



Iron County Water Stewards

Recognizing Commissioner Paul Cozzens

When Paul Cozzens decided to run in the Cedar City Council election in 2011, the Cedar Valley's potential involvement in the Lake Powell Pipeline project was one of his primary concerns. He said after he was elected and the Central Iron County Water Conservancy District had declined to participate in that project, he felt a duty to find other solutions to supply the valley with water.

"Water should be our top priority," he said. "The West Desert project is key and critical to bringing water to Iron County and the community needs to be educated on that."

In 2012 Cozzens became a Cedar City Council member and was also appointed to the Central Iron County Water Conservancy District Board. Now, as a County Commissioner, he serves as liaison to the District. During his

tenure with the District, Cozzens donated hundreds of hours and successfully negotiated the settlement of water rights for the Pine Valley Water Supply project.

District Board Chair Brent Hunter said when Cozzens joined the board and learned that the District had filed on water in the West Desert, he became very active in doing everything he could to help secure those water rights. He said Cozzens made phone calls, traveled to Salt Lake City, and really put in a lot of work to help make sure the Cedar Valley had the option of importing water.

Cozzens has been extremely involved in recharge efforts in the valley, making arrangements with the necessary people for the development of the Schmidt and Western Rock recharge facilities, and physically working on recharge projects, donating hundreds of hours of his time to run equipment.

Hunter said Cozzens has been vocal in his support of the District's goals and has provided exceptional leadership.

"He's not only been active in the leadership, but has been active in jumping on a Caterpillar (machine) and getting things done," Hunter said. "He's really spent hours and hours on the machinery helping us get things done."

During the recent construction of a dike across Quichapa Lake, he was able to help get a lot of county time and equipment donated to help finish the project. Cozzens believes it is critical to make sure water that flows into the Cedar Valley is used or has the best chance possible of making it into the aquifer.

"We need to get every drop of water we can and put it to beneficial use before it evaporates," he said.



He has also served on the Cedar Valley's Groundwater Management Committee.

Cozzens said he feels water is the most important issue in Iron County. In addition to all his work in the Cedar Valley, he has been working as a County Commissioner with the Parowan Pumpers to help with their basin and valley. He assisted with county equipment to build the recharge basin at the mouth of Little Creek Canyon, and has worked on cleaning gravel out of the settling ponds at the mouth of Parowan Canyon.

Cozzens has also attended meetings to plan Parowan Valley recharge projects and to discuss the Parowan Valley Groundwater Management Plan with the state water engineer and other leaders.

Cozzens has lived in Cedar City since 1980 and was the owner of Cozzens Cabinets from 1987 through 2019. He and his wife, Mary, have three sons and two daughters. One of his sons lives in Northern Utah and is a computer programmer, another is a property manager in Cedar City, and another purchased and took over Cozzens Cabinets LLC. Their two daughters were adopted from China, and one will be graduating from Cedar High School next month. His youngest is 14 and although she has a prosthetic arm, she is very successful at violin and dance, and anything she puts her mind to.



Cozzens grew up in Moab and learned to work through his family's engineering and excavation business. His father was paralyzed when Cozzens was 10 years old, and continued to teach him from his wheelchair. Cozzens came to Cedar City to attend Southern Utah State College (now Southern Utah University) and has lived here since.

The purpose of the Iron County Water Stewards program is to recognize community members for contributing to the effort to optimize every drop of water in Iron County. The Central Iron County Water Conservancy District (CICWCD) is actively engaged in education, conservation, reuse and import projects to meet the growing demands on local water supply.

For every effort you make to conserve, we consider you a water steward, too. To Get to Know Your H2O, visit <https://cicwcd.org/>.

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