

DWR NEWS | *People*

WINTER 2008



*Remembering
David N. Kennedy*

DAVID KENNEDY'S UNIQUE CAREER

Water Statesman Blended Calm Professionalism, High Ethical Standards

By Pete Weisser



“Dave’s knowledge of California’s water issues was unparalleled and his commitment to efficient and reliable operation of the State Water Project tireless,” said Director Snow. “His efforts have permanently improved water management for all Californians.”

In a unique 40 year public career, **David Norman Kennedy**, a skilled professional engineer and strategic California water leader, achieved many goals through high quality public service as a planner, administrator and strategist.

Kennedy was intelligent, organized, calm, reserved and ethical, a formidable icon in California’s water community, respected alike by adversaries and allies on a variety of California’s most potent water challenges.

During four decades, Kennedy dealt constructively and patiently with some of the toughest water issues confronting California—SWP expansion, Colorado River negotiations, Delta pumping and environmental challenges, water supply controversies, flood and drought, the Peripheral Canal – always exhibiting professional expertise and calm self-assurance.

A private person with a scholar’s passion for history, he shunned the limelight, avoiding personal publicity. His public service was marked by professionalism, an expert’s vision of the possible, and personal honesty, diplomacy and tact.

Though renowned chiefly as the longest serving Director of the Department of Water Resources (15 years, from 1983-1998) and a champion of the California State



Water Project, Kennedy’s career included 15 eventful years as a key leader of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, where he negotiated Colorado River water issues, provided SWP liaison, and led a determined, but losing campaign seeking voter approval for the Peripheral Canal.

Serving under **Governors George Deukmejian** and **Pete Wilson**, Kennedy adroitly led DWR during the longest drought in modern California history, from 1987-1992, and through some of its biggest, most perilous floods, especially the 1986 flood that nearly submerged Sacramento, and the huge 1997 floods, that prompted Kennedy to propose flood reforms still being implemented.

Kennedy is sworn as DWR’s Director by California Secretary for Resources Gordon Van Vleck.



Kennedy spoke during the Coastal Branch Aqueduct dedication.

Kennedy Personified DWR Excellence

From his earliest days as a young DWR engineer in 1962 working on aqueduct design, to his finale as a retired Director attending the July 2006 50th DWR Anniversary event at the State Capitol, he personified the skill, dedication and excellence associated with creation and operation of California's State Water Project, the biggest State-built and State-operated water and power system in the United States.

DWR Director Lester Snow hailed Kennedy as "a great water leader and dedicated public servant" after learning of Kennedy's death on December 23 at age 71.

"Dave's knowledge of California's water issues was unparalleled and his commitment to efficient and reliable operation of the State Water Project tireless," said Director Snow. "His efforts have permanently improved water management for all Californians."

"The State and nation have lost a great water leader with the passing of David Kennedy," said **William Gianelli**, who served as DWR director from 1967 to 1973 under **Governor Ronald Reagan**. "I personally have lost a great friend."

Former Governor **George Deukmejian**, who originally selected Kennedy as his DWR Director in 1983, called Kennedy "a very practical administrator (who) recognized that it was necessary to work with all of the different interest groups, and to try to reach accommodation with those groups to move the water program forward."

Pete Wilson, who reappointed Kennedy in 1991, said Kennedy was "a remarkably nice guy and absolutely straightforward."

"You ask a question and you get an honest, as well as knowledgeable, answer," said Wilson of Kennedy. "I think he probably knew more about water than anyone else in the state." Kennedy was instrumental in helping Governor Wilson develop a succinct

State water policy, issued in April, 1992, that put top priority on "fixing the Delta."

DWR Accomplishments

His DWR accomplishments included expanding the SWP's Delta pumping capacity and the system's environmental safeguards. Under Kennedy, DWR intensified Delta ecosystem and fish research, began expansion of the SWP's East Branch and achieved construction of the 143-mile Coastal Branch Aqueduct to provide supplemental SWP water supplies to drought-vulnerable users in San Luis and Santa Barbara counties. Begun in 1993, the Coastal Branch was completed in 1997 at a cost of \$500 million.

In 1994, he helped negotiate the Monterey Agreement, which resolved several vexing issues with the SWP Contractors and made apportionment

Fifth from right: Kennedy participated in the groundbreaking of Coastal Branch Aqueduct.



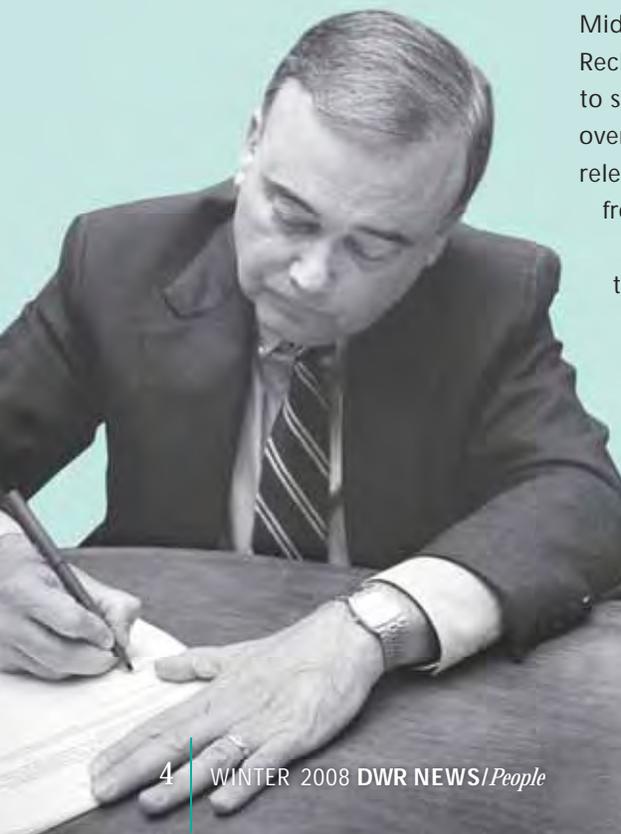
of SWP deliveries more equitable among agricultural and urban customers.

