

INTERVIEW WITH TOM MOSER
BY GAYLE STARR

February 3, 2014

1 MR. STARR: This is Gayle Starr doing an interview
2 with Tom Moser, the Manager of the Lewis and Clark NRD, the
3 only Manager of the Lewis and Clark NRD. We're conducting
4 the interview at the Embassy Suites here in Lincoln,
5 Nebraska, as part of the Natural Resources District History
6 Project. And so, with that, Tom, how about a little short
7 history of yourself?

8 MR. MOSER: Okay. If you can hear me over the
9 fountain in the background, I can give you all of that. I
10 was born and raised on a farm near Plainview, Nebraska. I
11 grew up on that farm. I milked cows and fed hogs and had
12 all kinds of livestock, a diversified farm with cropping and
13 livestock. Graduated from Plainview High School and went to
14 college in 1967. My dad died in 1969, and I was about 20
15 years old at that time, so I dropped out of school and went
16 back to run the farm for a few years. So, I had a good farm
17 background, I think. I enjoyed farming, did a lot of work
18 in that area. Graduated from Nebraska with a BS degree in
19 general ag at the time. It was right before the natural
20 resources measure came about. And I worked with Game and
21 Parks Commission for quite a while here in the Lincoln area
22 and it was under federally funded program and it ran out of
23 funds. And so, I kind of scrounged around trying to find
24 some place to work.

25 This was in 1972-73, in that area. They had just

1 passed a law creating NRDs. And I got married in 1972 and
2 was still working with the Game and Parks Commission, and
3 then they told me, sorry, they're going to run out of funds
4 in 1973. So, I started snooping around to find a job and
5 Duane Chamberlain helped me at that time. And very helpful.
6 And I filled out applications for several spots. I didn't
7 know what NRDs were, you know. They were brand new. Not
8 many people did. So, I was hoping to get on as an assistant
9 somewhere where I could learn the ropes and maybe move up
10 someday. And I had interviews at Lewis and Clark NRD, in
11 fact, here in Lincoln at the Cornhusker Hotel. Two
12 directors came down, Warren Patefield and Leonard Miller.
13 And they interviewed me, and it was my first job interview.
14 I didn't know quite how to handle it, and I didn't know when
15 to leave when my interview was over, and they didn't tell
16 me, so I sat halfway through the next interview that they
17 were having and realized, maybe it was inappropriate for me
18 to be there. So, I quietly left and told my wife that,
19 "Boy, I screwed that one up." And I'm surprised, a couple
20 days later they called me up and offered me the job. And I
21 says, "Are you sure?" You know, I had seen the other guy
22 interview and I knew he was more qualified than I, and they
23 said, "Yeah, we know he probably knows more now, but we want
24 to hire somebody that doesn't know anything yet and we want
25 to train him." And I says, "Well, if that's your

1 conditions, I guess I'll come to work."

2 So, I started in April in 1973 at Hartington, and
3 they gave me the top-notch salary of \$7,500 a year, which I
4 thought was pretty good. And I went to work up there in the
5 back room of an insurance building. They didn't have an
6 office, and they held their meetings at the SCS office at
7 that time. And I was about three doors back in the
8 insurance office when I started. And as things went up,
9 they moved out of the building and then I hired a secretary
10 about six months later. They gave me \$400 to get office
11 furniture and tables and chairs and typewriters. In those
12 days, they never heard of computers, yet, of course.

13 And so that's how it started out there in downtown
14 Hartington. And over the years, we moved to two office
15 locations and then we built the new facility in 1991, so
16 it's been 40 years that I've been there.

17 MR. STARR: So, what was the biggest challenge for
18 you in starting?

19 MR. MOSER: When we started in Lewis and Clark, we
20 had a lot of Missouri River issues. That's what Warren
21 Patefield instructed me on. But probably the more immediate
22 was the Aowa Watershed. It was a PL 566 flood control
23 watershed, and they had started on it and inherited the
24 responsibilities as an NRD from the Soil and Water
25 Conservation District. And that was a big effort there.

