

INTERVIEW OF GLENN JOHNSON

December 2, 2013

1 MR. STARR: Well, the first thing I'd like to ask
2 you to do, Glenn, is just to give a little brief resumé of
3 what you've done with your life from where you grew up, what
4 education, when you started with the district without a
5 whole lot of a detail.

6 MR. JOHNSON: I grew up on a small farm in
7 northeast Nebraska, near Wakefield. My dad was, from about
8 my earliest days I remember, a member on the county -- Wayne
9 County Conservation Board. I grew up farming two-row
10 terraces and lots and lots of point rows. When we got a
11 little farther along, we started growing four-row, then we
12 increased the size of the terraces. We even got to some
13 steep back (indiscernible). And then I had actually almost
14 left the farm to go to school, but then dad was one of the
15 first that converted over to conservation tillage, the
16 Buffalo planters came out then, and the neighbors all
17 scoffed at him and now you go up there and everybody's doing
18 no-till and conservation tillage. So I grew up in that kind
19 of an ethic and when I graduated out of high school, decided
20 I really was mostly interested in engineering and I thought
21 it was probably agricultural engineering. Came down to the
22 University of Nebraska-Lincoln, got a degree in agricultural
23 engineering in 1972. Graduated on a Saturday, went to work
24 on Mon- -- the next Monday for the Salt Valley Watershed
25 District, where I worked for about six weeks before it

1 transitioned into the Natural Resource District on July 1st
2 of 1972, and I've been here ever since. And I have gone
3 back and -- at UNO in the middle -- early and middle '90s to
4 get a master's degree in public administration.

5 MR. STARR: What -- I'm sure when you graduated
6 that, as a good young engineer, you had some other
7 opportunities. What prompted you to go with Hal Schroeder
8 (phonetic) and Salt Valley originally and then the NRD?

9 MR. JOHNSON: Well, actually, I had three job
10 opportunities and three job proposals. One was with what
11 was then the Soil and Water Conservation Commission still in
12 May, and -- working with Carol Hammond (phonetic) in
13 planning, and another was with the Department of
14 Environmental Control, at that time, and if I recall it
15 would have been in the livestock waste. And I had done some
16 of that when I was in college and, in doing some of my work
17 there in college, I worked in that area. I just saw
18 the -- what I thought was an exciting opportunity with a
19 brand new entity being created with the kind of focus -- I
20 think Hal Schroeder was an interesting person that really
21 peaked my interest and so that's kind of why I selected that
22 one.

23 MR. STARR: As I recall, your office at that point
24 in time was up in the -- near the Crosby Law Firm with a
25 total office not a whole lot bigger than your office now.

1 It's pretty small. You and Hal and Opal.

2 MR. JOHNSON: That's right. Hal and Opal and I.
3 And actually, Hal and Opal were on the same floor as Crosby
4 and shared a corner -- a couple of offices on that same
5 fourth floor. The law firm is still there today. I had a
6 closet up on the eighth floor right across from the elevator
7 with a drafting table and some file cabinets and a calendar
8 on the wall, as I recall, and that's about it. A couple
9 years into it, then, we actually got some -- an additional
10 larger office, two-room suite, and so -- it was still just
11 the three of us, but then we started utilizing Curtis
12 students for work experience and one of the first students
13 we utilized was Rod DeBoer (phonetic) and so Rod worked for
14 us during his work experience and then after he graduated,
15 came back to work for us permanently, so Rod was our fourth
16 employee.

17 MR. STARR: When was it that you moved out of the
18 downtown -- did you move just out here from downtown or was
19 there an interim?

20 MR. JOHNSON: We moved a couple of different -- we
21 were several different places downtown. After we left that
22 building, we moved across the street to the south into the
23 Sharp Building, where we were on the 14th floor. Actually,
24 the NARD office kind of moved around with us because they
25 were on a different floor in that building and then we moved

1 over to North 11th Street, and then they moved into that
2 building also. And so it's probably been, golly, 1985, I
3 suppose, that we moved out here to this location. And then
4 we've expanded and built on in this location and remodeled
5 it several different times.

