all sure where that water's going to come from. And it's very expensive so I'm not sure I think that's good. But is mining groundwater better and in some of these areas there isn't any groundwater to mine. I think about the 1970s, which, of course, I wasn't here then, but I understand there were a lot of charlatan land speculators who were selling land to people where there wasn't any water. And I think we certainly don't want to come back to that. And I worry with the CAGRDR that that could be an issue. There's also the agreement they've made with Nevada about banking Nevada's water.

Yes. And, I don't know how that's going to go at this point. You know, we've said they could take more water out of the river and we'd bank water here. As the Colorado diminishes, and we know that it is, with the drought and so on. How is that going to work? There's going to be some skirmishes there, I'm sure.

Well, and you mentioned about the Indian water rights. You know. Which, I guess in some ways benefited Tucson, but how have you seen that whole issue it seems like a lot of the CAP water is now?

Well, I think I read somewhere that 34 Indian tribes depend upon the Colorado River for their water. So, I don't think that's going to get any better. And you know, in 1922 when the Compact came into being, that was an extra wet year. And so, the apportionments were based on a particularly wet year, which I don't think has ever happened since. There could be some real skirmishes and problems with this because the Indians, of course, have a pretty high priority on the scale. We might end up giving up water. Although I know that locally the certainly the Tohono O'odham did pretty well. But, they aren't willing right now, as I understand it, to negotiate. I think what they're waiting for is for more droughts, so that they can escalate the price of the water for the leases. I don't know, but that's what I would do if I were in their shoes.

It seems like all those years of planning and building the, the CAP...we were talking about agricultural water versus urban water, and, and the Indians didn't even come into the equation

Right, until recently when they actually stood up and said, we need to be counted. And, you have to hand it to them. They were here first, after all.

And yet, Arizona seems to be the main state that's dealing with that issue. I've done interviews in Colorado and Nevada and Utah. And Indian water rights are not even on the horizon.

It's not on the radar screen there. Well, you know, that, that could change things dramatically, if all of these tribes decide that they need a little part of that. And I can't imagine that they won't.

I've interviewed some people with the Gila River Indian Community and they say, gambling money is nice. We're doing nice with bringing an income with gambling, but it really, in long range, isn't important compared to the water and the money that the water will be worth to us.

Yes, and I can understand that.

So...but, as people who are not Indians, the other cities are going to have to deal with that.

I think they are, too. And I think it's going to be difficult. One of the big sticking points here, of course, was using the effluent for raising it to potable standards. The recharging water into the ground so that it would be pumped back up as drinking water. And citizens, again, were pretty disturbed when this was discussed. So, it's been put back now for awhile. But eventually, I think, all the communities are going to have to do what Scottsdale has done. No question in my mind because that's a growing supply of water, whether we like it or not. We'll have to use it.

Well, there's been talk about even doing more...each home...reusing the so-called gray water.

Yes. Well, and Tucson, you know, has an ordinance for the use of gray water. New homes have to put in dual systems. When we did Civano, our environmental housing down on South Houghton Road, and the reclaimed systems were put in there, it really wasn't cost effective because people's yards were small, and they didn't use a lot of that water. And so, I don't know quite how this is going to work. We'll have to wait and see.

Has Tucson been somewhat of a leader in ordinances for that?

I think so. I think we've been a leader in a lot of things. I was over at San Diego with my husband for a reunion, and, I know people over there said, oh, Tucson. We're always told that Tucson is doing everything right as far as water goes. And I thought, well, that's a nice compliment, and I won't do anything to change your mind about that. So we do have a reputation for keeping our water use low and finding other ways to deal with the lessening water in the community.

One of the other issues with the CAP has been the desalination of water?

Yes.

In the Yuma Plant? How, how do you see that in the future?