1 That -- actually, it took 30 years to get that completed.

2 But more immediate, they hired me in April of
3 1973, and they said, we got, you know, 10- to 20,000 trees
4 come in that need planted. And I says, "Well, where do I
5 find a planter?" And they knew a guy that had a planting
6 machine, and I says, "Well, I need a tractor." Well, they
7 found a tractor. "I need a driver." "Well, that's your
8 job."

9 So, I found a high school kid to drive the
10 tractor. And, in fact, I planted trees for the whole
11 three-county district the first two years myself. So, I
12 knew how to do it by the end of that time. We had a grass
13 drill -- three grass drills at that time that we routed
14 around. Those were the immediate things then. And formed a
15 good relationship with NRCS, which was SCS at that time.
16 The district conservationists there were very helpful for
17 me. We relied on them completely for the technical
18 guidance.

19 MR. STARR: Who was that?

20 MR. MOSER: Ken Noonan was in Cedar County office.
21 Bill Yost was in Dixon County, and Phil Rickey was in Knox
22 County. Phil Rickey is an Abraham Lincoln look-alike. I
23 remember seeing him first and thinking, my gosh, he's the
24 reincarnation. Good man, all good men.

25 MR. STARR: How about your board. How supportive

1 and knowledgeable was the board?

2 MR. MOSER: When I first got up there, it was a
3 little strange, because Knox County was a very active soil
4 and water conservation district, and the NRD law split them
5 up into three different NRDs, the Lower Niobrara, the Lewis
6 and Clark, and Lower Elkhorn. So, there was some animosity.
7 And some of the directors there didn't take kindly to the
8 NRDs, number one, and then, of course, the manager comes in
9 and, my God, we got to pay somebody now, too. But it warmed
10 up after the, you know, could see that we could still do the
11 things that they did. And they had some tax revenue to work
12 on, so, they had more funds than they had in the past.

13 So, once that warmed up a little bit, then it got
14 a lot easier. And we've done projects over the years in all
15 three counties. So, it went real well. We started out
16 with, I think they had 28 directors that came in from the
17 other districts, and then we reduced it down to 17, within
18 the law, and then, later on over the years, to 11. And very
19 good directors. Warren Patefield was my mentor. I went to
20 him with all of my problems. And he was very, very helpful.
21 Paul Jacob was one of the directors from Knox County,
22 excellent quality man. He was one of those that didn't like
23 the NRD creation, but warmed up to it and accepted it.

24 I had some real good directors over the years. In
25 fact, I had a good relationship with all of my directors. I

1 think I was pallbearer for funerals for six or eight of
2 them. I lost count. But real good connection, and they
3 were very supportive. At the start, you know, they wanted
4 to tell me what to do, and as years went by, I tried to
5 educate them on the things that need to be done, let them
6 make the decisions. Because Warren Patefield always told
7 me, he says, "Remember, you're working for us. It's not the
8 other way around." So, I remembered that lesson.

9 MR. STARR: You mentioned opposition. How long
10 did that last, the opposition?

11 MR. MOSER: Probably a year and a half to two
12 years, I would guess. You know, that's quite a ways back,
13 so I don't remember real clear, but I remember feeling the
14 tension, and, you know, as the soil and water conservation
15 district, they had members all across the whole county and
16 when they divided them up into NRDs, then that's where the
17 animosity came, because they had a working relationship that
18 they lost. And so, that was hard.

19 MR. STARR: How about the Aowa Watershed? Was
20 there a watershed board there?

21 MR. MOSER: Yes, Aowa Watershed Conservancy
22 District.

23 MR. STARR: Were they pretty accepting?

24 MR. MOSER: Yeah, in fact, they were glad to hand
25 it off to somebody else. They were trying to negotiate for

1 easements for the structure sites and Pete Melle was up
2 there at that time, said, "I'm done with it." He said,
3 "Somebody else can do it." And that was probably the
4 hardest thing for me to learn was how to work the land
5 rights getting easements for the structure sites so that we
6 could build them. It was a long, hard process.

