William M. Alley, Chief of the Office of Ground Water for the U.S. Geological Survey, received The Groundwater Foundation’s 2007 E. Benjamin Nelson Government Service Award last November. The foundation established the Government Service Award in 1998 to recognize government officials who have significantly advanced environmental and groundwater stewardship. The award was named after Ben Nelson, two-term Nebraska governor and U.S. senator, in honor of his service to groundwater concerns.

Alley has been in his current position since 1993, where he oversees the Ground Water Resources and Water Use programs as well as USGS support of the Yucca Mountain project. In announcing the award to Alley, The Groundwater Foundation cited Alley’s background as a research scientist and a program coordinator which led to his in-depth understanding of how to communicate technical information. He authored or co-authored a series of USGS circulars that have been widely distributed and used to improve the public’s understanding of groundwater resources. According to the foundation, one of the most influential of these is “Ground Water and Surface Water—A Single Resource,” of which about 45,000 copies have been distributed worldwide.

Alley was nominated for the award by Robert Hirsch, USGS Associate Director for Water, who praised Alley’s leadership, vision, and communication of science.


New Director of LADWP

Last fall, David Nahai became the new general manager of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) following the retirement of Ronald Deaton. Nahai was appointed to the Board of Water and Power Commissioners in 2005, and subsequently was elected to the positions of both president and vice president of the board. Prior to that, he spent more than 10 years on California’s Regional Water Quality Control Board, and has been an attorney in private practice for nearly three decades. According to an LADWP release, he is one of the state’s leading experts on water issues.

Deaton announced his retirement in October following 42 years with the city, due to health problems.


Central Nevada Gets New Water Chief

Last summer the Central Nevada Regional Water Authority (CNRWA) appointed Steve Bradhurst its executive director, replacing Jon Hutchings, who had been the authority’s director since its establishment in 2005. According to the Ely News, Bradhurst has considerable experience in both water management
and policy, having served as Washoe County Commissioner, on the Tahoe Regional Agency Board of Governors, and in “developing and advocating water policy for government clients.”

CNRWA is “a unit of local government that collaboratively and proactively tackles water resource issues common to communities in Nevada’s rural interior,” according to its website. Member counties include Churchill, Elko, Esmeralda, Eureka, Lander, Nye, and White Pine, which collectively cover about 60 percent of the state. These counties are in central, eastern, and southern Nevada, characterized by aridity, an absence of regional surface water flows, productive alluvial aquifers, and deep bedrock aquifers with little modern recharge. CNRWA’s goal is to assist the communities in member counties in making sound water-resource decisions that promote economic prosperity and a healthy natural environment.


Stanley Davis Mourned

The hydrology community is mourning the death of Stanley N. Davis last fall, at age 83. Davis was a professor emeritus at the University of Arizona in the department of hydrology and water resources, where he had been since 1975. An internationally recognized groundwater and hydrogeology expert, he was the author of numerous publications, including the textbook Hydrogeology, which he coauthored with Roger DeWeist. His graduate students at the University of Arizona also remember him for his clear teaching style, interesting and challenging research projects, and careful attention to detail, including grammar and punctuation.

Davis also served on the faculty of Stanford University, the University of Chile, the University of Missouri-Columbia, and Indiana University. He was born in Brazil, where his father was researching a cure for yellow fever.