COLORADO RIVER CITIZENS FORUM ORIENTATION

Sally Spener, Public Affairs Officer

September 1, 2009

Yuma, AZ

IBWC MISSION

The International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, is responsible for applying the boundary and water treaties between the two countries and settling differences that arise in their application.

USIBWC MISSION STATEMENT

Provide binational solutions to issues that arise during the application of United States-Mexico treaties regarding boundary demarcation, national ownership of waters, sanitation, water quality, and flood control in the border region.

HISTORY

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION
COMISION INTERNACIONAL DE LIMITES Y AGUAS

EARLY HISTORY OF THE IBWC

- **Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)** – Established the international boundary
- **Treaty of December 30, 1853** – Re-established the southern boundary of New Mexico and Arizona
- **Convention of July 29, 1882** – Established a temporary commission to survey the land boundary and establish monuments

EARLY HISTORY OF THE IBWC

- **Convention of Nov. 12, 1884** – Adopted rules to address questions that arose about the location of the boundary when the rivers changed course
- **Convention of March 1, 1889** – Established the International Boundary Commission to apply the rules of the 1884 Convention
- **Banco Convention (1905)** – Modified the 1889 treaty to retain the Rio Grande and the Colorado River as the boundary

CONVENTION OF 1906

- Distribution between Mexico and the U.S. of the waters of the Rio Grande in the El Paso-Juarez region
- U.S. to deliver 60,000 acre-feet per year
- Proportional reduction in deliveries in case of extraordinary drought
- Water stored in Elephant Butte Dam, NM

