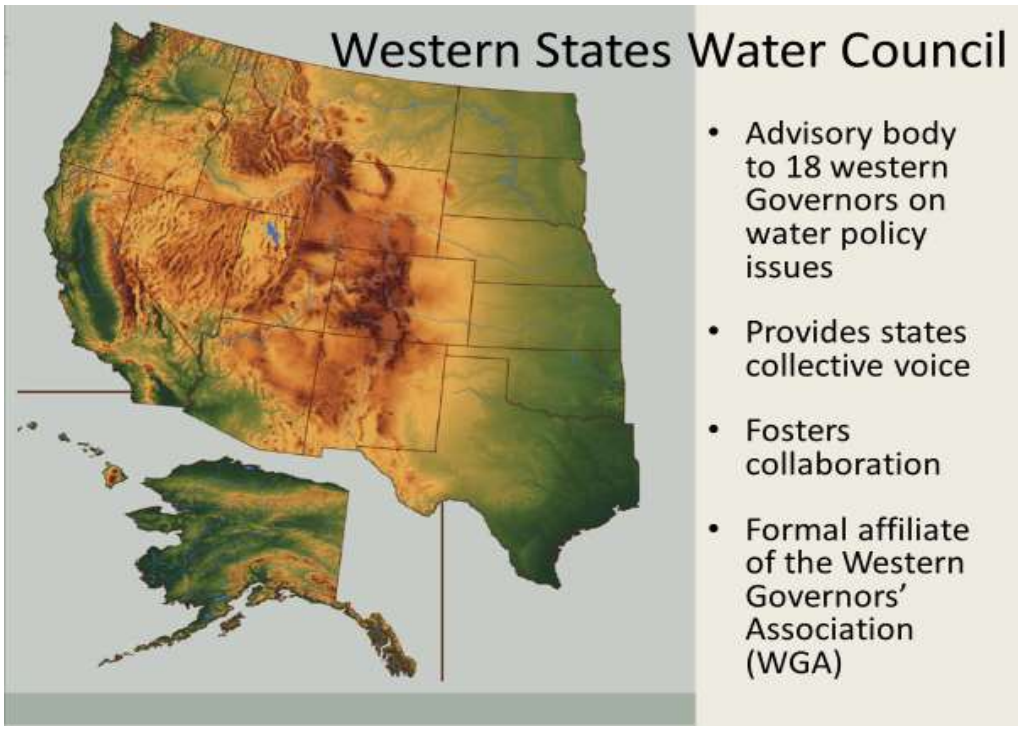
Tony Willardson: I appreciate the opportunity to be here at the invitation of Tom Annear and Christopher Estes. I'm Tony Willardson. I'm the Executive Director of the Western States Water Council. The council is a government entity. We were created in 1965 by the Governors of eighteen states, including Alaska, to advise them on water policy issues. Hawaii is not currently a member. Our members are appointed by the Governors and serve at their pleasure. The charge that the Council was given was to ensure that we have an adequate supply of water for present and future needs in the West. Just a small task. It doesn't say anything about what those needs are.



Our members represent, generally, the Department of Natural Resources, the State Engineers (the State water allocation agencies), state water quality agencies, and a number of the State Attorney Generals' offices are represented. We do not have any State Fish and Game Managers appointed to the Council at this point in time.

One of my good friends and former Director of Oklahoma Water Resources Board is now the Director of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, JD Strong. He is active in AFWA. I was invited to talk to AFWA's Fisheries and Water Resources Policy Committee, which JD chairs, at its meeting last September in Snowbird, Utah. He made the comment that when he was with the Board, he sometimes had differences of opinion with the State wildlife officials. He looked out across the audience and observed a lot of heads nodding! Sometimes, we do have different approaches and different missions that we're trying to address.

When I was growing up, my father was a city manager and then he took a job as a rural electric co-op manager in southern Utah. When I got into public affairs, he told me to stay out of local politics and public/private power so I chose a career in something less controversial like water! My background is in political science, economics and public administration. The Theory of Motivation and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs was already mentioned this morning. We all need food and water. We all need safety, shelter and love, a feeling of belonging. Well we're not that much different from fish at least up to that point. I'm not quite sure fish feel self-actualization and esteem, but we have a lot in common.

Water is important, and our needs are not only physiological, but at some level psychological and even religious. We've heard a little bit about the Klamath basin and some of the challenges that they face, but it was really also a lesson in civil disobedience. The canal head gates that were closed by court order, were opened by the irrigators two or three times. When the federal government complained to the county sheriff, he said, "That's not my problem. That's your problem." Eventually, the head gates were welded shut and federal marshalls posted. Then local interests formed a bucket brigade and started moving water from the canals to the fields to make a point. We do need to work together.