During the 1987-1992 drought, Kennedy created and implemented the Governor's Emergency Drought Water Bank, an innovation in helping cope with severe water supply impacts of the longest statewide drought in modern times. In 1994, he helped achieve the Delta Accord to confront Delta water quality and supply reliability challenges.

In a retrospective interview, Kennedy told a UC Berkeley publication in 2003 that flood responses were his most daunting challenges as DWR director, especially those of 1986 and 1997, two of the largest in California history.

Floods Were Top Challenges

"Decisions about reservoir releases and levee repairs have to be made in real time with incomplete information and many different things going on at once. Those were pretty hectic times."



In 1986, when huge rainstorms in mid-February threatened to overflow Folsom Lake and overwhelm Folsom Dam, Kennedy closely coordinated with flood experts at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation on ramping up releases. With a modest reservoir capacity of just

by the downstream levees and sufficient to cope with storm runoff into Folsom.

Twenty years later, in a retrospective Sacramento Bee article in 2006, Pulitzer Prize-winning Bee editorialist **Tom Philp** called Kennedy, Countryman and Houston "hidden heroes" who

"Decisions about reservoir releases and levee repairs have to be made in real time with incomplete information and many different things going on at once. Those were pretty hectic times."

under 1 million acre-feet, Folsom Dam was a small dam taking runoff from the sprawling American River watershed in a massive rain event.

Kennedy took part in strategic phone conferences with **Joe Countryman**, the flood expert for the Corps and **David Houston**, then director of the Mid-Pacific Region of the Bureau of Reclamation. They devised a strategy to safeguard Folsom Dam from being overwhelmed by storm runoff, by releasing as much water as possible from the imperiled dam.

They collaborated in deciding to release more water from Folsom Dam than ever had been released since Folsom's construction in the mid-1950s. They increased releases from the 115,000 cfs previously believed to be the maximum safe level to over 130,000 cfs, a flow accepted

made a "gutsy decision" that helped save the City of Sacramento from flooding in 1986.

Following the 1986 floods, Kennedy upgraded DWR's flood-fighting ability by creating a new Joint Operations Center (JOC) north of downtown Sacramento to provide a modern operational headquarters for flood response and also to improve monitoring of the SWP. Closer operational coordination with the Federal Central Valley Project was also achieved at the JOC where the SWP and CVP have adjoining monitoring facilities.

Kennedy played a behind the scenes, strategic role in DWR's well-organized response to the massive floods of January, 1997. In their wake, he oversaw drafting of the Governor's Flood Emergency Action Team (FEAT) report that recommended major reforms and improvements in California flood policy.

KENNEDY DWR HIGHLIGHTS

Family and Youth

David Kennedy was born on September 10, 1936, in Ontario, Oregon where his father, Norman, a civil engineer worked for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. In the 1940s, the family moved to Washington State, where his father worked as a State transportation engineer. In 1948, the elder Kennedy took a teaching position at Syracuse University in New York. In 1950, he joined the engineering faculty at the University of California.

David attended Albany High School near Berkeley. After graduating in 1954, he entered UC Berkeley as an engineering major. "I don't remember ever thinking about becoming anything other than a civil engineer," he later recalled.

During the summers of 1956, 1957 and 1958, he worked as a surveyor for the then-Division of Highways (now CalTrans) in the Bay Area.

A competitive swimmer in high school, Kennedy played on Cal's water polo team. He was active in a Christian Science religious group on campus,

where he met his future wife, Barbara, studying at Cal for a teaching career. In December, 1958, while discussing their futures in a campus chat near the Campanile, the two decided to marry.

Engineering Career Begins

After graduation in January, 1959, Kennedy, who completed the Reserve Officer Training Corps program at Cal, was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Army. After four months training at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, he was assigned to Fort Ord, near Monterey, for the balance of his two years active duty.

The newlywed Kennedys lived in Carmel, in a cottage rented for \$75 a month. Barbara taught school in Pacific Grove while David performed engineering duties at Fort Ord, major West Coast Infantry training post for the Army.

After his release from active duty in 1961, Kennedy worked briefly again at Highways, and then entered grad-



UC Berkeley campus photo by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory Photographer Roy Kaltschmidt.

1983

June 16, 1983, David N. Kennedy appointed Director of Water Resources by Governor George Deukmejian.

July 28, 1983, Kennedy appointed Member of the Western States Water Council.



1984

California Data Exchange Center established.

1985

Thermalito Diversion Dam Powerplant completed.

1986

Coordinated Operations Agreement between DWR and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation signed after more than 25 years of negotiations.

North Bay Aqueduct completed.

Wind Gap Pumping Plant renamed the Ira J. Chrisman Wind Gap Pumping Plant.

Fiber-optic installation begun along California Aqueduct.

Alamo Powerplant completed.

Suisun Marsh Salinity Control Gates installed.

Four Pumps Agreement signed.

In February-March, California worst flooding since 1964.



1987

California Water Plan Update, Bulletin 160-87 completed.

1987-1992 California's most severe statewide drought in modern history. Drought Water Bank is opened in 1992 and 1994.





uate school at Berkeley. By spring, 1962, he had earned a Masters in engineering in just nine months. His study areas of concentration featured hydrology and project planning. He wrote a major paper on California water rights.

DWR (1962-1968)

While Kennedy was on Army duty, he'd been intrigued by the November 1960 passage of the \$1.75 billion State water bond issue to finance construction of the SWP.

"Over the two years I was in the service," he recalled later, "I decided to shift over to water resources."

Even before completing his studies, he interviewed for a job at DWR. In June, 1962, Kennedy joined DWR, assigned initially to design work for the California Aqueduct. Other assignments followed, including work on North Coast river projects, including plans for the Dos Rios Dam on the middle fork of the Eel River. The big December 1964 floods focused more attention on North Coast rivers and Kennedy subsequently authored a DWR study justifying authorization of Dos Rios Dam.

But in 1965, to avoid moving with his unit up to Red Bluff, Kennedy transferred to the Statewide Planning

Kennedy (second from left at table) with staff members (Left to Right) Front Row: Robert Potter, John Silveira, Carlos Madrid. Back Row: Anita Garcia-Fante, Lucinda Chipponeri, Chet Winn, Susan Weber, and William Frye.