7 MR. STARR: What was the biggest surprise to you
8 at that time.

9 MR. MOSER: Surprise. Well, you know, I guess the
10 biggest surprise was the willingness for people to
11 participate once you had them realize that you had a good
12 project. I had good directors and then good people all
13 around that participated in it. You know, over the years,
14 there has been a lot of things that we've done and you
15 sit -- you lean back and you think, you know, how did that
16 all come together. You know, I was glad to be a part of the
17 process, but you really realize that there were a whole lot
18 of people that got involved during that process to make it
19 successful.

20 A good example was our rural water project. In
21 1978, I met with Frank Snyder, in the town of St. Helena.
22 And St. Helena was right on the bluff, right above the
23 Missouri River, a very poor groundwater situation, high in
24 chalk. You know, it's chalk rock soil. And so, it's high
25 in minerals, iron, manganese, and tasted terrible, you know,

1 you had to chew it to swallow it. And so they were looking
2 for a water source and had tried several areas for wells and
3 had not been successful. And he had heard about rural water
4 districts, so I met with him, and then, later on, the St.
5 Helena City Council. And they wanted to explore that area.
6 And from that, we started looking at the farms around the
7 town of St. Helena. And then they got as far as Crofton,
8 which had similar problems, and spread into that area. And
9 during that process, we had an advisory committee made up of
10 just people that lived in the area. And people, neighbors
11 talking to neighbors, word spread. And we had, eventually,
12 by 1981, we were building a project to take water out of
13 Lewis and Clark Lake, surface water, and treat it and blend
14 it, and sell it for drinking water. And had good people
15 guide the system. We hired a project manager, Verlane
16 Kollars, and Jim Sheldon came on as our attorney and Jim
17 took over for Verlane eventually. And those guys really
18 helped put things together along with the members of that
19 committee. And it's thrived. Now we serve over
20 820-some customers, four towns. We still have some of the
21 same members on the advisory committee. It's really grown
22 to where the budget is actually bigger than the NRD now,
23 even though they're a project of the NRD. So, that was
24 probably my biggest surprise is how successful that went.

25 MR. STARR: There've been a lot of changes in the

1 law over the -- since '72 that affected NRDs.

2 MR. MOSER: Right.

3 MR. STARR: What has affected you the most, or
4 your district the most?

5 MR. MOSER: I don't know. I guess I'd have to
6 think on that for a while, Gayle. Each year, it seems like
7 there's something that comes up. Probably the one that
8 we're fighting with right now are groundwater rules and
9 regulations. We're on the fringe area of the development of
10 irrigation, so our district has been a little slower than
11 some on groundwater rules and regulations. We've never had
12 groundwater quantity issues until 2012, when we had the
13 drought, and then we saw a big decline in the water tables.
14 We've always had groundwater quality issues with nitrate,
15 but they're spotty. They're here and there. In some cases,
16 it's just point source pollution, but in other areas, we
17 know now that it's broader than that.

18 MR. STARR: That's pretty typical.

19 MR. MOSER: Yeah, it is, and we're still working
20 on developing some of those.

21 MR. STARR: How much irrigation is there in your
22 district?

23 MR. MOSER: We probably got around 124,000 acres
24 out of the 900,000 in the district. So, it's less than --
25 it's right around a fourth of the district.

1 MR. STARR: Do you have any controls in place on
2 new wells?

3 MR. MOSER: No, we don't right now. We voted on
4 it about a year ago and the board decided they did not want
5 to have a moratorium, but we are trying to develop some well
6 permit issues so that we can control some of that. We still
7 don't have a serious decline in the water table. We had a
8 big drop in 2012, but we are seeing more conflict of use in
9 some parts of the district where there's been well issues
10 because development has come in fast.

11 MR. STARR: Like, with domestic users?

12 MR. MOSER: Yeah, conflict with domestic users.
13 And in some parts, conflict with irrigation. We've had
14 people in the Niobrara chalk area, for example, that the
15 water table's declined real fast, and so, it affects not
16 only the irrigators, but the domestic well users where we've
17 seen a 20-foot drop in a year's time. It doesn't recharge
18 quick. And so, we need to step in, I think, as an NRD, and
19 start managing some of that so that overdevelopment doesn't
20 take place.