Well, I've visited that plant...one time when I was over there at a meeting. It was just staggering to me the cost to run that plant. But, I don't think we have much choice but to continue to bring that forward, even though it's going to cost hundreds of millions of dollars. I also think, though, that we should be working with Mexico to see if there are ways that we could work some kind of an agreement out as far as the CAP goes. Now, what that would consist of, I don't know. So, I probably shouldn't bring it up, but seems to me that that's a sticking point, too.

What about developing any new water supplies? Do you see any additional water on the horizon for Arizona?

I think that's you know, I hear about cloud seeding, and taking invasive plants out along the canal, and so on and so forth. That's all well and good. But, I think somebody's going to have to come forward that's very innovative. And, I don't know what that innovation is going to consist of, but that's what it's going to take. And maybe we are going to have to go to compost toilets. I don't know, or put up the drawbridge so more people can't come here. One of those things, I guess.

Well, how do you see...what makes Tucson different from Phoenix when it comes to water issues?

Well, it's interesting. I was involved in the Arizona Town Hall and I was talking with someone who does business in both places. And he said, in Phoenix people don't seem to worry much about the environment or water or any of those things. He said, you come to work in Phoenix, in Tucson, and you've got to pay attention to those issues because the community does. And they're pretty (audio glitch) about that. And he was building roads that were what he was doing

here. And so, he said, you know, we have to have many more public meetings, and work much more with the citizens than we do in Phoenix. I know we had a City Attorney for awhile who was from Phoenix. And issues would come up here and he'd just scratch his head. He'd say, well, you know, in Phoenix, we wouldn't even think twice about that. But, here we do and we care.

I think you may have already talked about how did Tucson's initial problems with the CAP water affect the community?

Well, I think it's made us much more cognizant of water issues. And I know that when the CAP Board used to meet here, there would be just droves of people out there, called to the audience. And I remember the Chair once said that everyone in Tucson is a hydrologist. And I don't think that's changed much. But, that's true of any topic you can consider, from land use to water to economic development. There are all kinds of people with diverse opinions. And to try to get them to come together is a real issue. That's difficult. And, I think with the water, it still is going to be a, an issue. To try to get people to come to reach some kind of consensus. But to do that, there has to be leadership. And I think our leadership is quite fragmented at the present time, too.

How important do you think renewable water supplies are to the future of Southern Arizona?

Oh, I don't think there's any question. It's very important. We have a lot of groundwater credits, but, of course, the way we can use that has changed with the Assured Water Supply rules, and also the Groundwater Management Act changed some of that as well. Just before the Groundwater Management Act, we thought we were so smart. You know. We bought all that land out in Avra Valley, and retired the water rights. But, you know, with the Groundwater Management Act, why, it's pretty clear that if you're using more groundwater than you're replenishing, that you're in big trouble. And, Tucson continues to be in big trouble. As, for that matter, the whole state renewable supplies are going to be the name of the game, I think, from now on.

Do you think there is a consensus in the Southern Arizona region about, um, its water future?

No. You have all kinds of people running around saying we're going to run out of water. I think if we're careful, and plan, which we've always done. Tucson Water has been exceptionally good at planning...even when things were the darkest. In 1989 and through that area they were doing planning. Now that plan, of course, with the debacle with the CAP, quickly went south. But, you know, they've always done a lot of planning. And, and tried to stick to the plan. And, that's a concern to just stick to the plan. I don't think we're going to run out of water. But I think people see the drought and they hear this. The average lay person, if you were to talk to them, they'd tell you that we're going to run out of water. You know, then we have people who want to quantify the amount of water that we have. I don't know how you do that. We have a very complicated aquifer system. You know, we know how much CAP water we might have but I think it's very difficult. And one of the reasons I do some writing for a local business periodical, and I've just written an article about the importance of planning. Because we've had some newspaper reporters who have been talking about how we're going to run out of water, there's just no doubt about it. And I decided I had to take that on. So I did.

Well, what do you think could be done to, to build more consensus about water?