American Dam

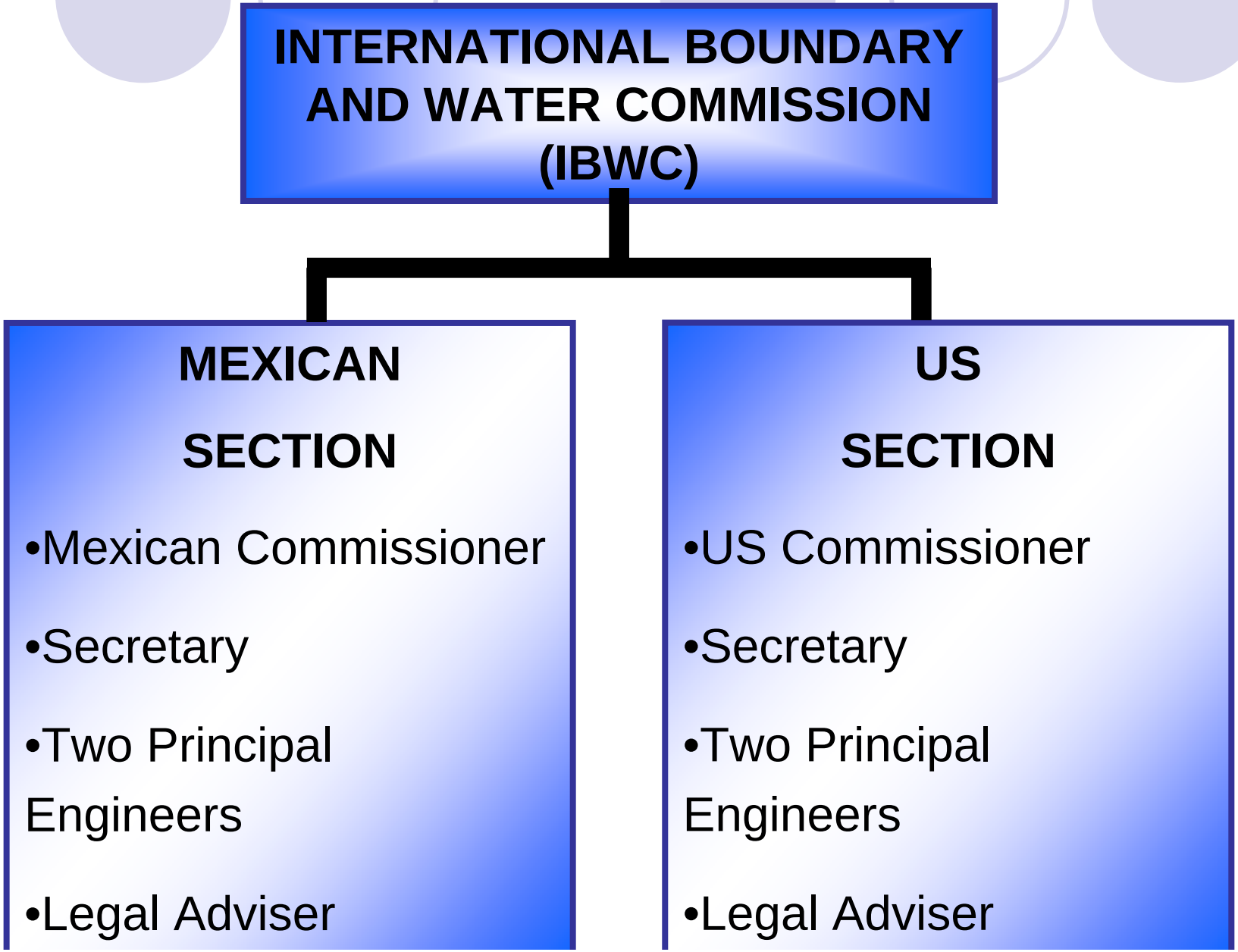
CONVENTION OF 1933

- Stabilized the international boundary in the El Paso-Juarez Valley
- Straightened the river channel
- Flood control levees in both countries
- Rio Grande Rectification Project

RIO GRANDE RECTIFICATION PROJECT IN THE EL PASO-JUAREZ VALLEY

RIVER BED AND RECTIFIED CHANNEL

STRUCTURE PER 1944 TREATY



1944 WATER TREATY– RIO GRANDE

- Mexico delivers water to the U.S. in cycles of five years between Ft. Quitman and the Gulf
- U.S. receives 1/3 of the waters arriving in the Rio Grande from six Mexican tributaries, a minimum annual average of 350,000 acre-feet
- Mexico incurred a deficit in deliveries in the 1990s but has since paid off the deficit
- Treaty authorized construction of up to three storage dams on Rio Grande, only 2 were built