Branch, working on the first document in the Bulletin 160 series (California Water Plan Updates), published in 1966.

His planning branch work quickly introduced him to policy level issues. This was during the heady days of SWP construction when the relatively new DWR dramatically increased its staff to accomplish the Herculean task of designing and building the largest State water and power system in the United States.

Kennedy met and worked with other bright young engineers, including **John Silveira**, his first supervisor, and **Robert Potter**, a skilled water planner. Silveira later would serve Kennedy as a Deputy Director while Potter would become his Chief Deputy Director.

These DWR salad days were highlighted by presentations he made for two legendary DWR Directors, **William Warne**, a New Deal style administrator with a public affairs flair, and later, **William Gianelli**, a UC-trained engineer

During his DWR engineering years, Kennedy acquired a reputation as a keen planner and strategic analyst in policy areas, usually the domain of higher echelon managers.

with World War II experience in the Pacific. The Warne presentation was on the first California Water Plan, which Kennedy had drafted. When it was over, Warne, whose public relations sense was very sharp, asked Kennedy how many copies were planned. 5,000, said Kennedy. "Get 10,000," advised Warne.

Toward the end of Kennedy's junior years at DWR, he was assigned to draft a policy document to brief Gianelli on the proposed Dos Rios Dam. His boss decided the best way to brief

KENNEDY DWR HIGHLIGHTS

Gianelli was to have Dave read his draft document to Gianelli.

During his DWR engineering years, Kennedy acquired a reputation as a keen planner and strategic analyst in policy areas, usually the domain of higher echelon managers. While the SWP was swiftly taking shape, Kennedy realized that the boom days of DWR were limited.

Once the basic infrastructure was formed, the Department began to cut back from its construction high of about 4,600 to a leaner permanent workforce of 2,500. Attrition and cutbacks prompted many DWR engineers to look elsewhere for opportunity. Kennedy was among them.



In 1986, Kennedy with Ira J. Chrisman during renaming of Wind Gap Pumping Plant. (Below) Ira J. Chrisman Wind Gap Pumping Plant.

MWD (1968-1983)

In 1968, Kennedy joined the staff of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, major public agency and water wholesaler for water distribution in the Southern California coastal basin. MWD was a pioneer agency in tapping the Colorado River for water supplies and was the first agency to sign a long-term contract to buy water from California's new State Water Project (SWP).

Though classified as an engineer, Kennedy's very first assignment introduced him to water policy issues of great concern to MWD, Colorado River negotiations, and put him in close working contact with MWD's influential water policy-makers. These included the legendary **Joseph Jensen**, who had led MWD for a quarter-century, many top managers and the MWD's large board of directors.

Kennedy's MWD career divides into two phases: Engineering and strategic staff analyst, from 1968 to 1974, and then as an assistant general manager, from 1974 to 1983.

He learned the intricacies of national water policy firsthand via Colorado River negotiations and Colorado River Board liaison duties. He mastered dealing with MWD's sprawling water

1988

San Luis Dam renamed B.F. Sisk San Luis Dam and San Luis Pumping-Generating Plant renamed the William R. Gianelli Pumping-Generating Plant.



1989

Water Awareness Week's first statewide celebration by DWR.



1990

Truckee-Carson-Pyramid Lake Water Rights Settlement Act.

Sherman Island property purchased.

1991

Kennedy reappointed Director of Water Resources by Governor Pete Wilson.



1992

Banks Pumping Plant's four additional pumps installed.

Skinner Fish Facility expansion.

Environmental Services Office created.

Twitchell Island property purchased.

DWR facilitates a new Governor's Water Policy in April of 1992. Top Priority is Fixing the Delta.

1993

California Water Plan Update, Bulletin 160-93 completed.

Vista del Lago Visitors Center overlooking Pyramid Lake opened.

DWR Alumni Club created.



infrastructure and complex water role in Southern California, and he also handled liaison assignments to the emerging SWP, which made initial deliveries to Southern California in 1972.

Though many in MWD's leadership were ambivalent about the SWP, MWD was the first water agency to

general manager, and **John Lauter**, the utility's chief counsel, and others with whom he worked. He speedily won promotion to principal engineer.

Kennedy was on a rising career trajectory in an era when MWD older managers were nearing retirement and expanding workload necessitated

From **Alan J. Williams**, MWD's media savvy public affairs director, Kennedy learned many lessons, not only tactics on how to deal with media aspects of water policy but political strategy on how public water agencies should conduct themselves.

A former Deputy Mayor of Los Angeles and a Hearst newspaper reporter, Williams was, in Kennedy's phrase "an encyclopedia of politics". In MWD's upper echelons, Williams "had an unlimited portfolio to do whatever he wanted to do", attending key policy meetings. Williams was influential in many policy areas, beyond public affairs and news media relations, including lobbying in Sacramento and Washington, DC.

"He was a man with a great sense of right and wrong, as to what public agencies should be doing," said Kennedy. "He became, to some extent, a mentor on policy issues."

Peripheral Canal Fight

Toward the end of his MWD career, Kennedy played a leading role in one of California's epic water policy battles, the 1982 election battle over the Peripheral Canal.

MWD solidly backed the Peripheral Canal, a Delta structure originally planned for the SWP but reluctantly deferred by Governor Ronald Reagan, due to a budget squeeze, on the advice of then-DWR Director William Gianelli. A sound engineering concept for moving water from the lower Sacramento River around the eastern edge of the Delta to State and Federal pumps, the canal offered both ecological and supply benefits. Reagan also tried, unsuccessfully, to persuade the Federal government to build it.



DWR Directors David Kennedy and William Gianelli present plaque in honor of those contributing to the success of the Oroville Complex.

sign a long-term contract to purchase SWP water. Ever since, it has been a major importer of SWP supplies for the 18 million people within its sprawling south coastal basin service area.

Because Colorado and SWP issues were so important to MWD decision-makers, Kennedy, an expert on both topics, was quickly involved in briefings and assignments that brought him into contact with the large MWD board of directors and top management. He impressed **Frank Clinton**, MWD's

reorganization. He and his wife, Barbara, now parents of three children, enjoyed living in the comfortable community of San Marino.

