
ASPA BUZZ

A Publication of the American Society for Public Administration, Utah Chapter

INSIDE

November Luncheon:
Las Vegas Lifeline or
West Desert Dustbowl?

Council Corner:
Ethics and Money on
Capitol Hill

Spotlight: New ASPA
Council Member,
Soulee Stroud

ASPA Chapter Council
Roster

Tentative Schedule of
Upcoming Luncheon
Meetings

Vol. XXXVIII No. 3
January 2009

ASPA ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW

Thursday, January 15, 2009

11:30 am – 1:15 pm

Auditorium of the State Office Building (first floor)

(north of the State Capitol Building)

Senator Greg Bell (R), Assistant Majority Whip

Representative Steven R. Mascaro, (R) District 47

... and more

ASPA members and friends are encouraged to attend an extended lunch at the State Office Building Auditorium on **Thursday, January 15, 2009 beginning at 11:30 a.m.** Legislators will discuss the upcoming legislative session and answer questions from the audience. In these times of economic turbulence, this will be a wonderful opportunity to find out what is in store for us.

Please make your reservations early. The luncheon will be catered. Reservations or cancellations must be received no later than **Monday, January 12th. No shows will be billed.** Limited parking is available—please carpool or ride public transportation where possible.

The cost of the luncheon is \$13.00 for ASPA members, \$15.00 for nonmembers, and \$8.00 for students. Cash or checks are accepted.

Please call the Center for Public Policy & Administration, University of Utah, at 581-6493 or e-mail jrandall@cpga.utah.edu for reservations.

DECEMBER LUNCHEON

By Tricia Jack
Center for Public Policy & Administration, University of Utah

NOTE: A few paragraphs in the BUZZ can never capture all of the knowledge and wisdom that is dispensed by our luncheon speakers. Members and colleagues are encouraged to attend these activities to receive the full benefit available to participants.

Las Vegas Lifeline or West Desert Dustbowl?

An overview of the proposed Snake Valley pipeline and the impacts on Utah

This month's ASPA luncheon was an interesting presentation by Mike Styler, Executive Director of the Utah Department of Natural Resources about the issues surrounding the Snake Valley water rights and the current negotiations with the State of Nevada.

Background

As Nevada began to experience growth in the Las Vegas area in the late 1980s, it needed more water. To meet this demand, Nevada requested a greater share of the Colorado River water rights, but the six other states who share this water (Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, Arizona and California) refused.

Most states with water rights to the Colorado River fully use their allocation. Currently, Utah does not use all of its allocation, but has plans for its future use. Rounded up, Utah is allocated 1.4 million acre feet (MAF) of the Colorado River. One MAF of this is already being used, leaving an unused allocation of 0.4 MAF. However, future obligations are projected to be 0.302 MAF. These obligations are to the Navajo Nation, the Ute Tribe, new agricultural uses, new municipal and industrial uses, and the Lake Powell pipeline. These figures demonstrate that Utah is at capacity when future plans are factored in. Even though there is currently 0.98 MAF left, there are pending applications for over four times this amount.

Nevada's water problem and the refusal of other states to increase Nevada's portion of water rights in the Colorado River led the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) to consider other options. One of these options was to consider pumping water from valleys in Nevada—water that is currently being used mostly in ranches. In 1989, the SNWA filed a request with the Nevada State Engineer for water rights in several valleys, including Snake Valley.

Snake Valley does not belong solely to Nevada; it is a shared resource. The Utah-Nevada state line goes straight through the middle of it. Utah has been using the water from Snake Valley for many years, mostly for farming. It is estimated that about 60% of the water in Snake Valley flows from the Nevada mountains side of the valley but more than 60% is being used in Utah.

Water Law

Water law in Utah and Nevada is the same: whoever was using the water first has the rights. Since Utah was using water in Snake Valley first, Utah does not have to give up rights to the water they currently use. This means Nevada can't take the water without Utah's permission. However, a federal statute, The Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation and Development Act

of 2004, allows a right of way through the Snake Valley for Southern Nevada Water Authority and Lincoln and Clark Counties. This does not mean that Nevada can simply take Utah's water. Utah's water rights are protected in the Act, which also requires Utah and Nevada to reach an agreement regarding division of water resources.

Negotiations

Since the passing of this legislation, a negotiating team with members from both states has been working on the issues. The negotiations are confidential, but there have been some parameters set. Below are the requirements of such an agreement on water rights in Snake Valley. Both states agree that any allocation of water resources must:

- Protect existing water rights
- Follow Utah and Nevada water law
- Allow maximum sustainable use
- Allow public comment
- Provide environmental safeguards
- Anticipate future unknowns

A subcommittee has been formed to develop a draft on how the two states will provide environmental safeguards as there are concerns over the air quality on the Wasatch Front if all the water is pumped out of the valley and it becomes a dust bowl.

Possible Water Divisions

Currently, the interstate negotiations are working on a plan to divide the water into "blocks." Block 1 would uphold each state's existing rights over the water they currently use (as at 1989.) Block 2 aims to split up the rest available between the two states, although there is no agreement yet as to how this would be split. Block 3 would be allocated between the states in the future if there were any surplus water found.

