Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Felix L. Sparks and I appear here as Director of the Colorado Water Conservation Board, the official agency of the State of Colorado in matters pertaining to water resource development effecting the State of Colorado. Either I or other representatives of our state water board have appeared before this committee with considerable regularity since 1953 in support of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project. The project has been so thoroughly documented here that there are members of this committee who could qualify as experts on the subject.

The senior members of this committee have a particular awareness of the prolonged efforts we have put forth in Colorado to secure authorization of this project. The past suggestions and comments of members of this committee have been most helpful in the
preparation of the greatly improved project plan which is now before you.

Seldom in the history of reclamation has any group of people, such as those in the Arkansas Valley, demonstrated more convincing faith in the necessity of a reclamation project. In addition to years of untiring efforts, the people of Colorado have to date expended over $700,000 in bringing this project to its present state, the greatest portion of this sum originating within the Valley proper.

In 1958, when the fortunes of the project seemed to be at the lowest ebb, the people of the Arkansas Valley organized themselves into the largest water conservancy district in the history of our state, both in terms of population and assessed valuation. In doing so, they demonstrated their willingness to raise, from ad valorem taxes alone, approximately $420,000 annually, based on present assessed values, to assist in project repayment and operation. Under applicable state law, an additional sum of half this amount can be raised to cover deficiencies or defaults in contractual obligations.

Past controversies about transbasin diversions of water have had the unfortunate effect of obscuring one of the most important aspects of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project. That is, the fact that the greatest portion of the water to be delivered by the project originates from flood flows and re-regulation of native
TABLE A

ARKANSAS RIVER NEAR NEPESTA, COLORADO
1951 - 1960
TABLE B
ARKANSAS RIVER NEAR
NEPESTA, COLORADO
Total Monthly Flows - 1955
Arkansas River water. Like most western rivers, the Arkansas is greatly erratic in both yearly and seasonal fluctuations. As a visual explanation of this statement, I have graphs here designated as Table A, which shows annual variations over a ten-year period of study, and Table B which portrays monthly variations over a single year of study. Pueblo Reservoir, which is contemplated as the principal storage structure for the project, would permit the conversion of these yearly and seasonal fluctuations into dependable and controlled releases. The importance of this conversion is best emphasized by the fact that the lower Arkansas Valley in Colorado is situated in that portion of the Great Plains which is classified as a chronic drought area.

Another fact generally overlooked in the present project plans is the emphasis which has been placed upon future development in western Colorado. The relocation of the western Colorado storage feature from Aspen to Ruedi has resulted in almost four times the original storage capacity at less than twice the original cost. Ruedi Reservoir, together with other remaining storage potentials on the Upper Colorado River, appears to be completely adequate to serve western Colorado in the foreseeable future. Projections of various water needs in western Colorado have been made by our Board in cooperation with the Colorado River Water Conservation District, a western Colorado agency, and are summarized in Appendices D, E and F, House Document 353, 86th Congress, 2nd Session. It is
therefore a fair summary of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project to state that it is a proposal to develop the waters of the Fryingpan River for use in both western and eastern Colorado, with the greatest proportion of the available water being reserved for western Colorado.

The use of Colorado River water for this project is well within the allocation to the State of Colorado under the provisions of the Colorado River Compact of 1922 and the Upper Colorado River Basin Compact of 1948. This is so under any theory or assumption which has been advanced pertaining to the river flow. In full recognition of the fact that the other states of the Colorado River Basin share with us common interests and rights in the river waters, we have cooperated fully with them in our legislative and project planning. The views of any and all states which have made their wishes known to us have been included in either the project legislation or the operating principles, with one exception. That exception deals with proposed limitations upon the use of water which was allocated to us by the compacts above referred to. The compacts speak for themselves and there is nothing that we can do, or would attempt to undertake, to either extend or limit our rights and obligations under those compacts.

It is not the function of our state board to represent only segments of our state. I appear today not only at the direction of the members of the state board, but also at the direction
of our Governor, our state legislature, and with the approval and active assistance of the only other state agencies charged with responsibility for this project, namely, the Colorado River Water Conservation District and the Southwestern Water Conservation District representing all of the Colorado River Basin in Colorado, and the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District, the sponsoring entity for the project. We are united, as never before, in urging this committee to report favorably upon the pending legislation.

You have been most patient with our problem. I will close by stating that the people of Colorado are again grateful for the opportunity to present their views on this important project.