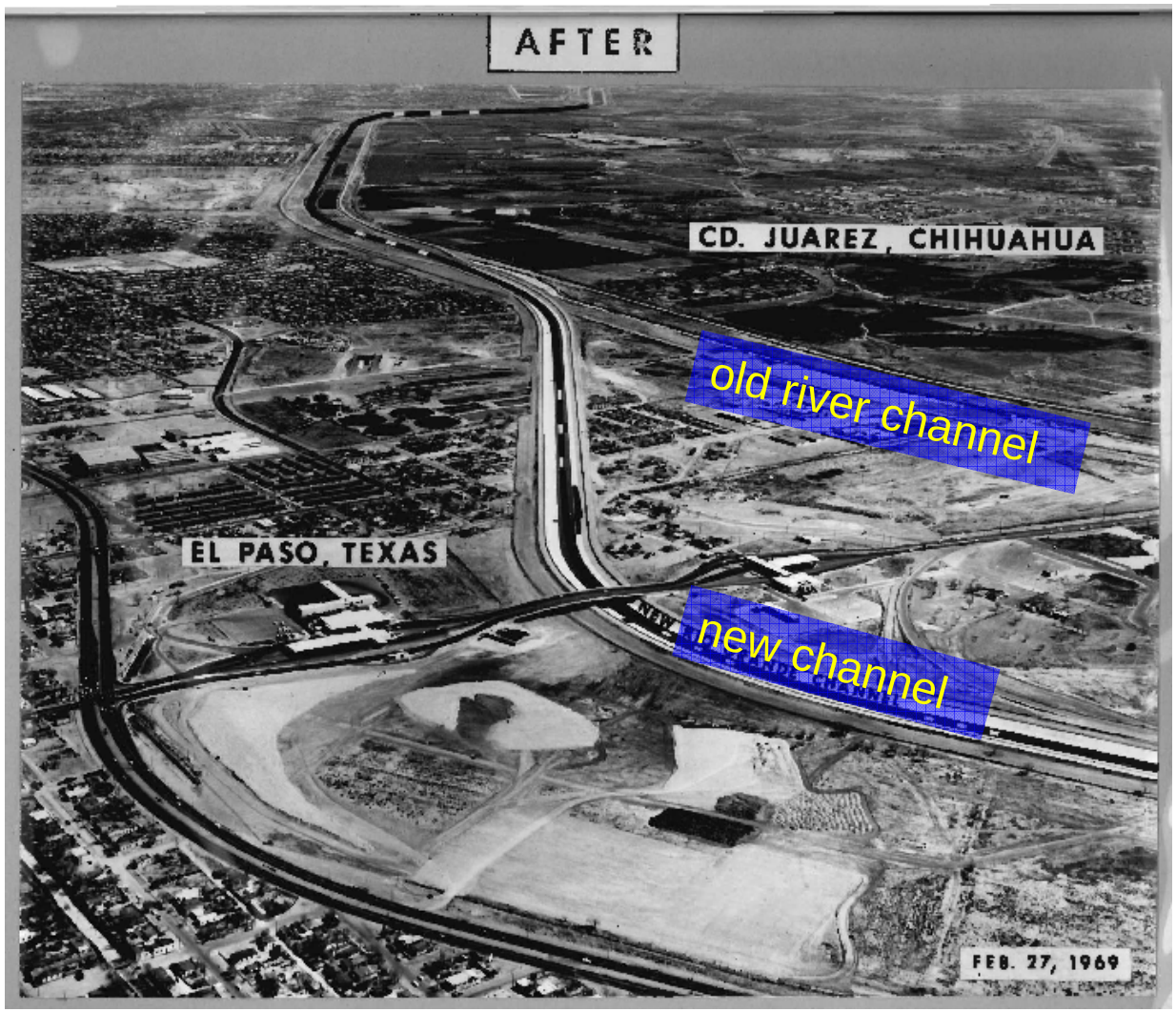
1944 WATER TREATY– COLORADO RIVER

- U.S. to deliver to Mexico a volume of 1.5 million acre-feet per year
- When there are surplus waters, U.S. to deliver to Mexico a total volume of up to 1.7 million acre-feet per year
- In extraordinary drought, Mexico reduced in proportion to U.S.

IBWC MINUTES

- Decisions of the Commission are recorded in the form of Minutes
- Minutes are binding agreements of the IBWC intended to implement treaty.
- They take effect once approved by the U.S. Department of State and Mexico's Foreign Affairs Ministry
- Over 300 Minutes

CHAMIZAL CONVENTION (1963)



1970 BOUNDARY TREATY

- IBWC to maintain the Rio Grande and Colorado River as the international boundary
- Boundary is middle of the channel occupied by normal flow or middle of the channel which in normal flows has the greatest average width over its length
- IBWC to delineate the boundary on maps
- IBWC may stabilize or rectify the channel (numerous rectifications carried out)
- Prohibits construction of works that would obstruct or deflect normal or flood flows

PROJECTS

IBWC OFFICES ON THE BORDER
SAN DIEGO
TIJUANA
MEXICALI
YUMA
NOGALES
NOGALES
LAS CRUCES
EL PASO
FT. HANCOCK
CD. JUAREZ
PRESIDIO
OJINAGA
DEL RIO
CD. ACUÑA
NVO. LAREDO
NVA. CD. GUERRERO
FALCON HGTS
MERCEDES
REYNOSA
N

SANITATION PROJECTS

- 3 international wastewater treatment plants
  - San Diego, CA
  - Nogales, AZ
  - Nuevo Laredo, Tamps.

