

NRD ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview of Doyle Lavene by  
Dayle Williamson & John Turnbull

October 7, 2014

1 PROCEEDINGS, October 7, 2014:

2 MR. WILLIAMSON: This is Dayle Williamson, and I'm  
3 accompanied today by John Turnbull, manager of the Upper  
4 Blue Natural Resources District. Well, we have the pleasure  
5 of interviewing Doyle Lavene today as part of the Natural  
6 Resources District's Oral History Project for the Nebraska  
7 State Historical Society. This interview is being conducted  
8 on October the 7<sup>th</sup> in the Buffalo County Extension Office in  
9 Kearney, Nebraska.

10 And so, Doyle, we'd like you to tell us a little  
11 about yourself, and your occupation, and your background.  
12 And then we'll go into how you became involved in the NRD  
13 movement. So, it's all yours.

14 MR. LAVENE: Well, I guess, I kind of give the  
15 history first maybe. I kind of wanted to get involved in  
16 politics or government or something, and I didn't know  
17 anything about the NRD. And I was up in the Gosper County  
18 Courthouse talking to, I don't know if you know him, Carlton  
19 Clark, --

20 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

21 MR. LAVENE: -- who was a county attorney and  
22 later a judge. But he told me I ought to run for this  
23 position, and I didn't, like I said, I didn't know anything  
24 about it at that time. But I did. And they got my  
25 signatures. And I run. And that was in, what was it, was

1 the first election in '74?

2 MR. TURNBULL: November of '74.

3 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

4 MR. TURNBULL: Yes.

5 MR. LAVENE: It was passed in '69, but it never  
6 went into effect totally until after the '74 election.

7 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, the districts - yeah, the law  
8 was passed in '69 and the districts started operation in  
9 July of '72. And that - the original board was the  
10 combination of soil and water conservation district --

11 MR. LAVENE: Okay.

12 MR. TURNBULL: -- board members and watershed  
13 board members from various areas in the state. And then the  
14 first elected board was the one that you were elected to,  
15 which the election was in fall of '74, and you took office  
16 probably --

17 MR. LAVENE: Right.

18 MR. TURNBULL: -- in January of '75.

19 MR. LAVENE: Yeah. That's what I remember --

20 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

21 MR. LAVENE: -- cause I tried - when I looked up,  
22 I couldn't quite remember how that transitioned --

23 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

24 MR. LAVENE: -- from '69 when the law was  
25 passed --

1 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, you couldn't do away with  
2 the board members that were elected on these. One district  
3 had over 100 board members.

4 MR. LAVENE: Oh.

5 MR. WILLIAMSON: And it was an executive setup, so  
6 they all didn't have to meet. But, so, that was --

7 MR. LAVENE: That was --

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: You're right then --

9 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- you started out in - after the  
11 '74 election. Yeah.

12 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

14 MR. LAVENE: Well, I guess, I'd always been  
15 in -- on the farm all my life outside of, well, I guess, all  
16 my life. Went to college. Graduated from Kearney. But  
17 basically farmed. And lived on the same farm all my life  
18 there in Gosper County. And was always interested way back  
19 when in irrigation. I loved to set siphon tubes. That was  
20 my --

21 MR. WILLIAMSON: Boy.

22 MR. LAVENE: -- forte.

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: If I'd interviewed you after  
24 hearing that, I'd put you in one of the military academies.

25 MR. LAVENE: Oh, is that right?

1                   MR. WILLIAMSON: Any young man that said he loved  
2 to set siphon tubes, when I interviewed them, I thought,  
3 "Boy, there's somebody that'll stick to the job."

4                   MR. LAVENE: Well, I did. I wasn't in the  
5 military though. But, anyhow, yeah, I went to several  
6 contests. They had them in Elwood, and they had them in  
7 Holdrege. And I won, I think, in Gosper County. And then  
8 we -- they had the state meet in Cozad.

9                   MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

10                  MR. LAVENE: And I --

11                  MR. WILLIAMSON: And, for history, tell us a  
12 little bit about what a siphon tube was. Now, some people  
13 are going to listen to this 40 years from now, and  
14 they'll -- they won't know what were talking about. So --

15                  MR. LAVENE: Well it was --

16                  MR. WILLIAMSON: -- tell us about a siphon tube.

17                  MR. LAVENE: Well, it was a major advancement when  
18 you had gravity irrigation. You had siphon tubes. You had  
19 your dams to keep the water built up. You had a slope,  
20 whatever. I mean it was quite a jump from the lathe boxes,  
21 which we still had them sitting around. I never did use  
22 them though. They dug in individually. So --

23                  MR. TURNBULL: Dug these into a little head canal  
24 on the heading --

25                  MR. LAVENE: Well you had just your regular little

1 ditch --

2 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

3 MR. LAVENE: -- the same as you did with the --  
4 later with the siphon tube.

5 MR. TURNBULL: Right.

6 MR. LAVENE: But you had to dig. The boxes were  
7 about yea so big. Some --

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: Made out of four lathes.

9 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, yeah.

10 MR. TURNBULL: I've got two of them on display in  
11 my office.

12 MR. LAVENE: Oh, is that right?

13 MR. TURNBULL: Yes.

14 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, well we had some --

15 MR. WILLIAMSON: Tell you this is a good part of  
16 history. That's what we want to pick up.

17 MR. LAVENE: Well --

18 MR. TURNBULL: Ted Regier (phonetic) gave those to  
19 me several years ago while he was still alive.

20 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, yeah.

21 MR. LAVENE: We had some, but they were laying out  
22 behind the shed. And they got rid of them. Of course, they  
23 rotted away, but --

24 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

25 MR. LAVENE: -- but, the siphon tube, yeah,

1       they -- first, they were plastic. And you just stuck them  
2       down in the ditch, and basically, what I did. You put them  
3       down in the ditch, and let them fill with water. And put  
4       your hand over them. Pull them over. And that's how you  
5       set them. Some people would pump them, pump them, but  
6       basically I, for speed, if you just shoved them down into  
7       the water and put your hand over them and pulled them over,  
8       and you had them going.