In 1974, at age 35, he was promoted to an assistant general manager position, a top management post in a massive, influential water agency. He handled most policy and liaison assignments while **Dick Balcerzak**, another assistant general manager, was responsible for the engineering and construction duties.

KENNEDY DWR HIGHLIGHTS

After a severe drought in 1977, Reagan's successor, **Governor Edmund G. (Jerry) Brown, Jr.** sought to revive the concept of the canal, which had support from anglers, environmentalists and the Department of Fish and Game. He tried to resurrect the canal with the Legislature's approval, though the water community basically believed the canal was already authorized under terms of the 1959 Burns-Porter Act.

Brown's water policy expert was **Ronald B. Robie**, a UC alumnus (class of 1958, a year ahead of Kennedy). Robie was a McGeorge Law School graduate who became a water law expert and had worked as a Legislative consultant. In 1980, Brown assigned Robie to spearhead an effort to win Legislative approval for the Peripheral Canal, as part of an expanded SWP.

Robie succeeded in winning legislative passage of the enabling legislation (SB 200 by State Sen. Reuben Ayala) by both the Assembly and Senate by two-thirds majority votes. Brown signed the legislation.

However, the revived canal drew passionate opposition from Northern Californians who saw it as a "water grab" and by some environmentalists.

Canal foes gathered enough signatures to put a canal referendum on the ballot in 1982.

As an assistant general manager for MWD, Kennedy was his agency's point man for the Peripheral Canal referendum.

To the surprise of many, a split on the canal existed within California's water community. While the concept was universally popular, some water leaders were dissatisfied with Brown's scaled down version of the canal, preferring a larger structure with fewer environmental guarantees.

Opponents included two of the larger corporate farm organizations in California, the J. G. Boswell Company and the Salyer Land Company. They contended the conditions for the new canal "gave away" too much to environmentalists and that a bigger, better structure could be obtained. Though the California Farm Bureau Federation historically had supported the canal, in late 1980 it shifted to an opposed position, also citing over-generous environmental guarantees.

Despite his best efforts at water diplomacy, Kennedy was not able to persuade dissidents to drop their

1994

The Framework Agreement and Bay-Delta Accord signed.

Monterey Agreement between DWR and the State Water Contractors.

New Eureka Flood Center opened.

1995

Project Operations Center relocated to new Joint Operations Center located north of Downtown Sacramento.

1996

East Branch Enlargement Phase I completed.

DWR Archives and Collection Program created.

1997

New San Bernardino Tunnel Intake at Silverwood Lake completed.



Coastal Branch Project Phase Two completed.

Flood of 1997. The Governor's 1997 Flood Emergency Action Team report completed.

California Water Plan Update, Bulletin 160-98 completed.

UC Berkeley honors Kennedy with Distinguished Engineering Alumni Award.

1998

Power utility industry deregulated.

Kennedy elected to National Academy of Engineering.

Kennedy retires.



DWR Directors Kennedy and Robie at DWR's 50th Anniversary celebration in May of 2006.

opposition. Kennedy advocated the canal as a wise public investment both environmentally and in enhancing water supply reliability.

Voters approved the referendum at the June 1982 primary election. (The vote rejecting the canal was decisive by a margin of more than three to two – 63 to 37 percent.) The Peripheral Canal has remained an unbuilt, though often discussed, Delta water project, which in recent years has gained credibility as a project that can benefit Delta fish, flows and ecosystems.

Characteristically, Kennedy counseled water leaders who divided over the canal to put aside differences after the election “because we all have to work together after this thing is all over”. For years, he cited the referendum to water colleagues as an example of why water agency leaders should strive for unity and agreement among themselves, as opposed to taking disagreements to the Legislature or to court.

Public Service Advice

Despite the disappointment of the Peripheral Canal vote, Kennedy was equipped by experience, training and temperament for a leadership role in California water affairs.

With the election of George Deukmejian as Governor in 1982, the opportunity to lead DWR beckoned. Kennedy was dubious that anyone from MWD would be considered, especially after what he called “the Peripheral Canal debacle”.

With two children in college, he felt financially hesitant to seek the job, which paid far less than his MWD post.

William Gianelli, former DWR Director, whom Kennedy regarded with great respect, told Kennedy he should apply for the DWR job. The suggestion, which surprised Kennedy, arose during a luncheon at the Pentagon, where Gianelli was serving President Reagan as Assistant Secretary of the Army for Public Works.

Kennedy cited his concerns about taking a pay cut.

“Well,” replied Gianelli, “you know there are some of us who have always thought that public service is very important.”

“We laughed about it, it was somewhat good-humored,” Kennedy recollected. “But it was a pointed comment on his part.” Kennedy gave it a lot of thought.

Kennedy spoke at many conferences and forums throughout California.



Kennedy, who started DWR's Tour Program, briefed many foreign visitors.

When he was approached to apply for the job, he decided to do so. He discovered to his surprise that his nomination was advocated to Governor Deukmejian by former adversaries in the Peripheral Canal referendum campaign, **Sal Russo** and **Doug Watts**, who had been impressed with Kennedy's conduct of the pro-canal effort.