Well, I think it's going to take leadership possibly throughout the region, not just Tucson, but the other groups in the region are going to have to get together and reach some consensus. And I know from time to time there have been groups that have tried to do this, but they don't always speak with one voice. And to get them to speak with one voice it's going to take, it's going to take somebody in the community to come forward and say, look, we all need to get together. We need to agree to this. We had a regional Town Hall a couple years ago. A lot of issues that came up at the Town Hall I haven't seen much in the way of follow up on this. There's been a little but it's been on issues like transportation. And the community did come together and develop a Regional Transportation Authority. And I know there are people that would like to see a Regional Water Authority where we would use that for supply. I think that would work if it's not politically driven, but is process driven. But to get to that, is going to be really tough.

What advice do you have for the people that are operating the CAP today?

Well, I think educational efforts are going to continue to be very important and I think they realize that. I also think that we shouldn't be on the defensive with the groups that are talking about the drought. The Scripps's Study, the Overpeck Study, and so on and so forth. I think we have to say, yes, those are concerns, but here's what we are doing, which then goes into the public education. But to pooh-pooh that and say, oh, that isn't going to happen, I don't think is good. It's not good sound policy and people aren't going to believe that anyway. So, you know, I think public education. Getting the CAP organization out, so people know what it does. That it operates the canal and this is important to all of us. And that it makes up, what? Fifty-eight-percent of our water supply and so on and so forth. I think all of that, you know, just constantly being out there, talking to people. And I, I think the CAP does that. I think they're trying hard to do that.

What direction do you see the western water taking in the, in the near future? So you see the, the drought.

Well, I think all, all of the states in the West need to be concerned about it. You know, I don't think there are going to be any more big water projects. I think public opinion and finance are both going to be detriments to any of that occurring. And, if you think back to 1977 when President Carter came into office he stopped the CAP for awhile, because he was concerned about Arizona's lack of management of its groundwater resources. It forced Bruce Babbitt to convene a group to form the Groundwater Management Act. I know our Congressional delegation had to work very hard to get the CAP back on track, track, during that time. So, I think we're going to see more of that kind of thing. You know, people west or east of the Mississippi, don't think anything out here exists. And yet, over time we've become a formidable area. Thanks to the Reclamation Act of 1902. You know, that made this area arable. It made it livable. We could start the Salt River Project. We could divert water and we could irrigate. All of those things have happened. But, I think even last night, there was a program on about Glen Canyon Dam, and the impact that it's had on the Colorado River. And you know, there are people that want to take that dam out. I think once you've done something like that, you can't go back. No matter how hard you might want to do that. That doesn't make much sense either. I think these are the kinds of things we've got to have our eyes open. We've got to realize that we're going to have to make due with what we have.

And you said you think we've seen the end of the big water projects. Some people in Colorado particularly mentioned that they think we should be looking at bringing Mississippi water west, because they've got more than they need.

And the Great Lakes, too. I've heard the Great Lakes.

You think that could...I mean, the technology's there, I suppose. They could do it.

Well, isn't the Mississippi also known as the Big Muddy. In Tucson that would do it. All we'd have to do is tell them that.

The doctrine for water in the West has always been the first in time, first in right. Also, the new demands now with the population growth and drought, and the way we continue to look at water?

It's going to be a stretch. I have a nephew that works for the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality. We were just discussing that when I was there, because Idaho's water law is different. I wish I'd had time to call him before I came today, to find out how it differs. But, their public doesn't have the assurance that Arizonans do, that they have the right to use the water. And so, it's a little different up there. It can be a little iffy. But that may hold down their amount of development, too. I don't know, but I found it fascinating talking with him about that.

Water law's an interesting area.

Yes, because from state to state it's different.

You mentioned that at one point, the 1922 water Colorado River Compact. Do you think that should be renegotiated? Re-opened for negotiations?