I also like to tell the story about my great, great-grandfather. He was actually Brigham Young's Indian agent in Utah. He had a special gift with the native language and was able to resolve some of the problems they had, but they tried to teach the Goshute Indians, which were gatherers, to farm. They started a church farm out in the West Desert. In reading my grandfather's journals, it's interesting that one of the problems he had was that the Native Americans kept pulling up the fence posts and burning them for firewood. Sometimes, I think that's analogous to us. We sometimes sacrifice our long term interests for our short term needs.

Christopher and I have talked a lot about silos and again, I appreciate the opportunity to be here, learn from you, and look at some different aspects of water management.

Indeed, water is the life blood of the West and that's particularly important with fish. Under the Reclamation Act of 1902, we began an era of building a lot of large dams. Dams on the Colorado River, on the Columbia, on the Missouri and in California on the Feather, Sacramento and the San Joaquin Rivers. Also on the Rio Grande.

Dams and diversions have created conflicts over flows for fish and wildlife, with a number of different species, and with environmental flows for other purposes on a number of rivers. One that I'd like to mention is the Rio Grande silvery minnow. Some of you may know that it's evolved over hundreds of years within a riverine system that really is at times intermittent and is not flowing constantly. We have now, what has been called an artificial refugia. When the river is really low, some of the fish are rescued and put into the refugia, where they're swimming around an island in circles as the water is pumped around.

I've kind of likened it to the old Twilight Zone series on television. They really don't know that they're not in the river. They just keep swimming around happily. When there's more water, they are put back in the river.

There are a lot of challenges and we are looking for creative solutions, some of those obviously relate to water conservation. There are things that we can do. I think it is important to recognize that we have changed our natural hydrologic system. West wide it is largely an artificial hydrologic system. Where we had ephemeral streams, now because of storage and releases, we have perennial streams. We have cold water fisheries where they were warm water fisheries. We have wetlands that have been created by some of our inefficient uses.

We're never going to go back to the way it was. We have to make the best of what we have now.

Very few of the Council's policy positions directly address the needs of fish and wildlife. We've addressed some needs related to the Endangered Species Act. At one point, we took a position in support of recognizing fish and wildlife as an important purpose on the Missouri river and for the management of the river. We've done work with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on hydropower and particularly supported the States' prerogatives under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act to require minimum flows.

I've been with the Council since 1979. I remember the former New Mexico State Engineer, Steve Reynolds. If anyone's from New Mexico, he was a relative legend. He served some 40 years under eight governors. In fact, it was said there wasn't a governor that could have replaced Steve even if they wanted to. There is a story told that the New Mexico legislature was debating an instream flow protection statute and when it came time to vote they looked up in the gallery and Steve put his thumb down (sort of like an emperor) and they voted it down. He said he had all the authority he needed to protect instream flows. He was viewed almost as a beneficent dictator when it came to water with only the best interests of New Mexico in mind.

We work closely with the Western Governors' Association. In 2012, we helped them with a report on water transfers and marketing mechanisms. We've heard a lot about that this morning. One of the things the governors said was that transfers can be used to enhance the river environment as demonstrated by water trusts across the West that seek to restore minimum stream flows with water rights transfers, leases, sales and donations.

However, transfers can also degrade the environment. For example, water conservation measures and redirecting water to new uses can dry up streams or wetlands that depend on current irrigation practices. A governors' policy statement declared that they believed that we should identify and promote innovative ways to allow water transfers from agriculture to other uses – including urban water supply, energy and environmental uses – while avoiding or mitigating damages to agriculture economies and communities. I think that's

the area that's going to be a real challenge. We will see some different uses, more water development, and challenges on both the supply and demand side. We're seeing much more conjunctive use of surface and groundwaters, water recycling and reuse, even desalination for urban uses, these changes may make some water available for other purposes.

As we face these challenges, we need to move forward together. We have a great panel this morning with your IFC Directors. I won't introduce them individually. Their bios are in your books. We will start with Region 1, and Jonathan Kohr will give our first presentation. He'll be followed by Jason Persinger, Region 2, then Clint Robertson, Region 3, Brian Murphy in Region 4, and finally Lauren Makowecki in Region 5. With no further ado, we'll turn to the IFC Directors. I should point out that our 18 states cover three of those regions.