9               MR. TURNBULL: Now --

10              MR. WILLIAMSON: Now --

11              MR. TURNBULL: -- these were a tube that were  
12       about what --

13              MR. LAVENE: Yeah, curved.

14              MR. TURNBULL: -- three feet long with a curve in  
15       it --

16              MR. LAVENE: Yeah, right. Yeah.

17              MR. TURNBULL: -- it's kind of a -- not a U shape,  
18       but kind of --

19              MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

20              MR. TURNBULL: -- (indiscernible) --

21              MR. LAVENE: And they had different sizes.

22              MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

23              MR. LAVENE: They had an inch, and an inch and a  
24       half. And up to two.

25              MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

1           MR. LAVENE: And then later they come out with  
2 aluminum --

3           MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

4           MR. LAVENE: -- with a neck on them --

5           MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

6           MR. LAVENE: -- instead of the like, the old  
7 plastic --

8           MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

9           MR. LAVENE: -- because the plastic would break --

10          MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

11          MR. LAVENE: -- pretty easy. So they come out  
12 with aluminum and also rubber, --

13          MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

14          MR. LAVENE: -- the rubber, big heavy ones so --

15          MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

16          MR. WILLIAMSON: And when you went to those  
17 contests and won the contest, you many could you -- how fast  
18 could you go?

19          MR. LAVENE: Oh, I don't remember what you -- I  
20 think we set 25. I don't know how long. It didn't -- it  
21 wasn't very long.

22          MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

23          MR. LAVENE: But it was -- I don't if you -- the  
24 name well, Sodderhome (phonetic) --

25          MR. TURNBULL: Yes.



1 MR. LAVENE: -- he was on the board.

2 MR. TURNBULL: Yes.

3 MR. LAVENE: But he had I don't know how many  
4 kids. But the boys and girls both set, and they could beat  
5 me in Phelps County. So that's why I had to win in Gosper.

6 MR. TURNBULL: Was his first name Art?

7 MR. LAVENE: Art Sodderhome.

8 MR. TURNBULL: Yes.

9 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

10 MR. TURNBULL: I remember.

11 MR. LAVENE: And those kids all set siphon tubes.

12 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

13 MR. LAVENE: And then they were all entered in the  
14 Phelps County. They were in Phelps County, so.

15 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

16 MR. LAVENE: So, I come in usually second or third  
17 to them there. And, anyhow, and then I won in Elwood. So I  
18 got to go to the state in Cozad. So that was --

19 MR. WILLIAMSON: Well that's a -- really a good  
20 part of history so -- there you started setting siphon  
21 tubes, you're interested in irrigation, and then your next  
22 step, well, you got on an NRD board.

23 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, yeah, that was kind of the  
24 jump. In between there though --

25 MR. WILLIAMSON: Oh, yeah.

1           MR. LAVENE: I didn't even like it when we went to  
2 pipe even though it was easier, but I still hated to give up  
3 the siphon tubes. But we did go to pipe.

4           MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

5           MR. LAVENE: You know, with pipe, but then you had  
6 to move and carry them all the time. And that was quite a  
7 job. Yeah, I got on, and I didn't know that much about the  
8 NRDs. But I learned. You know, but -- water is for  
9 fighting. And some of the rules on the runoff, why, we had  
10 quite the go-rounds with some of the farmers that had always  
11 run their water off, you know --

12          MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

13          MR. LAVENE: -- onto the neighbor, and didn't care  
14 about conserving it.

15          MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

16          MR. LAVENE: And, of course, you know, you went  
17 through all the rules, and tried to stop the --

18          MR. TURNBULL: Yep.

19          MR. LAVENE: Some of the --

20          MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

21          MR. LAVENE: -- farmers got really upset with us.  
22 Back then, you still had summer fallow. And some of the  
23 rough ground in Kearney County. I remember one run off  
24 deal. Why every time he'd get ready to work his summer  
25 fallow, why his neighbor would have run off going through

1 his summer --

2 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

3 MR. LAVENE: -- fallow.

4 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

5 MR. LAVENE: And we finally got him to stop it,  
6 but he wasn't very happy with the board or anybody that  
7 thought they could tell him what to do with his water. I'm  
8 not going to mention any names. But then later, he come out  
9 when I was irrigating. And drove down this dirt road. And  
10 I had covered or bladed up the ends so I'd hold the water in  
11 the field. Well, I had got too much water in it, and it  
12 broke out.

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: Sure.

14 MR. LAVENE: And, of course, it run in to  
15 the -- cross the road, through a culvert, and through a  
16 neighbor, and down through another neighbor which ended up  
17 in a reuse pit. It did. But he took pictures and brought  
18 it in and wanted to file a complaint against me. But the  
19 only problem was, I didn't have a well that was surface  
20 water. And I had already talked to the farmers down below.  
21 One had just run through a little bit of his pasture. And  
22 the other was my neighbor, and he used the water, so --

23 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

24 MR. LAVENE: But they -- he didn't realize that I  
25 didn't have a well --

1 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

2 MR. LAVENE: -- on that quarter, it was all  
3 Tri-County.

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: Can you give us a rough estimate  
5 of how much water was being used back in '74 on an acre of  
6 corn?

7 MR. LAVENE: Oh, God. I don't know. We  
8 used -- we got water from Tri-County. We got it every three  
9 weeks. And you was allowed, what was it, up to 18 inches.

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

11 MR. LAVENE: I don't know -- I don't recall, you  
12 know, keeping track. I'm sure I took all the water I could.

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: Sure.

14 MR. LAVENE: And it was, in the dry years, it was  
15 too far apart.

16 MR. WILLIAMSON: Uh-huh.

17 MR. LAVENE: Really, you know, three-week  
18 schedule.

19 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, you had to pay for it so --

20 MR. LAVENE: Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah, and some  
21 farmers later on or -- we even, you know, complained they  
22 was still -- when we started running short in McConaughy,  
23 that people -- no matter what, if they had a three inch rain  
24 the night before, they was due to start the next day, they'd  
25 want to run their water.