Well, I'm sure California would like that, wouldn't they and possibly Nevada, too. I suppose as time goes on and conditions change, you know, it's always a good idea to look at something like this. I guess I'd make sure that we had the best voices possible there to make sure that our interests are still looked after.

What was interesting, I guess that was just last summer during the campaign for President, that John McCain mentioned something about re-opening it. I happened to be in Utah, and the next day I interviewed Jake Garn and, he was appalled that John McCain would say such a thing.

Well, I'm appalled that he would say it, too. I didn't hear him say it. I'm glad I didn't. I might have written him.

Good timing for that interview. What about the...have you been involved at all with the Colorado River Water Users Association?

No.

Okay...

I know just of it. I don't know a lot about it.

I was going to ask you, how important do you think that group is to the future of water in the West?

Well, I think they could be important because we need a group like that that gets together on a regular basis to talk to one another. That's the way you resolve your differences by learning where the other person is coming from and seeing how you can work together to come up with something or to reach you're a consensus. And I think we're going to have to do a whole lot more of that than we've done in the past.

They did sign that 2007 Water Shortage Agreement?

Yes.

Well, I think I've asked you most of the questions I had, about water. Mitch, was there anything I didn't ask her that you think I should?

I think it's pretty well covered.

Okay. Just....in, in broader terms then.... How would, how would you like to be remembered?

How would I like to be remembered? I haven't given that much thought. I guess I would like to be remembered as someone who cared about the community, and worked to see that we used our water for beneficial use. Also, that I did the best I could while I was here.

And, you've had a rather diverse career, starting as a teacher and then as a City Council member. What advice do you have for young people that are thinking about what they want to do with their lives?

Well, I think they should explore options. I think about my daughters and granddaughters, and they have many more options than I had. I remember when I was in college a woman that I went to school with, was the only chemistry major and she got a big page...spread in the paper. That none of the rest of us got. You know, we were all going to be teachers or nurses, or something in the business community, and usually that was behind a typewriter. Things have changed dramatically over time and I think women today take all of that for granted. But I always tell young people that they should follow their dreams. Now I have a grandson who'll be graduating from high school next year. He's thinking about taking a year off before he goes to college and possibly doing some traveling, some writing. I think that could be beneficial in that, he'd be more ready to start college when he does start than perhaps when he graduates. I think young people are thinking more about those kinds of things. We were just in Europe, and I saw a lot of students who were traveling around the country. And some of them who are involved in summer internship programs. When I was growing up I never thought about doing that. We're really a global economy now. And I think our young people realize that. And, they are so connected with Twitter and all of the other electronic gadgets that are out there. And, you know, I think all that bodes well for us. I worry about the small percentage of kids who just don't seem to be able

to get it together for whatever reason. And, I don't know how we help them do that. It, it was, as I mentioned earlier, I did employ some of them here so they'd be recognized in a positive way. I also have a snake in a (can't understand) that a bunch of the kids did. And, it has suffered some damage. And when I went to try to get them to come back and fix it, I found out all of them were in Iraq in the Army. I hope they made it back. So, our, our kids have got a much different world to deal with, I think, than we did. And I think they'll do a good job of it, but, we've got to support them, and acknowledge them, too. And I'm not through doing that yet. I still feel strongly about young people and making sure that they have the kind of schools to go to that they need. And that they have the kinds of education that they need to find a good job and to stay in Arizona so that we don't become a state of just old people.

So, you've retired from the City Council, but it sounds like you still have things that you're doing.

Oh, I'm doing more and I was just reading an article this morning that said, don't get too involved. And I thought, that article was written for me. Because, I've said "no" to a lot of things, but there's an awful lot of things I've said "yes" to and I'm continuing to pursue. It keeps life interesting.

Okay, so I'm glad you could take the time this morning to talk with us.

Oh, well, thank you for having me.

Thank you for coming.

Yeah. I think it was fun. I haven't done something...I haven't thought about some of these things in a long time.