21 MR. STARR: If my memory serves me correctly, you
22 were one of the first cases where sediment erosion control
23 became an issue and got into the lawsuit and so forth.

24 MR. MOSER: Yeah.

25 MR. STARR: Say a little bit about that.

1 MR. MOSER: Yeah, Jim Cook was real helpful on
2 that.

3 MR. STARR: I'm sure.

4 MR. MOSER: We got into a situation on a farm in
5 Knox County where the landowner had some serious erosion
6 problems that caused sediment to run off on three of his
7 neighbors, four, actually. And in all three cases, they
8 filed complaints, and the district found those complaints to
9 be valid. And, of course, this was a farmer who knew how to
10 farm, and he wasn't going to be told to do it otherwise, and
11 he let me know that quite a bit. And so, we ended up in
12 district court, and I'm proud to say that we won that case.
13 In fact, we presented the case and the judge says he's going
14 to let us know his decision. He wanted to know where the
15 farm was at so he could drive by himself. And after he did
16 that, there was no question. And so, we got a court order
17 on that farm to change the manner in which it was farmed and
18 more conservation methods. And we were successful, but
19 curiously, over the years, the original landowner has sold
20 that farm and it has resold several times. But we still
21 have the court order on it. So, each new owner has come in
22 and has been an education process to say, no, you can't go
23 continuous corn on it year after year after year. And we do
24 need the waterways, you know. So, it was, I think, real
25 successful part of that. But I'm tickled that it's worked

1 out. My board has stood behind it, too, you know, they
2 didn't back down and weren't timid about it. And so they
3 wanted to go the whole way with it and I'm proud that we
4 did.

5 MR. STARR: How has the basic conservation
6 programs in your district, you know, the basic things we
7 talk about, waterways, dams, terraces -- is that pretty
8 good.

9 MR. MOSER: Yeah, when we started out up there,
10 you know, that was one of the priorities Warren Patefield
11 gave me. "We got to keep emphasizing soil conservation."
12 And we did that one way, through the Lands for Wildlife
13 Program that we started up there with the Lower Elkhorn NRD
14 in the '70s. We got the first check from Game and Parks.
15 They supported us with 75 percent of the funds. And we
16 ended up enrolling, you know, we have about 100 contracts
17 every year that we had enrolled in that program. It's a
18 set-aside payment for converting cropland to grass. And
19 that was real successful. But over the years, of course,
20 when corn went up to \$7-\$8 a bushel, we can't compete with
21 that. And then Game and Parks has backed out now as far as
22 supporting it with their share of the funds, so it's
23 dwindled down to now, I think we've got 15 contracts.

24 And terraces, we see very few of those. Dams have
25 been pretty effectively blocked by the Corps of Engineers on

1 the 404 permit requirements. They just basically closed the
2 door so there's not even a crack to get through to get
3 something built on dams. We still do a lot of planned
4 grazing systems. We still do a lot of tree plantings, and
5 again, with the help of NRCS on the technical end of that.

6 MR. STARR: How has your board evolved over these
7 40 years?

8 MR. MOSER: It's still a growing process. I have
9 a lot of directors that have been on for a long time. When
10 I lose somebody, I actually have to go out and try to
11 recruit replacements. That's been helpful in the sense that
12 I could get people that I knew and trusted. And then that's
13 worked out well. So, really can't complain about any of
14 them, because they've been supportive on all of the things
15 that we've done. But in the rural area, it gets harder and
16 harder to find good people that aren't committed elsewhere
17 that you can devote to natural resources. And I'm afraid
18 that's always going to be an issue.

19 MR. STARR: There's fewer and fewer of them.

20 MR. MOSER: That's right. The farm places are
21 disappearing, if you drive through the country.

22 MR. STARR: They sure are. In 2011, I guess it
23 was, there were enormous releases from Gavins Point.

24 MR. MOSER: Right.

25 MR. STARR: How did that affect your lowlands

1 along the river?

