



## **International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section**

For immediate release  
January 27, 2016

### **RIO GRANDE SALINITY CONTROL AND FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS ON AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 10 PUBLIC MEETING IN MERCEDES**

Efforts to control salinity of Rio Grande waters and rehabilitation of the river's flood control levees will be discussed at the next meeting of the Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum (LRGCF) of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC). The meeting takes place Wednesday, February 10, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m., at the USIBWC office at 325 Golf Course Road in Mercedes, Texas.

Salinity of Rio Grande water has been a concern for many years in the Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas and Tamaulipas because of impacts to farmers and other water users. To control salinity, the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, in the 1960s developed and constructed the Morillo Drain project with the financial participation of Texas irrigators, cities, and individuals. The 75-mile long Morillo Drain conveys highly-saline return flows from a Mexican irrigation district directly to the Gulf of Mexico, preventing the salty water from degrading Rio Grande water quality. USIBWC Principal Engineer Carlos Peña will discuss the current status of Morillo Drain and ongoing efforts to ensure proper operations to control salinity.

In other business, USIBWC Civil Engineer Ramon Navarro will give a presentation about Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project levee rehabilitation in Hidalgo and Cameron Counties, Texas. The presentation will provide an update on the status of levees under

construction and will cover projects planned for the future. The USIBWC is rehabilitating its levees to meet standards established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Communities protected by levee systems accredited by FEMA benefit from both enhanced flood protection and better rates on flood insurance.

The USIBWC established the LRGCF to facilitate the exchange of information between the USIBWC and members of the public about Commission activities and related issues in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

A complete meeting agenda follows. Members of the public who would like more information about the meeting may contact the USIBWC's Lower Rio Grande Office at 956-565-3150 or [sally.spener@ibwc.gov](mailto:sally.spener@ibwc.gov).

For more information:

Sally Spener  
915-832-4175  
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## **LOWER RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM**

**Wednesday, February 10, 2016**

**3:00 - 5:00 P.M.**

**USIBWC Conference Room**

**325 Golf Course Road\***

**Mercedes, TX 78570**

### **AGENDA**

- Welcome and Introductions – Omar Rios, Citizens Forum Co-Chair
- Lower Rio Grande Salinity Control and Morillo Drain – Carlos Peña, Principal Engineer, USIBWC
- Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project Levee Improvements – Ramon Navarro, Civil Engineer, USIBWC
- Citizens Forum Application Process – USIBWC Staff
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion
- Suggested Future Agenda Items

If you have a disability that you wish to self-identify confidentially that requires accommodation, please advise us ahead of time. For more information, call 956-565-3150.

**\*Directions:** From Expressway 83, exit Mile 2 W. Travel south for approximately 1.5 miles to Golf Course Road. Turn left. The USIBWC is the first building on your left.