6 MR. STARR: When you started, what did you
7 see -- you and Hal see as the biggest challenge facing you
8 at that point in time? What were the challenges? I'm sure
9 there were multiple, but --

10 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah. I think that, obviously, the
11 focus at that time when -- just starting in 1972, the Salt
12 Valley Watershed District had quite a few -- had completed
13 some projects, had several different projects going, and
14 studies, and a couple of different watershed projects, the
15 Oak Middle watershed project, which was partially completed,
16 the North Oak project, which hadn't yet been started, the
17 Salt Valley project, Salt Wahoo watershed project, which was
18 completed, and so there was a variety of different levels of
19 those activities from doing operation and maintenance on
20 existing projects. Some of them, even at that time, had
21 been built in -- as early as 1955, so there was a lot
22 of -- some of those projects that were dams that were
23 getting, actually, mature even in 1972. Others were just
24 being constructed at that time and then there were several
25 different watersheds we were looking at. And the Salt

1 Valley Watershed District had been working with the
2 different watershed conservancy districts and soil
3 conservation districts jointly on these various watershed
4 projects and basically just -- when they merged into the
5 NRD, the NRD just picked up the sponsorship of those
6 particular studies. So there was a lot of activity going on
7 with watershed projects at that time. The only other major
8 activity was in Lincoln with the Salt Creek flood control
9 project to improve Salt Creek channel and the levies, and
10 then continue to work on stream stabilization on the major
11 tributaries to Salt Creek in Lincoln. So there was -- that
12 really was just a lot of activity going on.

13 MR. STARR: As you recall, what was Hal's -- what
14 was his vision of what the NRD was to become? How did he
15 see it?

16 MR. JOHNSON: Hal certainly saw it as a much more
17 robust organization than any of the previous organizations
18 had been. When -- he saw the potential in, like, continuing
19 to build the dams, but also making them multipurpose. And
20 so adding recreation -- he saw the whole focus of increasing
21 emphasis on conservation practices and being able to provide
22 more technical assistance, more cost share assistance than
23 had been available previously to supplement what was
24 available through the federal government. I guess an
25 acceleration of that, there were -- and completion of some

1 of these urban storm water projects. There have been a lot
2 of other things that have taken place since then that
3 probably weren't on his radar screen.

4 MR. STARR: The initial board, I think we referred
5 to it as an interim board until they had an election, in
6 your case I think it was fairly large.

7 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, 68.

8 MR. STARR: That's fairly large. How -- did they
9 have a good understanding of what the responsibilities were
10 and was there a lot of negative opinion or was it extremely
11 positive? How would you view the viewpoint of that initial
12 interim board?

13 MR. JOHNSON: I think that, for the most part, it
14 was very positive. I think there was a little fear and
15 protectionism of losing some of those who had been on
16 particularly watershed conservancy boards, where they were
17 either studying or trying to be the sponsors of a watershed
18 project and were afraid that they may -- their project may
19 get lost, may not have continued emphasis on it. And I
20 think there was some concern, not a lot, because I think it
21 was dispelled very quickly with the members of the soil
22 conservation district boards, afraid that the Natural
23 Resources District maybe wouldn't have the continued focus
24 on land conservation, but found very quickly that that was a
25 very strong emphasis point. I think what the district did

1 to organize and regionalize, maybe, they respected those
2 watersheds and actually divided the district directors into
3 working groups in four different -- five different areas
4 actually, one being the urban area of Lincoln and the other
5 four being outside of Lincoln, but primarily combinations of
6 water -- of sub-watersheds. And each one of -- all the
7 directors that lived in each of those were organized as a
8 focus group or as an area group to work in that area as a
9 committee. And then the board -- each of those areas was
10 represented, then, on an executive sub-committee and on
11 the -- which was, I think, 17 maybe, or maybe as much as 21,
12 I can't remember, I think it was like 17 on the executive
13 committee. But, again, it had representatives from all of
14 the five sub-districts -- all the five sub-areas. And then
15 the board met as a whole, all 68 met quarterly. And I think
16 there was enough communication and I didn't sense that any
17 of them were -- really drifted away, didn't feel that they
18 had lost a sense of what their mission was in the
19 organization that they came from.