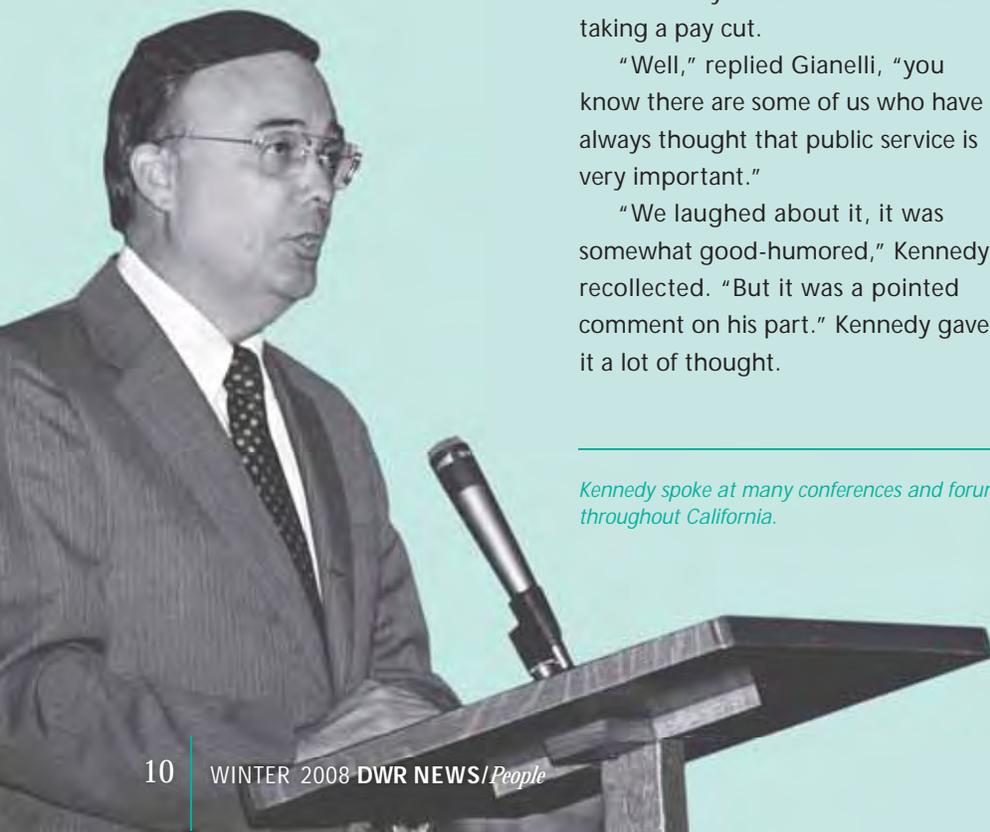
That Kennedy took Gianelli's advice on public service to heart is well documented. He told the anecdote frequently, including at his appearance at the July 2006 DWR 50th anniversary event at the State Capitol.

Kennedy's Legacy

“Dave Kennedy was a lifelong public servant who frequently referred to the need for and value of public service,” said Bob Potter, in summarizing Kennedy's legacy.

A friend of Kennedy's since 1962 and his Deputy Director from 1986 to 1992 and Chief Deputy Director from 1992 to 1998, Potter stressed the character and professionalism Kennedy showed in leading DWR and throughout his career.

“He had a strong belief that a healthy future for California depended upon developing and protecting a reliable water supply. In the early 1960s, as a



young engineer, he worked for DWR in planning for the State Water Project.

"During his years at MWD, he dedicated considerable effort to enhancing the relationship between MWD and DWR, in support of the State Water Project.

"Returning to DWR in the 1980s as Director gave him the opportunity to assure the continued effectiveness of the State Water Project in meeting California's growing water needs."

"Protect the integrity of the State Water Project," was a favorite Kennedy phrase during his DWR Directorship.

As DWR Director, Kennedy reached out to many of the "redwood generation" who conceived, built and led the

shared not only his UC education but also youthful membership in the Sea Scouts and service in the US Army.

Kennedy and fellow UC graduate Ron Robie were on cordial terms and both attended and spoke at the 50th anniversary event.

Kennedy was highly appreciative of the service of the thousands of men and women who worked with him at DWR.

Oral History Interview

In 2002, Kennedy was interviewed at length for the California State Archives Oral History Program. (The transcript of Kennedy's oral history interview provided many of the quotes used in this article.)

water issues to...stabilize the State Water Project and the Central Valley Project, particularly with respect to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta issues. The appointees and the professional people can make some incremental progress on those issues if they have the tacit support of elected officials. But I tend to think that at some point in the future, the Delta issues are probably going to become so difficult again that a governor will have to personally get involved to provide the statewide leadership that's necessary.

"I think something will have to be done in the Delta to stabilize the way water is moved through the Delta and to deal with the levee situation."

"At some point, a governor is going to have to take a real interest in the water issues to...stabilize the State Water Project and the Central Valley Project, particularly with respect to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta issues... I think something will have to be done in the Delta to stabilize the way water is moved through the Delta and to deal with the levee situation."



State Water Project. In talks with them he exhibited his characteristic sense of history, forging bonds of appreciation with such SWP advocates as former **Governor Edmund G. (Pat) Brown** and leaders, including especially William Gianelli, with whom Kennedy

In those interviews, he spoke candidly about many aspects of his career and California's water challenges, including the Peripheral Canal. Here's a brief excerpt:

"At some point, a governor is going to have to take a real interest in the

Retirement Activities

After retiring, Kennedy served on a national 13-member external review panel to evaluate the work of government officials studying New Orleans' levee failures.

He also accepted invitations to visit Japan to speak on Delta issues and to China where he spoke, on behalf of the World Bank, about SWP financing.

Kennedy kept in touch with colleagues and friends from his career, including many DWR officials and staffers, meeting them for informal, chatty luncheons at a food court in the Downtown Plaza. Unlike many who wield power and held high office, Kennedy took easily to the slower pace and leisure of retirement.

"The joke in my family is that it took Dad about two hours to adjust to retirement," he reported.

Kennedy was a modest, family-oriented man, who enjoyed gardening and walking for exercise and kept up a voracious pace of reading.

Family and Remembrances

David N. Kennedy died on December 23, 2007, at age 71, in a Sacramento care facility. He is survived by wife, Barbara Kennedy of Sacramento;

daughters, Ann Kennedy Watembach of Sacramento and Susan Orttung of Arlington, Virginia; son, Richard Kennedy of Brea; sister, Colleen Engstrom of Walnut Creek, and six grandchildren.

Contributions in his memory may be made to:

The Water Education Foundation
717 K Street, Suite 317
Sacramento, CA 95814

The UC Berkeley Engineering Fund
in care of the UC Berkeley Foundation.
2080 Addison Street
Berkeley, CA 94720-4200



During the Spring 2006 Association of California Water Agencies Conference in Monterey, Kennedy was a speaker.

