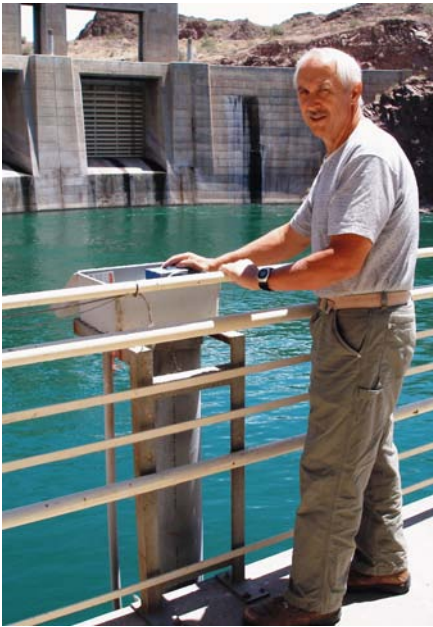


## *The Regional Report*

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### Employee Spotlight: Dave Gunderson

*Editor's Note: This feature focuses on the individual men and women who staff the Lower Colorado Region, the Boulder Canyon Operations, and the Southern California Area Offices, who ensure the goals and requirements of the Region are carried out in an efficient and effective manner. All employees featured in this series are selected randomly regardless of the position or time in service.*



Among Dave Gunderson's duties is calibrating Parker Dam's water level sensors.. LCR photo by Ken Phillips

Telecommunications Specialist **Dave Gunderson** works in the Water Operations Group of the Boulder Canyon Operations Office, but he doesn't work or live in Boulder City.

He works in the Communication Shop at Parker Dam and lives in Lake Havasu City, Arizona.

Gunderson's primary duties include, "maintaining the River Telemetry System and supporting the Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition (SCADA) Systems at Parker, Davis and Headgate Rock Dams," he said.

"I guess the best description of my job is that I maintain 'remote' sites that require technical support. The bulk of my work is the support of the dozens of remote gaging stations we have on the river and else where, kind of like being the 'Maytag repairman' on the river," Gunderson added..

He has worked for Reclamation for 15 years, three of which have been spent in the Lower Colorado Region.

"I worked my first 12 years for Hoover Dam in the Communication Shop and later in Engineering," he said. "My duty station however was at Parker Dam in the Communication Shop. It's a one-man operation and I'm the 'one man.'"

He began his federal career working for the Department of Defense (DoD) at the Sacramento Army Depot (SAAD) for the Maintenance Directorate.

"I worked a couple of different jobs at the Army Depot doing programming and engineering support," he said. "Most of my time was consumed traveling world-wide as a field engineer working on systems I can't talk about."

"I came to work for Interior during the time of the DoD Base Realignment And Closure commission, when base closures were occurring in the early nineties. The Sacramento Army Depot was one of the first facilities closed," he added. "As a point of interest, several of our Regional Office employees came from SAAD."

Gunderson is licensed by the Federal Communications Commission to work on radio equipment.

"All of our remote gaging sites are linked to Boulder City by radio. RF communications plays a key role in the collection of the

field data,” he said.

As part of off-the-job activities, he is continuing his education by studying other components related to his job.

“I am learning field hydrology techniques from our staff in Blythe and plan to learn some aspects of water scheduling from our Boulder City staff, when time permits, to ‘round-out’ my understanding of the big picture,” he said.

“I’m one of those folks that never pursued that formal college education,” he said. “I received my electronics training via a four-year stint in the Marine Corps, then graduated into the private sector as a field engineering technician.

“I worked for Sperry Univac both on the engineering floor and developmental test beds for a system used by the Federal Aviation Administration for air traffic control. It was here that I learned my craft. Been learning ever since.” Gunderson said.

“I’ve worked in several disciplines of electronics since the early seventies,” he added. “I’ve seen many changes through the years. The first computer systems I maintained were designed before the invention of the microprocessor. Programming of these systems was done in either machine or assembly language and usually entered by hand through a maintenance panel.”

“On my present job, my area of expertise is the data acquisition and distribution of information from the sensor to the data base. In case you were wondering, the sensors, instrumentation, data logging and communications equipment used in our gaging sites is microprocessor-based and requires some degree of technical knowledge just to take simple measurements.”

“Pretty cutting-edge stuff actually. The river gaging network that we have deployed on the lower Colorado River is one of the more technically advanced systems in the United States. I had the opportunity to develop, build and program this system and now am training others in maintaining it,” Gunderson added.

“I worked in both the private sector and the federal service. My last 15 years with Reclamation have been the most rewarding. I’ve been given more opportunities with Reclamation than with any other employer. I feel that I’m in the right place at the right time,” he said.

“I’m into ham radio, digital photography and graphic design as hobbies,” Gunderson added. “I’ve built several web sites (see [www.redpoodle.com](http://www.redpoodle.com) for a sample). The web site was inspired by the two poodles he and his wife own.

“I don’t get too much time to indulge in my hobbies in my off time though, as entertaining Mrs. Gunderson and the poodles take up a good deal of my time,” he said.

“This year is a landmark year for me. I’m pushing 30 years with the government and my marriage with the lovely Mrs. Gunderson.

“I’m planning my retirement to happen when I hit 62. We have purchased our retirement home in John Day, Oregon, and am in the process of ‘fixing it up’. We’ve decided on Oregon as it’s somewhat cooler and somewhat closer to our two grand kids,” he said.