20 MR. STARR: How did the -- the merger process
21 provided for the merger of whatever the assets were of those
22 various -- and they were split up with other NRDs because of
23 the boundaries and so forth, whether their assets were money
24 in the bank or equipment or buildings or whatever? How did
25 that process go? Did that take a long time?

1 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, it did take quite a while.
2 This district may have been fortunate in that the big dog,
3 the Salt Valley Watershed District, had a fairly good bank
4 account and a good tax base. And so it wasn't critical to
5 pool all of those merged funds immediately to be able to
6 have cash flow and operate your organization.

7 MR. STARR: You had some working capital.

8 MR. JOHNSON: So we were able to maintain those
9 funds in local banks where they had previously been invested
10 and really just changed the name on the CD or whatever the
11 instrument was, and maintain those for many, many years.

12 MR. STARR: Well, there was a provision in the law
13 that those monies were supposed to be spent, although
14 there's flexibility as to how you (indiscernible).

15 MR. JOHNSON: Right, and we did track them
16 carefully and it took us probably 10 years of -- and doing
17 good accounting, but we did spend those funds in the areas
18 where they were generated.

19 MR. STARR: When the first election came around
20 and you established 21 as your board size, and then you had
21 to divide up sub-districts, how they got elected, how
22 painful or easy was that process?

23 MR. JOHNSON: I had to count all the beans. You
24 know, sitting down with all of the census information, and
25 you didn't have computers, you didn't have -- you're doing

1 it all on paper with an adding machine or a very simple
2 calculator, and it really didn't go too badly. We did -- I
3 think we developed three or four different alternative ways
4 of doing it. I mean, we did go into each one of the five
5 sub-areas that we had in the district and held public
6 hearings in each of those to get input on how the new
7 boundaries, the new sub-districts, should be set up. And it
8 was -- we spent a lot of time talking about the -- and
9 really took into account all the factors of where are the
10 problems, where are the projects, where are the people,
11 where does the money come from, and what are the wishes of
12 the people in the district. Those were really, I believe,
13 kind of like the five criteria that you were allowed within
14 the law to consider. You were not constrained, at that
15 point, by a one-person/one-vote, or equal population,
16 because you were presumed to meet the one-person/one-vote
17 because they were nominated by a sub-district and elected
18 at-large ultimately, which was a very cumbersome election
19 but --

20 MR. STARR: Expensive.

21 MR. JOHNSON: Expensive, yes, it was.

22 MR. STARR: When -- I know at the state level,
23 when we looked at the various then 24 districts state-wide,
24 and those issues, because there was concern by some in the
25 legislature about moving to the one-person/one-vote process,

1 and I think, if memory is correct, this district had the
2 biggest disparity in terms of the fact that Lincoln really
3 overpowered the rest of the -- there really wasn't much
4 population as compared to a lot of the districts, it really
5 didn't make much difference. Even Omaha was not quite
6 as -- because of all their urban -- suburban areas, it
7 wasn't quite the disparity there was here. You had the
8 biggest issue, as I recall, looking at it. I think that's
9 probably right. But -- and I think my recollection is,
10 originally, this district looked at half the directors in
11 Lincoln and half outside of Lincoln.

12 MR. JOHNSON: That's exactly right. We have
13 five -- 10 sub-districts and --

14 MR. STARR: But then there were several iterations
15 of what you had to do in terms of ratios, and how was -- how
16 did that process go, those various changes?