DIRECTOR KENNEDY'S SAGE MANAGEMENT STYLE HELPED DWR MANAGERS GROW, REACH GOALS



“Working under Dave Kennedy’s leadership was the highlight of my career at DWR,” says **Ray Hart**, retired Deputy Director, SWP leader and former California Water Plan editor. “He was a tremendous mentor to me, and many other DWR managers.”

Hart’s view is echoed by DWR program leaders of the 15-year Kennedy era who reported to a Director they discovered to be a fascinating mentor and grew to revere as a wise water strategist. Intelligent, calm, encouraging, supportive and helpful, but never dictatorial, Kennedy typically nurtured his key aides and program managers in developing solutions to problems.

“Dave was a conservative, reserved, low-key but always ‘hands-on’ manager, who met frequently with his top deputies and program people,” recalls **Bob Potter**, Kennedy’s Chief Deputy Director from 1992 until retiring in 1998. “We found him to be a wonderful, knowing and understanding boss.”

“He was extremely diplomatic, always tactful and helpful in encouraging you to come up with the answers, never one to issue direct orders,” recalls **Larry Mullnix**, SWP Deputy Director from 1988 to 1991.

“He was not afraid to stand back and let people flail and thrash around in seek-

ing solutions for problems,” recalls Potter, whose friendship with Kennedy dates back to their 1962 meeting in DWR. “He let you know he would support you and give you resources to solve problems, but he would not dictate solutions. Then when you finally came up with a right solution, he would smile and approve it.”

Department veterans note that Kennedy had an eye for talent, promoting well-educated, professionally sound engineers and administrators, most with advanced academic degrees, and then giving them independence and encouragement to show initiative and creativity in managing programs.

One notable result was the rise to key management positions of respected DWR officials, including Potter and Hart, and many others, including Deputy Directors **Ralph Torres** and **David Gutierrez**, former deputy directors, such as **Stephen Kashiwada**, **Leslie Harder** and **Larry Mullnix**, and **Susan Weber**, DWR’s Chief Legal Counsel from 1987 to 2001, first woman to hold that post.

Kennedy encouraged frequent meetings, briefings and professional presentations with key middle managers and program leaders to foster Departmental esprit de corps and energize his

managers to accomplish DWR’s missions.

“He allowed people working for him to express their views and grapple with alternative views. But he had a way of gently letting you know when you were way off base,” states Potter.

“Are you sure you have thought this all the way through?” was a characteristic Kennedy question posed politely after hearing a plan or solution he sensed was not suitable.

“Director Kennedy was involved and knowledgeable on all SWP issues and policies,” remembers Kashiwada, selected by Kennedy in 1996 to succeed John Silveira as SWP Deputy Director. He served in that post until 2000.

“He had a keen insight on the impacts of operational and fiscal issues and was always seeking fairness to all SWP contractors in his policy decisions.”

Devoted to keeping the SWP a quality operation, Kashiwada said that Kennedy “was aware of the many issues facing operations of the SWP and provided me with the support necessary to manage the SWP divisions”.

“He supported many expansions of the SWP facilities as water demands in-

Deputy Director Larry Mullnix (right) is sworn in by DWR Director David Kennedy.

creased", including construction of the Coastal Branch, Phase II, completed in 1997, and renewal of aging system facilities, says Kashiwada.

"My most vivid memories of working with Director Kennedy involve projects done with him at the policy level with Governor Pete Wilson and in leading DWR's emergency response to the widespread floods in 1997," says Hart, Deputy Director for non-SWP divisions from 1996 to 2000, and SWP Deputy Director from 2000 to 2002.

"In 1992, Dave Kennedy assigned me to be his aide while he worked with the Governor's Cabinet (Agency heads) and top staff in the Governor's office to help develop the Governor's Water Policy, announced in April, 1992. 'Fixing the Delta' was the policy's top priority.

"It was clear to me that all these top level officials had tremendous respect for Dave and his knowledge and understanding of water issues.

"They all listened intently in meeting after meeting as he laid out the facts of California's water infrastructure, followed by his command of socio/political issues that each potential element of the Governor's Water Policy would face."

When the 1997 flood situation began developing, Kennedy called Hart, who was on vacation and asked: "Could you go over to the Flood Center and help out there?"

"While we spent many hours together addressing some difficult flood issues, he had a way of letting you know he supported you in tough

assignments, without micro-managing the situation," says Hart. DWR drew plaudits for its emergency response, led day-to-day by Hart, with Kennedy providing strategic guidance and top level support.

"When it came time to prepare for the 1998 El Nino flood season," recalls Hart, "I remember we briefed the Governor and his top advisors on what was needed.

"Dave Kennedy had such credibility that they developed a legislative bill incorporating what we needed and within a day and a half the Legislature passed and the Governor signed the bill into law."

After the 1997 flood, Kennedy advised Hart as DWR developed the Governor's Flood Emergency Action Team (FEAT) report. It documented flood activities and lessons learned, recommending improvements for better flood policy. Hart worked closely with Director Kennedy. The resulting FEAT report's findings and recommendations remain influential today in helping shape and strengthen California's flood policies and emergency response operations.

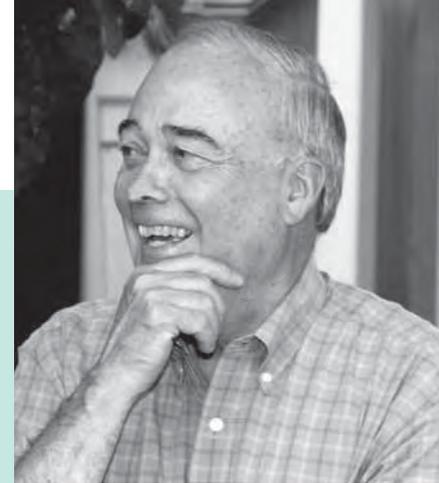
"David Kennedy had a vast knowledge of water issues in California that proved invaluable in his development of water policy and guidance for the Department," states Kashiwada. "He will be remembered as a caring, smart and well-respected leader in California's water arena." ■

—By PW



Kennedy (center) speaks with former staff members Stephen Kashiwada and Susan Weber during DWR's 50th Anniversary celebration at the Stanford Mansion in downtown Sacramento.