2 MR. MOSER: We pretty much dodged it, Gayle. The
3 releases, I think, were from Gavins Point, were over, I
4 think, 160,000 cfs. It made fantastic photography. And
5 there was a severe erosion in Knox County just outside of
6 our district, and then downstream, there was a severe bank
7 erosion along the Missouri River below the dam. But the
8 lake itself, and our intake for our rural water system
9 stayed relatively stable. Gavins Point Dam is a regulatory
10 structure for the Corps. You know, the other dams upstream
11 of that are more storage and they fluctuate quite a bit, but
12 Gavins Point, thankfully, has stayed pretty steady. We
13 didn't really have any problems with the intake at all.
14 There's a large plume of sediment went downstream. We saw
15 propane tanks floating by. We saw trees go through the dam.
16 And it was really impressive. You know, a lot of crashing
17 water.

18 Downstream, some -- you know, the Lewis and Clark
19 NRD has been active on Missouri River bank stabilization
20 work. There's a Bank Stabilization Association of citizens
21 from both South Dakota and Nebraska that worked with us.
22 And we sponsored some of the bank stabilization work along
23 the Missouri River on five different locations to try to
24 hold onto roads and areas that were specific. And we're
25 still trying to work with the National Park Service up there

1 to get some of those areas where they need attention.

2 Sometimes that works and sometimes it doesn't.

3 MR. STARR: Is the Aowa Watershed completed then?

4 MR. MOSER: Yes, we completed it in 2004 with the
5 Powder Creek structure, Aowa 32-4A, and I'm proud to say
6 that we built a large dam, 110 acres of water, and we own
7 463 that we put into native grass and tree plantings, a
8 \$2.9 million project. And with the help of the Resource
9 Development Fund, Nebraska Environmental Trust, and Nebraska
10 Game and Parks, we ended up paying, I think, \$250,000 out of
11 our own budget. So, less than 10 percent of the cost of the
12 project the district actually paid, because we had good
13 partnerships.

14 MR. STARR: Good.

15 MR. MOSER: So I was proud of that. Vince
16 Kramper, who was a director on the Commission, Natural
17 Resources Commission, he was up there on a tour last year
18 with the Water Quality Committee, and he's proud of that,
19 what we did there.

20 MR. STARR: Yeah, he is. So, how have you changed
21 over the 40 years, other than, obviously, we've gotten
22 older.

23 MR. MOSER: Yeah, I've definitely gotten older.
24 Well, my wife, Rita, and I have raised six kids, three boys
25 and three girls. They're all college-educated, so I'm proud

1 that they're moving on. Right now, we've evolved to the
2 point where we like to babysit the grandkids and really
3 enjoy that.

4 Myself, I've always enjoyed living in a small
5 town. I like to come to Lincoln and buy some popcorn and
6 coffee and go back to a town without stoplights.

7 So, I've always enjoyed that part.

8 MR. STARR: How about your thinking in terms of
9 managing the district? How has that evolved?

10 MR. MOSER: That's still changing. You know, as
11 every person goes through life, you have these times when
12 you feel like, "I'm totally in control. I know what I'm
13 doing." And boy, you know, when you talk about technology
14 and how cell phones have changed to go beyond just making
15 calls, I'm not keeping up with all that stuff. And so, I
16 feel like I'm kind of falling behind right now. So, I think
17 every person goes through peaks and then you come through
18 valleys, and I'm probably coming toward a valley now. I'm
19 going to have to wind down one of these years. But I can't
20 stay inactive. I have to find something. And so, until I
21 find something, I'll keep working for the NRD.

22 MR. STARR: In terms of the NRD that operates
23 under state law, what do you think, if you had the authority
24 to change one thing, what would that be? How would you --
25 what more authority or guidance would you like?

1 MR. MOSER: Well, you know, I've always been an
2 advocate for local control. I'm not sure where the changes
3 need to be, but that's one of the things I've always felt as
4 a strength of the NRDs is that we could make a decision that
5 impacts Knox, Cedar, and Dixon County. And we can do it,
6 you know, neighbor next to neighbor. That's always been a
7 critical component of the natural resource district concept.
8 You know, I guess, as far as changes, I'll leave that to
9 somebody else to decide how that needs to be made.