17 MR. JOHNSON: We never were -- well, those changes
18 took a lot of thought, I guess, and the philosophy that the
19 board had was kind of an interesting one. They -- and it's
20 really still there today. They wanted to maximize the -- to
21 create the opportunity for the maximum number of non-Lincoln
22 directors to serve on the board, to be elected to the board,
23 and -- but it was also meant that potentially you might have
24 none non-Lincoln directors serving on the board or only one
25 or two because what you had to do was to create your -- the

1 sub-districts generally and carve out a piece of Lincoln to
2 put in with a much, much larger geographically rural area
3 with a smaller population base to get you to that 35,000
4 population in each of the sub-districts, 30- to 35,000. And
5 we still actually have that today and so -- and it, I think,
6 has served the district very well. It's just always been a
7 challenge, I think, for this district to get true production
8 agriculture folks on the board even in those districts where
9 there's plenty of opportunity.

10 MR. STARR: Did the 20- -- the latest census,
11 2010, require you to make a whole lot of change or --

12 MR. JOHNSON: No, not a lot of changes. We did
13 some -- again, some tweaking and came out really pretty
14 well, I think.

15 MR. STARR: Over the years from that first elected
16 board until the 21 folks you have today, how would you
17 characterize the progression of the board in terms of their
18 knowledge, their attitude, their thinking?

19 MR. JOHNSON: Well, certainly, it's not a straight
20 line because we've had a lot of changeover in board members
21 over the years. I mean, we would have anywhere from three
22 to seven new board members come on each time we had an
23 election, so -- and we had a lot of competition. And
24 particularly in the first 25 years, we had a lot more
25 competition for the seats on the board. The -- I think we

1 had -- even one time we had as many as eight or 10
2 candidates in one sub-district for that position. Must have
3 been a very coveted position. It's always been interesting
4 and exciting, and refreshing, to come through an election
5 and have some new ideas and new folks coming onto the board.

6 MR. STARR: Who is your most experienced board
7 member now?

8 MR. JOHNSON: Bob Anderson (phonetic) would be the
9 longest serving board member now.

10 MR. STARR: Twenty years or so?

11 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, Bob and then Ron Svoboda
12 (phonetic), probably. Elaine Hammer's (phonetic) been on a
13 long time.

14 MR. STARR: Yeah, she sure has.

15 MR. JOHNSON: A couple of interesting stories, in
16 that original sub-district -- drawing up of the sub-district
17 boundaries, the district was taken to court on the
18 constitutionality of -- and challenged on the
19 constitutionality of the sub-district boundaries, and that
20 was a challenge brought by the League of Women Voters. And
21 one of the active members of the League of Women Voters was
22 Elaine Hammer.

23 MR. STARR: And Ann Bleed (phonetic).

24 MR. JOHNSON: And Ann Bleed. And now they're both
25 on the board and have served -- Elaine's been on a long time

1 and has served in many positions and served extremely well
2 for the board. The chief lead in the legislature of getting
3 the elections changed to one-person/one-vote that is now the
4 mayor of Lincoln, but his cohort in that is Dave Landis and
5 he's on my board now, too. Dave's on the board for the
6 second time --

7 MR. STARR: He was re-elected.

8 MR. JOHNSON: -- because he was on the board
9 before he went to the legislature.

10 MR. STARR: Way back when, yeah.

11 MR. JOHNSON: He was on the very first board.

12 MR. STARR: Some of the districts have had
13 contested elections over a single issue. Have you ever had
14 that or has that not been --

15 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, we've had some of those. We
16 did have -- on a couple of particular projects, one was the
17 Stevens Creek watershed project and the other was -- I'd say
18 the Weeping Water project, but it was narrower than that, it
19 was the one dam down by Elmwood that was never completed. I
20 think those are two projects where there were slates of
21 candidates put together and organized -- and some organized
22 opposition to particular projects that ran for the board.
23 Earlier even, there was some slates that ran several times
24 that weren't really related to any particular project, but
25 they were the green slate. It was more, I think, just

1 a -- kind of an environmental persuasion. And all of them
2 were, to some degree, successful in putting -- in electing
3 candidates to the board.