DAVID KENNEDY'S UC BERKELEY SCHOLARLY LEGACY UNDERLAY HIS "INTELLECTUAL ENGINEER" STYLE



Though best known as a water leader and longtime DWR Director, David Kennedy impressed, and mystified, many throughout his career with an intellectual style that transcended engineering expertise, and a lifelong fascination with history.

Widely-read, Kennedy devoured scores of history books, with a special interest in the military and political dramas of World War II. Both in reading and in travels to Europe, he evinced a keen historical appreciation

Photo by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory Photographer Roy Kaltschmidt

of the vital role of engineering in the past. He was thrilled by seeing such Roman antiquities as the Pantheon, aqueducts and the Forum.

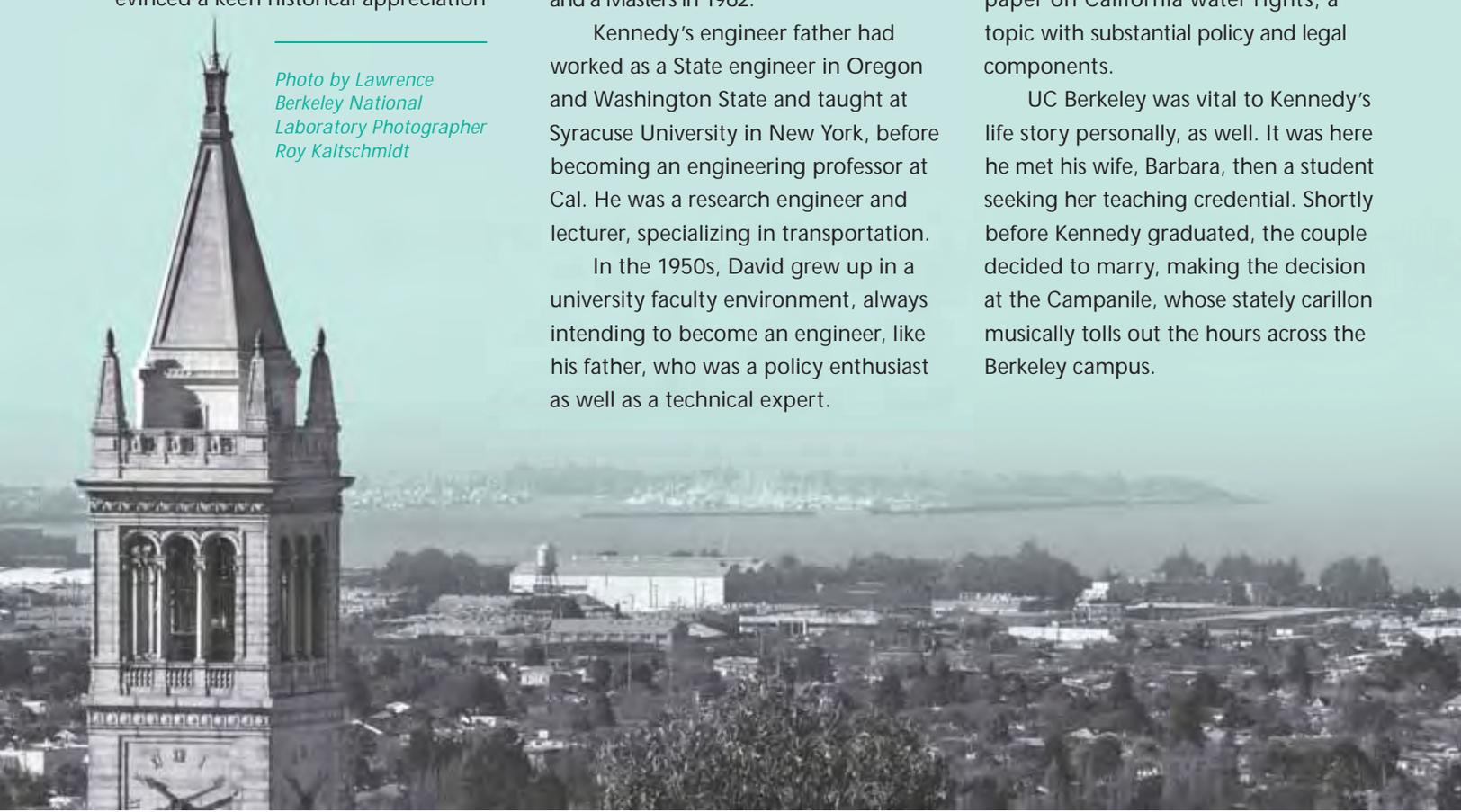
Kennedy's scholarly passion for history stems from family and intellectual influences associated with the University of California at Berkeley, where his father was a faculty member from 1950 to 1975, and where Kennedy earned two engineering degrees, a Bachelors in Civil Engineering in 1959 and a Masters in 1962.

Kennedy's engineer father had worked as a State engineer in Oregon and Washington State and taught at Syracuse University in New York, before becoming an engineering professor at Cal. He was a research engineer and lecturer, specializing in transportation.

In the 1950s, David grew up in a university faculty environment, always intending to become an engineer, like his father, who was a policy enthusiast as well as a technical expert.

"My Dad was interested in the public policy aspects of transportation," recalled Kennedy, as well as the engineering. His father was a reader of Shakespeare and his mother was a teacher. Even as a teenager, David read several newspapers daily. After graduating from Albany High School in the Bay Area, he entered Cal. Though carrying a full engineering course load, Kennedy took a year of history. In earning his engineering Masters, Kennedy wrote an extensive paper on California water rights, a topic with substantial policy and legal components.

UC Berkeley was vital to Kennedy's life story personally, as well. It was here he met his wife, Barbara, then a student seeking her teaching credential. Shortly before Kennedy graduated, the couple decided to marry, making the decision at the Campanile, whose stately carillon musically tolls out the hours across the Berkeley campus.



As a young engineer at DWR in the early 1960s, Kennedy was quickly recognized as a keen water policy analyst and highly organized writer. He was assigned to make presentations and write significant reports on complex water topics, including development of dams on North Coast Rivers.