1 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

2 MR. LAVENE: Well, it probably run for an hour and  
3 it was out the end of the field.

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

5 MR. LAVENE: But you said you it, if I paid for  
6 it, I'm going to use it, and --

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: And those are things that have  
8 changed over the years.

9 MR. LAVENE: Oh, definitely.

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

11 MR. LAVENE: When you try -- well -- when they put  
12 in reuse pits, and then use that water, I mean, that helped.  
13 It helped you irrigate. Maybe you could irrigate ten acres  
14 off of the pit.

15 MR. WILLIAMSON: Sure.

16 MR. LAVENE: And that made a difference, because,  
17 you know -- even in Gosper County we figured you had to have  
18 three acres signed up, of course the water was what, 250 an  
19 acre or something --

20 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

21 MR. LAVENE: -- if I recall.

22 MR. TURNBULL: I don't remember the numbers.

23 MR. LAVENE: On Tri-County -- so, you figured you  
24 could only -- you'd need three acres signed to accurately  
25 water one acre.

1 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

2 MR. LAVENE: So it was definitely -- and then, of  
3 course, that was in the 50s when the wells all started --

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

5 MR. LAVENE: -- coming in.

6 MR. WILLIAMSON: What were some of your early  
7 experiences with -- when you got on the NRD board?

8 MR. LAVENE: Well, like I said, I didn't really  
9 know what it entailed, but you found out really. You  
10 know --

11 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

12 MR. LAVENE: -- it was trying to control the  
13 water. Keep it on your farm.

14 MR. WILLIAMSON: Uh-huh.

15 MR. LAVENE: And use it to the best of your  
16 ability. I don't know, of course, back then, when the wells  
17 started going in, why, everybody could drill a well. It  
18 didn't matter who, or what, or when, or where. I mean you  
19 could drill a well. But I think the biggest thing on it was  
20 enforcement, and the problems we had on run off from wells  
21 in the early stages. Because people didn't have pits. And,  
22 like I said, just thought, well I'll run out to the end of  
23 the field and you knew -- you thought your rows were through  
24 then so you'd change it. But it was -- yeah, that was one  
25 of the --

1           And going out and examining like we had -- the  
2           tributaries, the creek -- we had Loss (phonetic) Creek, and  
3           the problems that it had from flooding and stuff -- a lot of  
4           the, you know, run too much, because nobody -- when you was  
5           gravity and you was running off a lot, then if you got a  
6           rain, why, you know, it run off too. It isn't like today  
7           when you have minimum till, and then you try to hold most of  
8           the water. Of course, now you got the pivots on  
9           practically, I don't know what, 75 percent of the ground.

10           MR. TURNBULL: Probably 75, yeah.

11           MR. LAVENE: They might have a combination of both  
12           pivot --

13           MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

14           MR. LAVENE: But it was just, it kind of evolved.  
15           Of course, I was on the NRD board 13 years. And then I was  
16           on the Central Board for 20 years. So I kind of had to  
17           change my thinking going from groundwater to surface water.

18           MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

19           MR. LAVENE: And it didn't -- the groundwater  
20           people then, we probably didn't agree on everything. After  
21           I made the leap onto the Tri-County to the Central Nebraska  
22           Public Power and Irrigation Board.

23           MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

24           MR. LAVENE: So it was a learning process. I  
25           mean, I didn't -- I'd farm, like I said, farmed all my life.

1 But I, you know, of course, getting into rules and  
2 regulations. And going to the legislature and debating. I  
3 mean, we always had the water laws were up for debate.

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: Sure.

5 MR. LAVENE: And going down and visiting with the  
6 senators. That was -- I enjoyed that.

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

8 MR. TURNBULL: So you were on the board about six  
9 months then when you hired me.

10 MR. LAVENE: Was that what it was, yeah?

11 MR. TURNBULL: I think so --

12 MR. LAVENE: Well --

13 MR. TURNBULL: -- because I came in June of '75.

14 MR. LAVENE: Okay, so I can't remember, who did we  
15 have there?

16 MR. TURNBULL: Gene Stoklasa was the manager.

17 MR. LAVENE: Okay.

18 MR. TURNBULL: And Gene quit, and then I threw my  
19 hat in the ring and got lucky and you hired me.

20 MR. LAVENE: And then you left us, because you  
21 wanted to go to bigger and better things.

22 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, I guess you could put it that  
23 way.

24 MR. LAVENE: We weren't active enough, I guess.

25 Or we didn't have as much.





1 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

2 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

3 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

4 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, Gene started a nursery there  
5 in Holdrege for awhile after he quit the district.

6 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

7 MR. TURNBULL: A little retail plant nursery.

8 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

9 MR. TURNBULL: Did that for, I don't know, a year  
10 or two and then he went to work for Central Platte.

11 MR. LAVENE: Oh, is that right?

12 MR. TURNBULL: Something like that.

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

14 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

15 MR. WILLIAMSON: And Gene Stoklasa worked  
16 for -- in the state office with us --

17 MR. TURNBULL: Before that?

18 MR. WILLIAMSON: Before that.

19 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, yeah.

20 MR. WILLIAMSON: Before he became manager. A lot  
21 of our people from the state office went out as managers.

22 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: So we lost quite a few people,  
24 but it was good.

25 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

1 MR. WILLIAMSON: Because they, you know, they'd  
2 been through all the legislation and stuff, and it --

3 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- was a good group to get hired  
5 out in the districts.

6 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah. And there was quite a lot  
8 of controversy when the NRDs got started, and you came on a  
9 little later, Doyle. And were people still a little upset  
10 by some of it? Some people were upset by the NRDs taking  
11 over the old soil and water districts.