4 MR. STARR: A lot of districts have had
5 individuals come on who had, themselves, a real agenda all
6 the way from firing the manager to changing things, to cut
7 the mill levy in half, to whatever, and then after being on
8 the board for a four-year term, by the end of the four years
9 they were some of the better board members. Has that
10 happened to you, too?

11 MR. JOHNSON: Yeah, that has happened, you know,
12 several different occasions. But I've also had it happen
13 where they gain no traction and they decided, "I'm getting
14 off" and they didn't fight it any longer, and that was a
15 couple of cases where you had that or, in some cases, they
16 were elected -- or defeated in the election before they were
17 ever a -- maybe the most contributing member that we've had
18 on the board. The -- I think that's been one of the
19 benefits of having -- and continues to be a benefit of
20 having a large board, is that individuals who are motivated
21 by a personal agenda, it's just much more difficult to push
22 that agenda very hard effectively with the larger board.

23 MR. STARR: When did Hal retire?

24 MR. JOHNSON: Hal retired in '82.

25 MR. STARR: So he was 10 years?

1 MR. JOHNSON: Right.

2 MR. STARR: And then you became the manager at
3 that point?

4 MR. JOHNSON: Correct.

5 MR. STARR: So you're just over 30 years as their
6 manager?

7 MR. JOHNSON: Uh-huh.

8 MR. STARR: Friday or Thursday, whenever it was, I
9 was with John Myoshi. He's almost 30 years with the NRD,
10 not as the manager, but he was a manager virtually all that
11 time because Ray left very shortly after John came on and so
12 forth. So what would you think if Hal could walk in here
13 now and see what this was, what do you think his reaction
14 would be?

15 MR. JOHNSON: My desk and my office is patterned
16 after him, unfortunately, but I think, like him, I know I
17 can find the things in here. A clean desk wasn't
18 necessarily the most important thing to either one of us. I
19 think he would be surprised in some respects by some of the
20 projects that we're involved with, some of the things we're
21 involved with. I don't believe Hal was really ever tuned
22 in, and didn't need to be, to the groundwater issues. They
23 really didn't become very high on the agenda until after he
24 had left. Yeah, we were developing a groundwater management
25 plan because the State said we had to, but their -- it just

1 looked like, where we had groundwater, people were
2 developing it, where we didn't have it, they weren't, but
3 they were getting along fine. I think he would have had
4 some frustrations with having to deal with endangered
5 species issues and certainly with permitting issues that we
6 do today. I think that would have frustrated him even more
7 than it frustrates -- particularly the permitting issues
8 frustrate me. The challenges that are there today, I think
9 he would have bought in to all of the different urban type
10 of activities. Trails? I don't know where he would have
11 been on that. But, you know, we -- really, I came out
12 of -- and he was still in the era where -- and that's where
13 I started was, we were still draining wetlands. We were
14 straightening streams. We were building big dams for flood
15 control.

16 MR. STARR: And flood control only.

17 MR. JOHNSON: And flood control only, and today
18 we're restoring wetlands. Today we are focusing on
19 re-meandering those same streams that we straightened.
20 Instead of building dams, we're looking at, what else can we
21 do to protect the flood plain by either preserving it in
22 advance of development with conservation easements or
23 stronger floodplain mapping and floodplain zoning, or doing
24 some buyouts, let it flood rather -- but manage the flood,
25 manage the flood damages rather than trying to prevent the

1 flood. So it's -- there's been that shift in direction.

2 MR. STARR: That's kind of the change that the
3 Corps of Engineers have had over the years --

4 MR. JOHNSON: Exactly.

5 MR. STARR: -- which is where Hal came from,
6 although he was on the military side of the Corps and not on
7 the stream flood control, et cetera, side of the Corps of
8 Engineers. So what -- you've got this (indiscernible)
9 Antelope project done. What's the district's next big
10 thing?