Excavation for plant upgrade in San Diego

WATER QUALITY

- Treaties do not regulate water quality
- IBWC has conducted binational water quality studies with partners from both countries
- Water quality data is routinely exchanged
- Working on binational water quality database
- Texas Clean Rivers Program for the Rio Grande conducts regular monitoring and publishes reports

FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS

- Canalization Project - 106 river miles in New Mexico and Texas
- Rectification Project – 84 river miles near El Paso, TX
- Presidio Flood Control Project – 13 river miles near Presidio, TX
- Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project – 186 river miles in south Texas to Gulf of Mexico
- Tijuana River Flood Control Project – small project at San Diego-Tijuana
- Levee rehabilitation program underway to meet FEMA standards
- $220 million in Recovery Act funding for levee rehab

RIO GRANDE FLOOD CONTROL

Levee construction in El Paso, TX

PRESIDIO PROJECT

PRESIDIO PROJECT

INTERNATIONAL STORAGE DAMS

- Amistad Dam (Del Rio, TX)
- Falcon Dam (Falcon Heights, TX)
- Purposes
  - Flood Control
  - Recreation
  - Hydroelectric Power
  - Water Supply

AMISTAD DAM

INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES AND BORDER CROSSINGS

- International bridges (34+)
- Border Crossings/Ports on the land boundary (23+)
- Crossing of utility/service lines (43+)
- Review border infrastructure projects to ensure no deflection of surface water

BOUNDARY DEMARCATION

- U.S. and Mexican Sections of IBWC jointly determine location of the boundary and demarcate the boundary
- 258 principal monuments between El Paso, TX-Cd. Juarez, Chih. and the Pacific Ocean
- Hundreds of intermediate boundary markers
- Boundary demarcation plaques at ports of entry/international bridges
- IBWC responsible for maintaining the monuments and preparing boundary maps

BOUNDARY DEMARCATION

Monument No. 199, Yuma County

Mon. 204, San Luis

CITIZENS FORUM

CITIZENS FORUM PURPOSE

- To facilitate the exchange of information between the USIBWC and the local community regarding ongoing and future USIBWC projects in the Lower Colorado River
- The Citizens Forum is intended to bring together community members enabling the early and continued two-way flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between the USIBWC and the general public, environmentalists, water managers, irrigation districts, government agencies, etc.

BOARD MEMBER DUTIES

- Attend public meetings four times per year
- Meetings alternate between sites in Yuma and Imperial Counties
- Board term is for two years
- Board members are expected to be available to the public to facilitate the exchange of information

BOARD MEMBER DUTIES

- Review and comment on technical documents and activities associated with USIBWC projects in the area
- Discuss plans and issues related to ongoing and future USIBWC projects
- CF is not a federal advisory board; goal is to exchange information and to receive feedback from a diversity of viewpoints
- Members serve as volunteers. There is no reimbursement for expenses.

CITIZENS FORUM LEADERSHIP

- Two Co-Chairs
- USIBWC Co-Chair
  - Area Operations Manager Anna Morales
- Community Co-Chair
  - Selected by the board

CITIZENS FORUM INFORMATION

- All meetings are open to the public
- Regular communication with the board via e-mail
- Meeting notices, notes/minutes, and presentations are available online at:

http://www.ibwc.gov/Citizens_Forums/CF_Colorado.html

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION, UNITED STATES AND MEXICO
UNITED STATES SECTION

USIBWC
HEADQUARTERS

4171 N. Mesa C-100

El Paso, TX 79902

915-832-4100/4175

YUMA OFFICE

1940 S. 3RD Ave.

Suite A

Yuma, AZ 85364-5657

928-782-1598

www.ibwc.gov

sallyspener@ibwc.gov