12 MR. LAVENE: Well, I don't recall really --

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

14 MR. LAVENE: -- much of that being --

15 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

16 MR. LAVENE: -- any kind of a problem, but --

17 MR. WILLIAMSON: It kind of settled down before  
18 you got started.

19 MR. LAVENE: But I think most -- when the first  
20 wells started going in, you thought it was your water and --

21 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

22 MR. LAVENE: -- you did damn well what you pleased  
23 with it.

24 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

25 MR. LAVENE: And that was -- to try and change

1           that scenario, for some, was --

2                   MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

3                   MR. LAVENE: -- pretty hard to do.

4                   MR. WILLIAMSON: Sure.

5                   MR. LAVENE: I mean try to --

6                   MR. TURNBULL: It's taken us a generation to --

7                   MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

8                   MR. TURNBULL: -- change that attitude.

9                   MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

10                  MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

11                  MR. TURNBULL: Literally --

12                  MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

13                  MR. TURNBULL: -- I think.

14                  MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

15                  MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

16                  MR. LAVENE: Well, like I said, you think it's  
17 your -- it's under your property --

18                  MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh, yeah.

19                  MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

20                  MR. LAVENE: -- it's yours. You can use it any  
21 way, shape, or form.

22                  MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

23                  MR. WILLIAMSON: Uh-huh.

24                  MR. LAVENE: But we found out, I guess you need  
25 to --

1 MR. TURNBULL: I was thinking --

2 MR. LAVENE: -- conserve.

3 MR. TURNBULL: -- I was thinking yesterday about  
4 when I was here from '75 to '78, we dealt a lot with some  
5 drainage projects.

6 MR. LAVENE: Uh-huh.

7 MR. TURNBULL: Like you mentioned Loss Creek. And  
8 there were some others in the northern part of the district  
9 like that. And I didn't get a chance this morning to go  
10 back and look, but were those some wetter than normal years  
11 in the mid 70's?

12 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, possibly, they might of been,  
13 because we come up with what was the IPA.

14 MR. TURNBULL: Yes, the improvement project areas.

15 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

16 MR. TURNBULL: Yes, yes.

17 MR. WILLIAMSON: Uh-huh.

18 MR. LAVENE: Yeah. And that was -- yeah, we had a  
19 lot of battles on --

20 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

21 MR. LAVENE: -- that too.

22 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

23 MR. LAVENE: Because they had a pay a little more,  
24 and do some things --

25 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

1 MR. LAVENE: -- within the area --

2 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, uh-huh.

3 MR. LAVENE: -- that you set up the IPA. They had  
4 to vote it in first of all.

5 MR. TURNBULL: Right, right.

6 MR. LAVENE: The farmers.

7 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

8 MR. LAVENE: And some of them, there again, didn't  
9 really want to do anything about it. But --

10 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, they wanted the other guy to  
11 pay for it.

12 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

13 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

14 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, or flush it on down as far as  
15 you could.

16 MR. TURNBULL: Yes. I remember wading out in the  
17 middle of Funk Lagoon with people looking at that thing.

18 MR. LAVENE: Oh, is that right?

19 MR. TURNBULL: (Indiscernible) years, yes.

20 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, yeah.

21 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, yeah. Well in the central  
22 Nebraska project brought a lot of water into the area,  
23 and --

24 MR. LAVENE: Oh, yeah.

25 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- filled the aquifer so --

1 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

2 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- that was kind of cropping up  
3 at that time.

4 MR. TURNBULL: Yes, yeah.

5 MR. WILLIAMSON: That's where those issues came  
6 from.

7 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, we had a -- we not only had  
8 the storm run off to deal with in Loss Creek --

9 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

10 MR. TURNBULL: -- and some of those, but you have,  
11 where the high groundwater table, particularly --

12 MR. WILLIAMSON: High groundwater table.

13 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

14 MR. TURNBULL: -- there were some parts along the  
15 main canal system, there were some, you know, some seepage  
16 problems that caused some drainage issues --

17 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

18 MR. TURNBULL: -- for folks.

19 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

20 MR. TURNBULL: Wet spots showing up right next to  
21 the canal, and so on. So it was a little contentious trying  
22 to sort that out.

23 MR. LAVENE: And I had that on both boards too.  
24 Then when I got on the Central Board --

25 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

1 MR. LAVENE: -- why then we had to --

2 MR. TURNBULL: Deal with it there too.

3 MR. LAVENE: -- buy some ground. And we to --  
4 when we put it Elwood --

5 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

6 MR. LAVENE: -- Reservoir --

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: Uh-huh.

8 MR. LAVENE: -- and different things --

9 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

10 MR. LAVENE: -- you do have high water table  
11 issues, and --

12 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

13 MR. LAVENE: -- they're still fighting that  
14 today, --

15 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, yeah.

16 MR. LAVENE: -- some of them out there.

17 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

18 MR. LAVENE: So it's --

19 MR. TURNBULL: What was the board member's name  
20 from Smithfield? First name was Jerry. He was on the board  
21 when you were, little short guy.

22 MR. LAVENE: Jerry -- I don't --

23 MR. TURNBULL: I can't remember his name now.

24 MR. LAVENE: Smithfield, Jerry. I don't recall.

25 MR. TURNBULL: I remember Millard Johnson.



1 Millard was --

2 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

3 MR. TURNBULL: -- the treasurer.

4 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, yeah.

5 MR. TURNBULL: What was the fellow from Kearney,  
6 Newboldt (phonetic)?

7 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, yeah, Ozzie (phonetic).

8 MR. TURNBULL: Ozzie Newboldt.

9 MR. WILLIAMSON: Ozzie Newboldt.

10 MR. TURNBULL: Yes.

11 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

12 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

13 MR. TURNBULL: Ozzie Newboldt.

14 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, and I think Sweet (phonetic)

15 Fastenal (phonetic) was on --

16 MR. TURNBULL: Yes.

17 MR. LAVENE: -- from Gosper County.

18 MR. TURNBULL: That's right.

19 MR. LAVENE: And I think he come on maybe two  
20 years later, or --

21 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

22 MR. LAVENE: Was the first term just two years?

23 Or how --

24 MR. TURNBULL: There were some of them that  
25 were --

1 MR. WILLIAMSON: Split terms, yeah.

2 MR. TURNBULL: Some were two years and some were  
3 fours --

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: Two years and some were four.