10 MR. STARR: Fair enough. What about some things
11 that you would prefer that the NRDs were not burdened with?

12 MR. MOSER: Right now, we're having a bad
13 experience with trails. We're trying to work with the City
14 of Yankton to build a bike trail from Gavins Point Dam to
15 Highway 81 bridge on the Nebraska side of the river, because
16 Yankton has an extensive trail program in South Dakota, and
17 they would like to see a counterpart so they could have a
18 circular route in Nebraska. And they needed somebody from
19 Nebraska to sponsor that. And so, in 2006, we said, "Well,
20 yeah, we'll do that. We can do that." And we were
21 optimists at the time, but things haven't worked out real
22 well for that. It's been a hard project. Working with
23 Department of Roads has been a difficult experience. And
24 I'm not sure that that trail will ever be finished because
25 it's been so hard to put together.

1 MR. STARR: What types of problems have you run
2 into?

3 MR. MOSER: Mostly administrative, working with
4 Department of Roads, and their process of going through
5 decisions is different than any agency I've ever dealt with.
6 And it's taken a long time to get anything done. And once
7 you feel you have got an accomplishment, then somebody
8 changes their mind and you start over again. And so, that's
9 caused a lot of the frustration.

10 MR. STARR: What about the land rights and the
11 right-of-way and the route of the trail? Has that been an
12 issue?

13 MR. MOSER: Yeah, that's been an issue. In fact,
14 that's probably the major handicap right now, because in the
15 midst of the process, you know, we were trying to build a
16 trail in the highway right-of-way to get down the stretch,
17 and we wouldn't need to go on private property with that.
18 And we got Phase 1 and Phase 2 agreed to on that, and Phase
19 3 -- you know, we can only afford a portion of the trail at
20 a time. Phase 3 now appears blocked, because Department of
21 Roads has changed their policy and said they don't want
22 trails in the right-of-way anymore. And my board has said
23 all along, "Well we're not going to condemn any landowner to
24 get private property for it." So, we already know that
25 landowners are not willing to let spare property go for a

1 bike trail, so that effectively stops our project with that
2 change of policy. So, that's been a big issue right now and
3 we're still struggling to see how we can deal with that.

4 MR. STARR: What's your district doing in terms of
5 the groundwater management plans and all of that process?
6 Were you involved?

7 MR. MOSER: Yeah, we're amending our groundwater
8 quality portion of the plan, and we're writing a new
9 groundwater quantity portion of the plan that will have well
10 permit program -- well permit process ranking system. We're
11 also going to develop subareas within the district, because
12 we're in an area where the glacier stopped, so we've got
13 Pierre shale down there, the Dakota formation deep, and
14 above that, we've got Niobrara chalk in parts of Cedar
15 County, and we've got all the Pleistocene sand and gravel
16 that the glaciers left. And you can go from one spot on one
17 farm and a mile away you have two different sources of
18 water. And -- either that or no water. So, we need to
19 identify the subareas where we got issues and try to deal
20 with that.

21 We're also volunteering to get an integrated
22 management plan with Department of Natural Resources. We're
23 going to start on that this year. And we've also got one
24 subarea in the Creighton area that we call the Bazile
25 Management Area that we're concentrating efforts because of

1 high nitrate contamination in the groundwater. They've got
2 shallow wells in an area of sandy soil that's highly
3 irrigated. And over the years, they've just, through excess
4 fertilization or untimely fertilization, they've contributed
5 to the problem that's going to take years to clean up.
6 We're going to be hiring a project coordinator in that area
7 to start this year to try to get that turned around.

8 MR. STARR: If I understand, there has been some
9 wind energy development in that area.

10 MR. MOSER: Right.

11 MR. STARR: Does that involve you at all?

12 MR. MOSER: It hasn't so far. We took our
13 directors out there for a tour and there's -- they put up 37
14 wind generators. They're 250 feet tall not counting the
15 blades. And near Crofton, they put up another 12 last year.
16 They pay a generous bonus to the farmers and haven't heard
17 any negative things about it. We, in fact, sold water from
18 our water system to them during the construction phase to
19 keep road dust down and to make concrete and stuff like
20 that. We worked with them on that, haven't heard anything
21 negative. They look like they could be a real white
22 elephant someday, so I'm hoping that there's something in
23 their clause that they have, you know, if they ever do go
24 down for maintenance, that they'll come take them down, at
25 least. But they're quiet. You can drive right by them.

