Clark Co. Regional Flood Control District

- Dedicated funds for Flood Control
  - Voter approved
  - $\frac{1}{4}$ sales tax increase
- Same funds as Capital & Maintenance etc.
- Pitched on two fronts
  - Need for real data (rainfall and stream gauge)
  - Value of Warnings
Clark County System

- Gauges
  - 1999: 67 in Las Vegas Valley (101 total)
  - 2003: 99 in LVV (132 total)
  - 2007: 118 LVV (165 total)
  - 2011: 133 LVV (196 total)
- 8000 Square miles
- Monitor size, intensity and movement of storm cells
- Runoff/Stream stage
- 8 that CCRFCD pays USGS to operate and maintain
- 6 repeaters at 5 repeater sites
Uses for Information

- Ground-truth weather radar
- Media Value
- Better forecasts from NWS
- Wind speed/direction valuable in fighting wildfires (Carpenter 1)
- Public use data for various purposes, e.g., hang-gliding at Mt. Potosi
- Empirical validation of precipitation depths
- Future Uses?
  - Resilient Infrastructure
July 1999 - 62 gages
June 2003 - 79 gages
USGS & NWS

- Federal Funding
- Ownership
- Maintenance
Cutting budgets

- Several rounds
  - Layoffs
  - Discretionary expenditures
  - Capital
  - Labor contracts
  - Priorities

- What should you do when asked to cut?
Tailor Your Message

- Know your audience
  - Elected Officials
  - Management
  - Technical Knowledge
  - Finance/Budget oriented
- Relationship – go for the best chemistry
- Avoid jargon, acronyms, insider terms
- How much history does decision maker have?
- What does the listener value or find persuasive?
  - Costs, public perception, evidence, priority?
Timing

- Plan your meeting
  - Don’t try to explain this in the elevator
  - Optimize the use of your audience’s time
    - Level of Detail
    - Visual presentation
    - Short story?
    - Question/Answer time?

- Advance Materials
  - Overkill
Preparation

- Who is going with you?
- Can you manage the attendance?
  - Avoid grouping together those who don’t support
- Know in advance where your support lies
  - External
    - COE, USGS, other agencies, state, media
  - Internal support
    - Other departments, labor unions
- Plan the Most Favorable Meeting Location
  - Do you have a great visual at your offices?
Set the Tone

- Make it clear that you believe what you’re saying
- Be positive, passionate, not emotional
- Point out you are team player
- Empathize – Making cuts is no fun for the boss
- Believe what you are saying
- Always be honest
Make Your Case

- Explain the system simply if necessary
- Use data, ROI, if you have it
- Use a good picture to make points
- Tell a success story
- Let the facts speak
- Don’t use hyperbole, hysteria or guilt
Make Your Case

- Offer Alternatives if you can
  - Risk maybe that you’ll lose two programs
- Point out how you’ve done more with less or cuts you’ve already made
- Explain the implications
  - No data, grant funds, partnerships, who uses the data besides your agency?
- Consequences, restart costs? (Value of long-term climate records; uncertainty in the face of climate change)
Management Considerations

- Priorities
  - Mandated functions
  - Life/Safety Issues (ALERT systems are life/safety programs)
  - Risk Management
- Leveraged funding
- Community Value/Support
  - Media
  - Public Relations
Management Considerations

- Team Players
- Past efforts
- Short and long term consequences
- Avoided costs
- One time versus reoccurring costs
- Cost of restart when budget allows
- Success of program
- Your credibility
After the Meeting

- Drop a note or email
  - Any other questions?
  - Thank for your time
  - Mention the argument that worked the best with that individual
  - Make sure they understand the ask
  - Consider asking others to weigh in
- Debrief with your staff – what worked?
After the Decision - Cuts

- Appreciate the difficulty of the decision
- Keep your staff positive
- Ask for feedback on why decision was made
- Avoid poisoning the well, there may be a next round