

## ICID Update

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The ICID conference was very much a success thanks to the enormous effort of a lot of people. Visitors from around the world now know where Saskatoon Sask, is and the enormous opportunity we have for irrigation in this province, particularly around lake Diefenbaker. I have had many positive comments about the welcome and hospitality shown in our province. We really did showcase our country, city, province and industry to the world. The event started Sunday August 12 and ran to Friday August 17. In addition a post conference technical tour ran from August 18 to 21. For a detailed summary go to the website [icid@icid.org](mailto:icid@icid.org). It is well done.

The event received 520 paid registrations from 40 countries. Our goal was to host a first rate event but with the concern throughout to ensure expenses could be covered. Fortunately we did break even and in fact generated some revenue. This will be utilized to help pay the Canadian membership into ICID in the future. We were very relieved to see this. Anyone organizing an international conference these days is taking a risk. My recommendation is to start early, have a strong committee and meet regularly.

Our opening ceremonies chaired by Chandra Madramootoo were first rate. Hon Goodale, Hon Duncan, Mayor Clark and President Reinders, all brought opening remarks. It was great to have the 3 levels of government welcome our delegates and set the stage. Hon Goodale brought considerable promise and support to the development of Lake Diefenbaker in the province for drought and flood control and expansion of irrigation. A number of you have requested a copy of his remarks and I have brought them along today. It would be hard to misinterpret his vision and support for water management and irrigation in this province.

Our Plenary session speakers Dr` s Pomeroy, McCornick and Moloney were all world class well known authorities. They provided the delegates lots to think about and set the conference off nicely. They outlined clearly the concerns of a rapidly growing world population, changing climate and the fact we must be prepared to adapt and to mitigate GHG`s. The record droughts, floods, fires etc. that have been hitting our country and the world are very costly and are projected to continue . They talked about the Global Water Futures program and providing solutions to water threats in a time of global change. Maurice Moloney spoke of engineering plants to try and achieve global food security. He outlined of some of the issues they were working on. Much needs to be done

Following the plenary there was 2.5 days of scientific conference whereby some 120 papers were presented in concurrent sessions. There were 28 poster papers. In addition there were workshops on GHG mitigation , Irrigation Production Workshop, Financing irrigation projects workshop, Canal linings and geosynthetics workshop, FAO workshops on Senegal River basin, Improvement of small scale irrigation WUE projects in Africa and hydrometric modelling. There was also a Young professionals forum with 40 YP`s from around the world. They were transported to CSIDC in Outlook for discussion

and hands on training in operation of an irrigation project SSRID by Brian Bartel, Variable rate irrigation, GHG mitigation, cropping practice etc. , visited the dam etc. This went very well. In fact ICID suggest this hands on approach will be the model they follow in the future.

A trade show/ exhibit area was also part of the event. There were 30 exhibits in the conference area which allowed delegates to interact with exhibitors and share experiences.

Tours were a big part of our conference starting with a pre conference tour to the south Saskatchewan irrigation district etc. to learn about irrigation in Sask. Thanks to Kelly Farden and Brent Paterson etc. for all their work in organizing such a great event. Stops and tours were at the Dam, CSIDC, Small Potato Co., Eliason farms etc. and was very much enjoyed. In addition during the conference week there were 3 tours : to SSRID, to irrigated farms , to the U of S etc. There was also an accompanying persons tour each day to various locations including Wanaskiwin, Western Development Museum, Berry Barn, Remai Gallery, River Cruise etc.

After the conference, there was a post conference 3 day technical tour travelling through southern Sask and into the Lethbridge irrigation area. This was a great tour and the 40 visitors were most impressed with the large potato processing facilities, sugar beets, feedlots, Hybrid canola seed production, modern irrigation technology etc. It really was very impressive and Brent and Roger did a great job. We ended up at Banff to see the where the water originated in the rockies and then people flew home from Calgary International airport.

During the conference there were 4 receptions; 1) SIPA 2) Australia 3) Indonesia 4) Canada farewell dinner 5) India. I must say that the SIPA reception was well done, very popular and great opportunity to tell the world about SIPA and irrigation in our province. It was well received.

A highlight for me was the fact we had 50 delegates from China, 30 from Korea, and 14 from Nigeria.

There are many people to thank, but I want to particularly thank SIPA for their support monetarily but more than that in their willingness to help and for moral support. Roger, Larry, Joel and Sandra deserve specific thanks for supporting the idea from day 1 and working hard to the end for promoting it and participating. It meant a lot to our organizing committee that our local industry was so supportive. It was great to receive support from the Town of Outlook, Credit union and so forth.

People ask would we do it again and most say definitely but that we have learned a lot. Hosting an international conference is fraught with many issues. It is a huge amount of work, financially a big risk and very expensive to host an event of this nature. In addition visa issues, political turmoil, etc, all can have a major impact on the event. Despite all this we managed to pull it off successfully.