5 MR. TURNBULL: -- they tried to get the --

6 MR. WILLIAMSON: To get the board, you know,  
7 rotated, yeah.

8 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

9 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

10 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, so you didn't vote on them all  
11 at once.

12 MR. TURNBULL: Right.

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

14 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

15 MR. WILLIAMSON: Uh-huh, yeah.

16 MR. TURNBULL: Bill Umberger was on the board when  
17 I came.

18 MR. LAVENE: Yeah. But I don't recall, you said  
19 it -- a Jerry?

20 MR. TURNBULL: Jerry. I cannot think of his last  
21 name. Doesn't matter.

22 MR. WILLIAMSON: No.

23 MR. TURNBULL: We'll think of it. We'll remember  
24 as soon as this is over.

25 MR. WILLIAMSON: Well I remember the other name.

1 MR. LAVENE: Well, Larry Reynolds, but he came on  
2 later.

3 MR. TURNBULL: He came on later.

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

5 MR. TURNBULL: Yes.

6 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

7 MR. TURNBULL: He wasn't on the board while I was  
8 there.

9 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

10 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

11 MR. TURNBULL: I've gotten well acquainted with  
12 him over the last 10, 20 years or so.

13 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

14 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

15 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, he's a --

16 MR. WILLIAMSON: I knew him as an air guard pilot.

17 MR. LAVENE: Oh yeah, yeah.

18 MR. TURNBULL: Yes.

19 MR. LAVENE: That's right. Yeah, he was in that.

20 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, yeah. I'd see him there.

21 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, Larry and I have lots of  
22 flying conversations --

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

24 MR. TURNBULL: -- when we're together.

25 MR. WILLIAMSON: He didn't fly low and slow

1           though.

2                   MR. TURNBULL:  No.  He called me crazy.

3                   MR. WILLIAMSON:  Yeah, that's good.

4                   MR. TURNBULL:  That's better than what's other  
5 people have called me.  So I'm happy with that.

6                   MR. WILLIAMSON:  Well, what other things would you  
7 like to comment on, Doyle, and it's good to pick up your  
8 thoughts here as you started as one of the very first board  
9 members, elected board members.

10                  MR. LAVENE:  Right.

11                  MR. WILLIAMSON:  Yeah, yeah.

12                  MR. LAVENE:  Well I said it was, it was quite a  
13 learning situation really.

14                  MR. TURNBULL:  Yeah, yeah.

15                  MR. LAVENE:  I'd never, you know, thought about  
16 any type of rules or laws or anything that -- on water.

17                  MR. TURNBULL:  Uh-huh.

18                  MR. LAVENE:  And there really wasn't before the --

19                  MR. WILLIAMSON:  No, no.

20                  MR. LAVENE:  -- NRDs --

21                  MR. WILLIAMSON:  Yeah.

22                  MR. LAVENE:  -- started, there wasn't any kind of  
23 regulations --

24                  MR. WILLIAMSON:  Yeah.

25                  MR. LAVENE:  -- that I know of before.

1 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

2 MR. LAVENE: They might -- I don't know what -- I  
3 wasn't acquainted with the conservation districts, so I  
4 didn't know exactly what their --

5 MR. TURNBULL: Well they didn't --

6 MR. WILLIAMSON: They really didn't have any. And  
7 of course, the NRD law didn't cover all that. But it's just  
8 like --

9 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- any law, you just keep  
11 improving, you know. You don't --

12 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- no one writes a perfect law.  
14 And so --

15 MR. LAVENE: No.

16 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- you gotta keep doing it.

17 MR. TURNBULL: Well, and that first groundwater  
18 management act, that was passed in the spring of '75 by the  
19 legislature and went into effect that summer of 1975. And  
20 so that was the one that set up that we needed to regulate  
21 irrigation run off from wells.

22 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

23 MR. TURNBULL: And so that -- we were just -- I  
24 remember Jim Cook on your staff helped us write those first  
25 set of regulations.

1 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, yeah. I think we --

2 MR. TURNBULL: And then you guys sent me out into  
3 the field to make it go work. And I remember dealing with  
4 those guys saying, "No, it's my water. I can run it off if  
5 I want."

6 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, that was -- I think that  
7 was -- it was a learning experience.

8 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

9 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

10 MR. LAVENE: It definitely was.

11 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah. We started out talking  
12 about siphon tubes, and then we went to gated pipe. Say  
13 something about the current day, Doyle, with center-pivot  
14 systems off the canals and so on. You want to comment on  
15 that?

16 MR. LAVENE: Well that's been a --

17 MR. WILLIAMSON: That would be good for history  
18 here.

19 MR. LAVENE: -- that's been quite an improvement  
20 for the amount of water we use on even -- I mean with the  
21 wells and with surface water. But, I mean, first and  
22 foremost was with wells. And you kind of learned to come  
23 in -- I don't know they've been here, what 50 years?  
24 Pivots? I mean, but --

25 MR. TURNBULL: Probably.

1           MR. LAVENE: -- it took a while. I know I bought  
2           some ground from my uncle. And I was gonna -- I checked out  
3           to -- see this was back in '70 something. No, maybe it was  
4           later than that. Well, I can't remember. Anyhow, I looked  
5           in to it. And, of course, I wasn't acquainted with pivots  
6           so I -- gravity was all I knew, because we didn't have any  
7           pivots. So I got an estimate from the land leveler who was  
8           a good friend of mine. And, of course, he come up with a  
9           bill like around \$20,000.00 would be to level it. And it  
10          was going to run two ways. And you have to lay all this  
11          pipe. And I got to looking into it, and that's when I  
12          decided maybe to go with the pivot. And, I mean, I'm glad I  
13          did.

14          MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

15          MR. LAVENE: Because then they didn't cost near as  
16          much. I mean the leveling, and then I'd still have all the  
17          work with gated pipe and everything. But that's, you know,  
18          that was something that changed my mind. And once you had  
19          one, why you wanted one everywhere you could put one. What  
20          you could afford to put one.