Possible Agreement on use of the Snake Valley Water Resources

	Nevada	Utah
Block 1: Use as of 1989	12,000 ac/ft	55,000 ac/ft
Block 2: Future Use	Target of 105,000 to 111,000*	
Block 3: Surplus	Potential of 132,000	

*The target is to get the totals of blocks 1 and 2 under 111,000-105,000 that is estimated to be available.

Conclusion

Utah supports the idea of the pipeline from Snake Valley to Las Vegas, but it is not giving its water to Las Vegas. Utah's water rights are being carefully protected through legislation and negotiation with authorities in Nevada. The final agreement, should it be accepted by both parties, will be a mutually beneficial and environmentally sound one that will not leave Utah dry.

COUNCIL CORNER

Sandy Peck
League of Women Voters
ASPA Council Member

Ethics and Money on Capitol Hill

Ethics and money — or the lack of — often go together at the legislature, and this year of falling revenues certainly will be no exception. Money is at the heart of some proposed ethics reforms that the League of Women Voters has long advocated, in order to further the goal of equal access to elected representatives for all voters, regardless of wealth or station in life.

Ethics reform bills under consideration include:

1. Limiting campaign contributions:
PURPOSE: to discourage decisions being made by a few individuals or businesses as to which candidates get on the ballot with sufficient funds to get their media messages out to voters.
BONUS: Basing a campaign on smaller contributions from more donors can make representatives more responsive to diverse interests and increase public interest and involvement in elections
2. Limiting or banning gifts from lobbyists to legislators:
PURPOSE: (a) to reduce unfair special paid access to legislators and (b) to help legislators avoid the sense of obligation to their benefactors that we all have and which can influence our decisions.
3. Limiting personal use of campaign funds:
PURPOSE: to help legislators keep faith with voters who expect campaign contributions to go to public, not personal, use.
4. Requiring a cooling off period of one or two years to avoid a revolving door between serving as a legislator and working as a lobbyist:
PURPOSE: to discourage legislators from voting on behalf of possible future employers instead of on behalf of their constituents.
5. Disclosing or avoiding conflicts of interest:
PURPOSE: to discourage legislators from voting on matters that affect their personal finances without failing to disclose those conflicts.
6. Establishing an independent ethics commission:
PURPOSE: To make ethics violations and sanctions more open to public knowledge and input.

Utah's part time legislators make great personal and financial sacrifices to serve. Most of them separate public business from private business as usual. But, we support the reforms proposed this year as a way to improve access by voters to their representatives and to make all elected officials more aware of their special obligation as public servants to respond fairly to all their constituents.

Public Service Recognition Week, May 4-10, 2009

Public Service Recognition Week, celebrated the first Monday through Sunday in May since 1985, is a time set aside to better inform Americans about the broad variety of services provided by government.

The week is also an opportunity to show appreciation to public employees at the federal, state, county, and local levels who ensure that our government is the best in the world. Public Service Recognition Week provides governments around the nation the vehicle with which to celebrate, recognize and identify the important contributions that public employees offer to this country. It is a perfect time to emphasize the common bond among federal, state, county, and local levels that ensure that our government is the best in the world.

Each year the Utah chapter of ASPA requests nominations for several service awards. These awards will be presented at the luncheon on May 7th. The ASPA Council would appreciate your taking a few moments and considering whom you might nominate. A nomination form is included below. Award categories are:

The Senator Arthur V. Watkins Distinguished Service Award is presented to an elected official who, through exceptional commitment, skill and integrity, served the public with special distinction.

The Dr. G. Homer Durham Distinguished Service Award is presented to an appointed official who has served the public with honor and integrity.

The Dr. F. Ted Hebert Distinguished Service Award for Outstanding Contributions to Public Administration, honors individuals that have made significant contributions to public administration through academia or as a public citizen.

The Boards and Commissions Award of Excellence is presented to a board or commission who has exhibited community service, works to support the common good, is proactive in decision-making, and facilitates public participation in governmental processes.

Tentative Schedule of ASPA Luncheon Topics for 2008-2009

(Please note that luncheons have been moved to Thursdays)

February 5, 2009

March 5, 2009

April 2, 2009

May 7, 2009

Economic Development

State Four-day Workweek

Health Care

Awards Program

ANNOUNCING THE ASPA ANNUAL SERVICE AWARDS

ASPA SERVICE AWARD NOMINATION FORM

I would like to nominate the following individual, board, or commission for an ASPA service award.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____
City State Zip Code

Name of Nominator: _____ Phone Number: _____

The award I think the individual, board, or commission would be eligible for is the:

- Senator Arthur V. Watkins Distinguished Service Award for an Elected Official, which honors elected officials who, through exceptional commitment, skill and integrity, served the public with special distinction.
- Dr. G. Homer Durham Distinguished Service Award for an Appointed Official, which honors appointed officials who have served the public with honor and integrity.
- Dr. F. Ted Hebert Distinguished Service Award for Outstanding Contributions to Public Administration, which honors individuals that have made significant contributions to public administration through academia or as a public citizen.
- Boards and Commissions Award of Excellence, for a board or commission whose members have exhibited community service, work to support the common good, are proactive in decision-making, and facilitate public participation in governmental processes.

Reason for nominating this person or organization:

Nominations should be sent to:

Utah Chapter ASPA
University of Utah
260 S Central Campus Dr Rm 214
Salt Lake City, UT 84112-9154

Fax: 801-585-5489