In his years as an engineer and later assistant general manager at the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), he added Colorado River expertise to his professional resume and became adept in water policy leadership and in running a large public agency.

From **Alan J. Williams**, MWD public relations chief in the 1960s and 1970s, and an omnivorous reader, Kennedy acquired an understanding of how the news media works and encouragement in reading widely in fields that gave him added perspectives on water issues.

"Al was exceptionally well-read, one of these people who read two or three books every week," said Kennedy. A former Deputy Mayor in Los Angeles, Williams "was very valuable to Metropolitan in trying to help them do the right thing on any given issue," said Kennedy, noting: "Public works agencies are usually run by engineering types who do not have a very broad view of the public interest."

In 1983, Kennedy became DWR's sixth director, the fourth UC Berkeley graduate to head the department.

The three UC Berkeley graduates who preceded Kennedy as Director were: William Warne, a 1927 Berkeley graduate in English, serving as DWR Director 1961-1967; William Gianelli, a 1941 engineering major, who was DWR Director under Governor Ronald Reagan, 1967-1973, and Ronald B. Robie, a 1958 Journalism major, who,

after earning a law degree and working as a water law consultant in the California Legislature, served as DWR Director under Governor Edmund G. (Jerry) Brown, Jr., 1975-1982.

By the close of Kennedy's 15 years as Director, DWR had been led by UC graduates for 35 years.

During his years as DWR Director, Kennedy encouraged staff to further their educations, and expanded management training programs to help orient new managers to their duties and legal obligations.

As a result of the 1987-1992 state-wide drought, Kennedy enhanced DWR's water education programs serving the public, including a visitors program patterned on one at MWD. That visitors program has briefed thousands of visitors, including many from foreign countries whose governments seek to emulate California dams, aqueducts and water systems.

He provided DWR fiscal support and briefers' participation for the private Water Education Foundation, and joined with the Association of California Water Agencies in establishing Water Awareness Month each May as a means of promoting greater public understanding of water issues.

Kennedy was a highly credible advisor on water issues to the two Governors he served, George Deukmejian and Pete Wilson. He was an effective ambassador on water issues to the public, media and Legislature. As a briefer, he had an



Left to Right: DWR Directors from 1956 to 1998 included Banks, Warne, Gianelli, Teerink, Robie, and Kennedy.

“Technical data was summarized on a fact sheet for Dave’s use and reference,” said former Deputy Director Stephen Kashiwada. “At the conclusion of the briefing, Dave would always return the fact sheet to the presenter, thanking him for the presentation. Amazingly, Dave would be able to recall dates and data at subsequent briefings, sometimes months later.”



astonishing capacity to absorb reams of pertinent water data and recall them easily when needed.

“Director Kennedy had an amazing memory,” recalled former Deputy Director Stephen Kashiwada, who often saw Kennedy being briefed on complicated water issues.

“Technical data was summarized on a fact sheet for Dave’s use and reference,” said Kashiwada. “At the conclusion of the briefing, Dave would always return the fact sheet to the presenter, thanking him for the presentation. Amazingly, Dave would be able to recall dates and data at subsequent briefings, sometimes months later.”

Kennedy avoided personal publicity but was tireless in efforts to increase public understanding of water issues, especially the role, history and mission of California’s State Water Project. He spoke at many ACWA, DWR and Water

Education Foundation forums and presentations.

In keeping with his scholarly style, Kennedy originated the concept and oversaw development of a California State Water Project Atlas, a 196-page hardback publication, published in 1999. It provided a detailed written and visual description of the SWP and its facilities. The Delta Atlas, which was used as a teaching tool with staff, was another example of Kennedy’s continuous effort to educate.

After the major floods of January, 1997, the historically-attuned Kennedy came up with an ideal memento to give DWR staffers active in the emergency flood response: A copy of the classic “Battling The Inland Sea,” a history of floods and public policy in the Sacramento Valley, written by the late **Robert Kelley**, a history professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

Kennedy wrote a foreword to a new edition of the book. Kennedy

helped arrange its publication through the University of California press after the idea arose in a Legislative hearing. The book brought together two of Kennedy’s consuming passions: California water policy and history.

Kennedy’s son, Richard, followed in his professional footsteps, attending UC Berkeley to study engineering. Richard earned bachelors and masters degrees in Mechanical Engineering.

In 1997, UC Berkeley honored David Kennedy with the Distinguished Engineering Alumni award from UC Berkeley. In 1998, he was elected to the National Academy of Engineering, one of the higher professional distinctions that engineers can attain.

During retirement, Kennedy accepted invitations to Japan to speak about Delta issues and the SWP, and to China to discuss SWP financing. He also served on an independent panel of experts to review the work of officials studying New Orleans levee failures during Hurricane Katrina. ■

–By PW

Kennedy spoke during DWR’s 50th Anniversary celebration at the State Capitol in May of 2006.



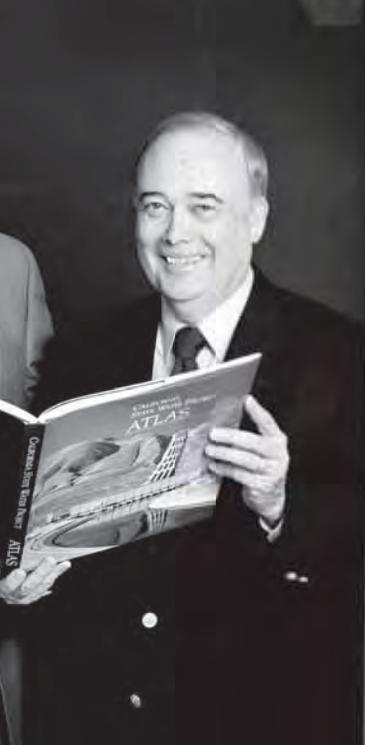
DWR DIRECTOR DAVID KENNEDY (1983-1998)





AP PUMPING PLANT

California Department of Water Resources
STATE WATER PROJECT



DWR MISSION

Statement

To manage the water resources
of California in cooperation
with other agencies,
to benefit the State's people,
and to protect, restore,
and enhance the natural
and human environments.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA • DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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