21          MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

22          MR. LAVENE: Because, yeah, it's just so much  
23          handier. I mean there's problems with them. They get  
24          stuck. They have some problems with them.

25          MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

1           MR. LAVENE: They always get stuck on a hot, hot  
2 day. And you have to go out in the middle of the cornfield  
3 and change a tire or something. So -- or drag it out, or  
4 take out -- level the rock, and try to back it up and go  
5 forward, and so. And they sometimes run over vehicles and  
6 run up on barns. There was a neighbor of mine that went up.  
7 They put it in. They had a farmstead right there. They  
8 thought it would miss, and it went up on the barn. Tipped  
9 everything over. And I -- friend of mine had his pickup.  
10 They was out there running it, and climbed right over the  
11 top of the pickup. I mean it's amazing what they'll do.

12           MR. WILLIAMSON: I love that story. You know,  
13 that's only the second one I remember about. We had a good  
14 guy from Ravenna, Nebraska, Herman Link. And Herman got a  
15 brand new pickup -- or not, a brand new center pivot. But  
16 he didn't have a grainery moved yet. And, but he -- it was  
17 getting dry, so he thought he better go out and irrigate.  
18 He took his pickup out, and he was reading a book and he  
19 went to sleep. And next thing he knew, he thought it was  
20 raining. And the center pivot was climbing over the hood on  
21 his pickup truck.

22           MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

23           MR. WILLIAMSON: So, I thought that was the only  
24 one in Nebraska. Now I know --

25           MR. LAVENE: No.



1 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- another story.

2 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, there's another one. They  
3 weren't in it though.

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

5 MR. LAVENE: At that time, they were running it.  
6 But they've gone, you know, on Highway 23. They've gone  
7 over the railroad tracks and right out on the highway.

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

9 MR. LAVENE: Rick Therell (phonetic) had one.

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

11 MR. LAVENE: It went right out -- it was out on  
12 the highway running.

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: Well, this is --

14 MR. LAVENE: Still running.

15 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- this is good for the  
16 historical --

17 MR. LAVENE: I mean they'll go most anywhere.

18 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, yeah. And it turned wild.  
19 Well, Herman was a great guy, but we really had to laugh.  
20 Because one time we took a bus tour and Herman loved to talk  
21 to people, and by-gosh we left him. We didn't realize that.  
22 He had to find a car and a guy to catch up with the bus.  
23 And after that he was always known as the missing link.

24 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, that --

25 MR. WILLIAMSON: Just a little humor in there.

1       These well-told stories about, you know, irrigation and what  
2       the NRDs --

3               MR. LAVENE:   Well the --

4               MR. WILLIAMSON:  -- have done --

5               MR. LAVENE:  -- the pivots I had another one.  
6       I -- that first pivot that I put in, which Central Valley  
7       did it all, Terry Gertis (phonetic).

8               MR. TURNBULL:  Uh-huh.

9               MR. LAVENE:  And then my neighbor put one in.  And  
10       they'd been in there several years.  And one morning I went  
11       over to check my pivot, and here come the pivot but it was  
12       dragging the end section where the end gun was.  It was  
13       dragging that through the field.

14              MR. WILLIAMSON:  Yeah.

15              MR. LAVENE:  Well I looked over in the neighbor's,  
16       and his -- I forget what it did to him -- but anyway the  
17       two --

18              MR. TURNBULL:  Had --

19              MR. LAVENE:  -- lined up finally, and met at the  
20       same crossing.  And there wasn't room.  But they tore each  
21       other apart.  But I think his got by without much damage.  
22       But anyhow -- but Terry Gertis said, "Well that's our fault.  
23       We should have" --

24              MR. TURNBULL:  Uh-huh.

25              MR. LAVENE:  -- when we went out and run their

1           little deal and see where they was going to be --

2                   MR. TURNBULL:   Yeah.

3                   MR. WILLIAMSON:   Uh-huh.

4                   MR. LAVENE:       So he fixed it.   Never charged me  
5 anything --

6                   MR. WILLIAMSON:   Wow.

7                   MR. LAVENE:       -- to fix it.   So, but that was kind  
8 of strange that they'd been there several years.   But, you  
9 know, they'd never had met right at that --

10                  MR. WILLIAMSON:   Called a synchronization.

11                  MR. LAVENE:       Yeah, finally.   Yeah, they just come  
12 together.

13                  MR. TURNBULL:   I bet your stomach sunk when you  
14 drove out there and saw that.

15                  MR. LAVENE:       Yeah, yeah.   Hell, I've had them blow  
16 over, two or three of them.

17                  MR. TURNBULL:   Yeah.

18                  MR. WILLIAMSON:   In the old style aircrafts, you  
19 shoot bullets between the propellers, so.

20                  MR. TURNBULL:   Yes.   Yeah, that's right.

21                  MR. WILLIAMSON:   I always worried about that.

22                  MR. LAVENE:       Yeah, well I never had that deal,  
23 but --

24                  MR. TURNBULL:   So, Doyle, you said that your wife  
25 also served on the board.

1 MR. LAVENE: Right.

2 MR. TURNBULL: That was after you got off the  
3 board?

4 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, right after I got off, I think.

5 MR. TURNBULL: Okay.

6 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, she served several years  
8 didn't she?

9 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, she was chairman of the board.

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

11 MR. LAVENE: She would've -- I got on, let's see  
12 '75. I was on thirteen years, '88.

13 MR. TURNBULL: Okay.

14 MR. LAVENE: And she got on -- I think she was  
15 appointed to my -- took my position when I --

16 MR. TURNBULL: Okay.

17 MR. LAVENE: -- went from, from the --

18 MR. WILLIAMSON: Uh-huh.

19 MR. LAVENE: -- NRD over to the Central --

20 MR. TURNBULL: Central.

21 MR. LAVENE: -- Board.

22 MR. TURNBULL: Okay.

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: Uh-huh.