11 MR. JOHNSON: Well, I think our biggest thing that
12 we're doing right now is this voluntary integrated
13 management plan for the district. We decided to take that
14 on even though our district is not fully appropriated or not
15 been -- and don't know if and when it might be designated,
16 but the board has been very proactive in their groundwater
17 management plan and in their groundwater management
18 responsibilities. We've got nine areas in the district
19 where we've got nitrate problems and we're managing those in
20 different -- three different phases of controls and
21 incentives and regulations. We -- just last month, the
22 board approved a moratorium on any additional new irrigation
23 wells in one area of the district and are looking
24 at -- because last year and this year is really the first
25 we've seen -- we saw a little bit back in the 1970s in this

1 same area of not enough -- in dry times, there's a shortage
2 of groundwater that's just -- or there's some conflicts that
3 take place so we're starting to deal with that. But looking
4 at not just groundwater, but surfacewater, and looking
5 farther into the future in this integrated management plan
6 and on how -- what we have for a water supply in the future,
7 what we have for water needs in the future, and I think the
8 board's very excited about it. The State's very excited.
9 The Department of Natural Resources, I think, is a fantastic
10 partner with us in this and I think they're really excited
11 about having an opportunity to look at a proactive approach
12 rather than where they've had to be, on all the rest of
13 them, is reactive, and having to go back or reverse trends
14 or at least stop where we're at. I think that's one of the
15 big ones. I think the other, in terms of a project, is on
16 the Dead Man's Run floodplain through Lincoln, from 27th or
17 29th and Cornhusker Highway back south and east, through the
18 east campus and through the Gateway Shopping Center area,
19 back through that way.

20 MR. STARR: You have, over the years, have done
21 some things that are --

22 MR. JOHNSON: We've done a lot of stream bank
23 stabilization. It was a very -- over the years as the city
24 grew, they simply just took the small meandering channel
25 that went through farm fields, golf courses, plant

1 nurseries, and basically straightened it. And when you
2 straighten it and then urbanize the drainage area, all of a
3 sudden it becomes a chasm, just straight vertical sides and
4 deep, and very erosive, so we -- that was a major focus in
5 the 1970s through the -- 1970s and 1980s finishing doing
6 that, basically stabilizing that stream and -- to a position
7 where it's very, very stable now. But, unfortunately, the
8 watershed is all urbanized and the channel and the bridges
9 can't convey all that water without some significant
10 flooding. There's a major, major floodplain area starting,
11 really, at 52nd and Holdrege that kind of bulges out in that
12 area as you go north and west. And then, really, from 48th
13 Street to 33rd Street, north from the east campus, through
14 that whole area, is -- there's 900-and-some structures in
15 that 100-year floodplain, houses, buildings, so forth, and
16 it's a very challenging floodplain to reconstruct in and
17 build because you've got to meet the new construction
18 standards. And there's a lot of older homes, small,
19 substandard, you know, that -- so it's -- the neighborhood's
20 not going to probably be able to get a lot better just
21 because of the economic disincentives from rebuilding the
22 floodplain. We, and the city, did a study looking at that
23 watershed more at water quality and also -- and water
24 quantity, and identified what we think is a potential
25 project that could take as many as 800 of those structures

1 out of the 100-year floodplain. It primarily involves doing
2 some off-stream detention in one or two sites and then
3 improving the bridge openings, improving the conveyance of
4 the channel so it will capture and contain more of the flood
5 waters, but it's got a price tag of about \$50,000,000.

