

## NMWRRRI Celebrates 50 Years

About 250 people attended the New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute's (NMWRRRI) 50th Annual New Mexico Conference held on the campus of New Mexico State University (NMSU) in Las Cruces, Oct. 19-20. The theme of the meeting was "New Mexico Water: Past, Present, and Future, or Guns, Lawyers, and Money." Special tribute was made to Ralph Stucky, NMWRRRI's first director. Also fondly remembered at the meeting was Albert E. Utton, a much-missed water negotiator from New Mexico in whose name a memorial water lecture was founded; Charles DuMars was the 2005 Utton lecturer. Water economics and water markets were prominent topics at the symposium, which opened with a lively presentation by Lowell B. Catlett, regent's professor of agricultural economics and agricultural business at NMSU, and included a panel discussion of how communities might still grow without

exceeding their "water means." The directors of the New Mexico Environment Department, Office of the State Engineer, Interstate Stream Commission, and Rural Water Association were among the many distinguished speakers. On the lighter side, cowboy poet Baxter Black entertained attendees with stories and poems, including a few deemed too risqué for radio broadcast.

*Proceedings from the conference will be available in the spring at [wrrri.nmsu.edu/publish/watcon/confproceedings.html](http://wrrri.nmsu.edu/publish/watcon/confproceedings.html).*

## CA Groundwater Conference Turns 50 Too, Sort of

Also celebrating an anniversary in October was California's Biennial Groundwater Conference, first held 50 years ago. The 25th conference, organized by the University of California Center for Water Resources, was held jointly with the Groundwater Resources Association (GRA) of California's 14th Annual

Meeting in Sacramento. Around 300 people attended the meeting, whose theme was "Past Lessons and Future Prospects." David Keith Todd, professor emeritus at the University of California at Berkeley, opened with a retrospective on the people, agencies, and issues that have been foremost in California groundwater over the past 50 years. Later, he presented GRA's Lifetime Achievement Award to Luna Leopold, a fluvial geomorphologist who was the chief hydrologist of the U.S. Geological Survey from 1950 to 1972 and later a professor at Berkeley. Session topics included salinity, tracers and age dating, law and policy, climate change, unregulated contaminants, agricultural impacts, septic system discharge issues, and groundwater management plans. Several posters addressed some aspect of nitrate in groundwater or denitrification, subjects currently of considerable research interest in the state.

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