24 MR. LAVENE: Yeah. So she'd a been there.

25 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

1 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, that was good. Boy, that  
2 was a family affair. I remember that.

3 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, yeah.

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: So that's great, yeah.

5 MR. LAVENE: Of course, then we had disagreements  
6 when we -- but more so with my number two son.

7 (Indiscernible) bring that in, but, I don't, they're going,  
8 you know, next week before the supreme court.

9 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

10 MR. LAVENE: Next Tuesday -- well week from today.

11 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, yeah.

12 MR. LAVENE: Their going to --

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: You bet. Yeah, you're proud of  
14 him. Boy that's great.

15 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, we're going out there.

16 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

17 MR. TURNBULL: Now what's this over now that --

18 MR. LAVENE: Kansas, Nebraska law.

19 MR. TURNBULL: Kansas --

20 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

21 MR. TURNBULL: Okay, yes.

22 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, goes before the United States  
23 Supreme Court, so.

24 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, he's been handling that,  
25 so.

1 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, yeah.

2 MR. TURNBULL: That's Justin?

3 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

5 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

6 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: Justin, yeah.

8 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah, we've dealt with him from  
9 York several times. And I've always been impressed with the  
10 way he handles things.

11 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

12 MR. LAVENE: Well he's been on that issue for --

13 MR. TURNBULL: Long time.

14 MR. LAVENE: -- a long time.

15 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

16 MR. WILLIAMSON: Uh-huh.

17 MR. LAVENE: I don't know if it will ever end,

18 but --

19 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

20 MR. TURNBULL: Probably not.

21 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

22 MR. LAVENE: Probably bring up --

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

24 MR. LAVENE: -- something else.

25 MR. WILLIAMSON: Well it's good though to have a

1 person with some background in the, you know -- knowing the  
2 issue --

3 MR. TURNBULL: Sure.

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- and growing up there.

5 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

6 MR. WILLIAMSON: And not just coming in. So  
7 that's good.

8 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

9 MR. TURNBULL: Well, the other thing is Doyle and  
10 I served together on the Nebraska State Irrigation  
11 Association Board for several years.

12 MR. LAVENE: Yes.

13 MR. WILLIAMSON: Oh, okay.

14 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

15 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

16 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

17 MR. LAVENE: I was looking at that. We were -- I  
18 can't remember if I was chairman in '93 when they was what  
19 the 100 -- was that the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary?

20 MR. TURNBULL: Yes.

21 MR. LAVENE: It was the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

22 MR. TURNBULL: I think that was probably my first  
23 or second year on that board.

24 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, we had a lot of contact -- we  
25 had a meeting out in North Platte when Mike Jess was up, or

1           they were --

2                   MR. TURNBULL:   Uh-huh.

3                   MR. LAVENE:   -- debating -- I don't know if that  
4           was the first time he was going to be hired, or I think we  
5           supported him.

6                   MR. TURNBULL:   I think so.  I think that's right.

7                   MR. LAVENE:   NSIA did.

8                   MR. TURNBULL:   Yeah.

9                   MR. LAVENE:   At that time.

10                  MR. TURNBULL:   Yeah.

11                  MR. LAVENE:   I don't remember even who was  
12           governor then, but so -- yeah, I've been involved with the  
13           water for, well, about 34 years.  I was --

14                  MR. TURNBULL:   Yeah.

15                  MR. LAVENE:   -- on Central Board for 21 years.

16                  MR. WILLIAMSON:  Well, thank you so much for your  
17           service.  Anything else you can think of?  And we don't want  
18           to take too much of your time and, but --

19                  MR. LAVENE:   Well, it's still an ongoing  
20           situation.

21                  MR. WILLIAMSON:  Yeah.

22                  MR. LAVENE:   Thank God we've had it, or else we'd  
23           a been in dire shape, or else the feds would've probably  
24           come in or somebody would've taken over.  So, to have the  
25           local representation is definitely better than having some



1 other people that don't understand it come out now. Just  
2 like that new ruling they're coming out with on water with  
3 the EPA.

4 MR. WILLIAMSON: Waters of the US.

5 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

6 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, that's very controversial  
8 right now.

9 MR. LAVENE: But, I mean, it is. It's been good  
10 to have --

11 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

12 MR. LAVENE: -- and you could go talk to them. If  
13 you know --

14 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

15 MR. LAVENE: -- I had a lot of people that would  
16 come talk to me --

17 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

18 MR. LAVENE: -- cause --

19 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

20 MR. LAVENE: -- there were issues. And with water  
21 there's always issues.

22 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

23 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah. Yeah, and Nebraska was  
24 strong for local control. And, of course, when the NRDs  
25 went in, "Well," people said, "we're losing local control."

1 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

2 MR. WILLIAMSON: But really, the small districts  
3 didn't have any control. They just, you know, and --

4 MR. LAVENE: Before --

5 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- the NRDs really made the big  
6 difference, yeah.

7 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

8 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

9 MR. LAVENE: I did the Kansas -- we went down  
10 there several times. And I can't remember, I think I was on  
11 the NRD board. But they had their groundwater --

12 MR. TURNBULL: They have groundwater districts in  
13 Kansas, but they're not -- they don't cover the whole state.  
14 They're --

15 MR. LAVENE: No, they're different areas.

16 MR. TURNBULL: There's some --

17 MR. LAVENE: The one in the western, district 5 or  
18 something. But were they elected, or were they appointed?  
19 I --

20 MR. TURNBULL: I think that their board members  
21 are now elected.

22 MR. LAVENE: Oh, they are now like --

23 MR. TURNBULL: I think they are, yeah.

24 MR. LAVENE: Before they might of been from, I  
25 don't, from surface water districts. Some of it, or --

1                   MR. TURNBULL: Some of it, and some were  
2 groundwater irrigators. I don't know what their  
3 requirements are. But, you know, we got active when I was  
4 in Holdrege with the Groundwater Management Districts  
5 Association.