6 We've been working with the Corps of Engineers on that
7 project to initiate a study, just like we did on Antelope
8 Creek. Unfortunately, we're in the timeframe -- we're in
9 the era of no earmarks and the Corps of Engineers and
10 Congress have not been able to resolve that issue as to how
11 to deal with Corps of Engineers' projects that traditionally
12 were always designated by name, authorized by name, funded
13 by name, even though they were all thoroughly vetted with
14 economic analysis and studies, and environmental studies,
15 but they weren't what were the bad earmarks, but they were
16 combined in with all the earmarks. So we've been

17 (indiscernible) at getting that one started that way. We
18 did include this year, in our budget, a joint study with the
19 City. Basically, we're going to initiate that same type of
20 a study on our own. If, subsequently, we can -- things
21 change at the federal level and we can bring in some federal
22 funding or the new funding study at the State comes up with
23 a big pot of gold at the end of the rainbow and we can
24 quality for that --

25 MR. STARR: I wouldn't spend it yet.

1 MR. JOHNSON: -- it's a great candidate project
2 for resource development funds. But, again, the long -- the
3 line is long and the pot isn't very big.

4 MR. STARR: It ain't 50,000,000, that's for sure.

5 MR. JOHNSON: So we're -- the need is critical
6 enough that our board is -- and the City have decided that
7 they were at least willing to start out on that study by
8 themselves and it's a big project.

9 MR. STARR: Back in Hal Schroeder's day, my
10 observation was that Hal was inclined to do things by hiring
11 engineers, professionals, to do studies, hiring people to do
12 work and so forth, and I know that's evolved some, but I
13 think my observation is that that's still kind of the board
14 and your philosophy.

15 MR. JOHNSON: Yes. We've had the discussion many,
16 many, many times as to -- and this kind of goes with new
17 board members coming on -- and when they are brought some
18 recommendations before the board for consideration for
19 engineering studies and they look at the price of the
20 engineering they go, "My goodness, why can't we put some
21 staff on to do that engineering in-house?" And I said,
22 "Okay, here's the reality of it. We may have anywhere from
23 eight to 15 studies going on with six, seven different firms
24 all at the same time."

25 MR. STARR: With different expertises.

1 MR. JOHNSON: With different expertise. I said,
2 "Which two of those do you want the in-house engineering
3 staff to work on and we've still got to farm out the rest
4 because we just -- we cannot afford to hire a staff that can
5 do -- that has that multiple expertise," and it -- so we're
6 still keeping the engineering industry in business.

7 MR. STARR: It's really appreciated.

8 MR. JOHNSON: And we've -- we do the same thing
9 with construction and contracting. We've never gotten into
10 the construction end of it ourselves. We have minimal
11 equipment and we hire most of that done.

12 MR. STARR: And you're in a position where the
13 availability of those folks, both from the planning and
14 construction side, are available, whereas some of the
15 districts don't have that luxury.

16 MR. JOHNSON: That's absolutely true. That's a
17 real asset we've had here. One of the other assets we have
18 here is the Department of Corrections. And since at least
19 1980, and maybe earlier than that, we've had one or two
20 crews of inmates from the Department of Corrections working
21 for the District year-round doing -- assisting doing
22 operation and maintenance. We've had a really good
23 relationship with the Department. It's been beneficial
24 definitely for us and we think for them, and I think we've
25 got a good record.

1 MR. STARR: Glenn, I've about run out of
2 questions. Is there anything else that you'd like to put on
3 record or anything other thoughts that you have about the
4 40-plus years of the NRDs?

5 MR. JOHNSON: Well, I will say that in the 40
6 years, the board of directors of this district have always
7 been, in my opinion, very willing to tackle the tough
8 issues. They've been progressive. They have been good
9 partners. I think they've been willing to partner with
10 anybody and everybody on projects, and not really feeling
11 like they need to take the credit for it. They feel that
12 there's -- they can leverage a lot more through working with
13 people than they can by themselves. But they've always
14 done -- they've made good decisions. They've done valuable
15 projects and they haven't gone off in what, you know, I
16 think might be -- some people would have considered wrong
17 directions.

18 MR. STARR: Good. Well, I sure thank you, Glenn.
19 I appreciate your time.

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