1 Unless you roll down the window, you don't hear them. So,
2 and apparently, they're contributing to the energy shortage,
3 so it's a good thing.

4 MR. STARR: One of the environmental impacts you
5 hear about them is the effect on migrating birds.

6 MR. MOSER: Right.

7 MR. STARR: Has that been an issue.

8 MR. MOSER: To my knowledge, no. You know, we've
9 got bald eagles in the area, and, you know, it's a migratory
10 flyway there, too, because of Gavins Point Dam and that --
11 and the Missouri River, but in talking to some of the
12 operators on the system, I don't think they've really had
13 any major issues. There might have been some bats. There
14 might have been some hawks that hit the blades, but nothing
15 serious that I've heard, anyway.

16 MR. STARR: What size of staff do you have now?

17 MR. MOSER: It's still small. There's myself and
18 a secretary and I've got a resource coordinator now. The
19 Rural Water Project has five people that work. And then
20 we've got three secretaries, so we've got a total of --
21 what's that add up to, 12-13 people right now. We are going
22 to have to add staff as we get into groundwater management
23 more, and the board is -- we've been talking about it over
24 the last few months. We're going to be doing certification
25 of acres. There's going to be a lot of documentation

1 involved with that, so we're probably going to have to add
2 staff, and, you know, that's something a smaller district
3 has to deal with, you know. It's different from the larger
4 districts where they have a lot bigger revenue scheme to
5 work with. But in a smaller district, you have to have
6 broad spectrum people that can do a lot of different things.
7 Our resource coordinator, for example, takes care of the
8 maintenance on the -- operation and maintenance of the Aowa
9 dams. They take care of the chemigation. They do the water
10 sampling. They do the I&E. Where, in some districts, they
11 got people for every one of those positions. So, it's a
12 good place for somebody that likes diversity.

13 MR. STARR: So, what's your mill levy now?

14 MR. MOSER: Our mill levy's just under two. And
15 we're one of the smallest in the state. I keep reminding my
16 board that, in order for us to be doing our job, we need to
17 start stepping it up, because they're very conservative, you
18 know, on property tax levies. They all pay taxes just like
19 I do. But we've got responsibilities, too, so we need to
20 step up to that.

21 MR. STARR: Well, Tom, I've about run out of
22 questions. Is there anything else that you'd like to add?

23 MR. MOSER: Oh, I don't think so. You know, I was
24 doing some nostalgic thinking when you talked to me about
25 the interview about things. And I think we've kind of

1 covered everything that I thought of. Like I say, as you
2 get older, you start losing pages in the book. And some
3 things you don't think of unless somebody reminds you.

4 MR. STARR: I fully understand.

5 MR. MOSER: I'd just say I've had some good people
6 to work with and that's why I've stayed this long, because a
7 job isn't fun if you've got difficult people you have to
8 deal with. And both on staff and in directors. It's been a
9 good time.

10 MR. STARR: Do you handle the financial billing
11 and so forth on the water district?

12 MR. MOSER: Yep, right.

13 MR. STARR: The bills and all that stuff?

14 MR. MOSER: Yeah, we have a gal that's hired that
15 takes care of all of that. And, in fact, we've got a remote
16 read meter system now where if they see if somebody's got a
17 leak, we can tell them about it before they even know it.
18 And, unfortunately, that cuts our revenue.

19 Because, when we help them solve their leak
20 problems, it cuts down on water usage, but they really
21 appreciate that. That all comes through the NRD office.
22 In fact, we've got -- when you answer the phone, it's "Lewis
23 and Clark NRD," and they said, "No, I wanted to call Rural
24 Water." We got both phones in the same office. They're
25 different numbers, but sometimes they aren't sure.