6                   MR. LAVENE: Oh yeah, GMDA.

7                   MR. TURNBULL: GMDA. And --

8                   MR. LAVENE: Yeah, I served on that board.

9                   MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

10                  MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

11                  MR. TURNBULL: You were on it. And when I  
12 went -- I was on it for awhile after I got to York. Frank  
13 Dragoun was on there for awhile.

14                  MR. LAVENE: Yeah, yeah, we went to --

15                  MR. TURNBULL: And so, we'd hold those meetings,  
16 you know, in Kansas, Colorado --

17                  MR. LAVENE: Texas.

18                  MR. TURNBULL: -- Texas, down in the Panhandle.

19                  MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

20                  MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

21                  MR. TURNBULL: It was always a contrast to go to  
22 those meetings, and hear how other states were doing  
23 groundwater management.

24                  MR. LAVENE: Yeah, yeah.

25                  MR. TURNBULL: Just black and white difference as

1 to how to go about it.

2 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

3 MR. WILLIAMSON: Uh-huh.

4 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

5 MR. WILLIAMSON: Texas especially cause --

6 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, they --

7 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- they --

8 MR. LAVENE: -- about pumped her dry.

9 MR. WILLIAMSON: Well and the folks there own the  
10 water, you know, so --

11 MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

12 MR. TURNBULL: Well what's interesting today is to  
13 read about what California is going through. They got a  
14 real drought situation.

15 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

16 MR. TURNBULL: So their surface water supplies are  
17 extremely low. And now they've got this rush on groundwater  
18 drilling, because they basically have no groundwater law.  
19 Particularly --

20 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

21 MR. TURNBULL: -- in the central valley of --

22 MR. LAVENE: Oh, is that right.

23 MR. TURNBULL: -- California.

24 MR. LAVENE: I was wondering how they --

25 MR. TURNBULL: So, they're having the same

1 arguments that we had in the early and mid 70s.

2 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah. It's surprising.

3 MR. TURNBULL: It's -- you could take our  
4 notebook, and say why don't you go to page 3, item 3? It  
5 covers what you're talking about.

6 MR. LAVENE: Yeah. I didn't know they had -- were  
7 able to drill groundwater wells.

8 MR. TURNBULL: In some parts they are, yeah.

9 MR. LAVENE: Are. But like in Colorado, I mean,  
10 that's what we always -- the board say we always said that  
11 all the water run up hill to money --

12 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

13 MR. LAVENE: -- in Colorado. Because they  
14 actually had a water court.

15 MR. TURNBULL: Uh-huh.

16 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, we went out there several times  
17 listening to some of that. It was --

18 MR. TURNBULL: Yeah.

19 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

20 MR. LAVENE: -- I mean that was, you know, good  
21 thing we didn't end up with that here. I mean, we've been  
22 to court a lot, but --

23 MR. TURNBULL: Nothing like that.

24 MR. LAVENE: I mean, they --

25 MR. WILLIAMSON: Uh-huh. Yeah.

1           MR. LAVENE:  --  I mean, a lot of people sold  
2  their water rights.

3           MR. TURNBULL:  Yeah.

4           MR. LAVENE:  Of course, they got a lot of money  
5  for them.  But then you just turn it into more --

6           MR. TURNBULL:  Yeah.

7           MR. LAVENE:  --  because they don't get hardly any  
8  rainfall so you --

9           MR. TURNBULL:  Right.

10          MR. LAVENE:  --  basically lost your --

11          MR. WILLIAMSON:  Uh-huh.

12          MR. LAVENE:  --  occupation --

13          MR. WILLIAMSON:  Uh-huh.

14          MR. TURNBULL:  Yes.

15          MR. LAVENE:  --  from out there.

16          MR. TURNBULL:  Yeah.

17          MR. WILLIAMSON:  Yeah.

18          MR. LAVENE:  It's still a system that, I don't  
19  know --

20          MR. WILLIAMSON:  Yeah.

21          MR. LAVENE:  It's still a fighting system.

22          MR. WILLIAMSON:  Well, good.  I think we'll wrap  
23  up --

24          MR. LAVENE:  Okay.

25          MR. WILLIAMSON:  --  unless there's something else.

1           And really a pleasure to interview you, Doyle. And thanks  
2           for all your service. And thanks for giving us part of the  
3           history of starting with the NRDs, and also one pickup that  
4           got run over.

5                     MR. LAVENE: Yeah. I think that -- climbing up on  
6           the barn was worse.

7                     MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah.

8                     MR. LAVENE: It couldn't get over. It got over  
9           the pickup.

10                    MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, yeah.

11                    MR. LAVENE: But couldn't get over the barn.

12                    MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah, the barn was a two story  
13           barn.

14                    MR. LAVENE: Yeah that was --

15                    MR. TURNBULL: That's a good one.

16                    MR. WILLIAMSON: Well, we'll finish on that happy  
17           note. You know there's a lot of crazy things that happen.

18                    MR. LAVENE: Oh, yeah.

19                    MR. WILLIAMSON: And they all cost money.

20                    MR. LAVENE: Yeah.

21                    MR. WILLIAMSON: And you go to bed at night and  
22           wonder, "Why did I do that?"

23                    MR. LAVENE: You think about them pivots. I know  
24           we had another one. We had a hired man that started one.

25                    And, of course, he was going to get back to it. It was

1 first time around. And it was a shorter pivot. But he got  
2 busy with something else, forgot about it, and by the time  
3 he got back there it'd run over the canyon and --

4 MR. TURNBULL: Oh.

5 MR. LAVENE: -- down in the trees and --

6 MR. WILLIAMSON: Yeah. Somebody didn't use the  
7 circle.

8 MR. LAVENE: Yeah, he was going to try to make a  
9 circle, but we needed to stop there.

10 MR. WILLIAMSON: Hey, well thank you so much. I  
11 tell you. We've -- I think been on about 35 minutes, and  
12 that's --

13 MR. LAVENE: All right.

14 MR. WILLIAMSON: -- that's just great. So thank  
15 you so much.

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