



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
January 29, 2015

FLOOD CONTROL INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE CITY OF HARLINGEN'S TRAIL SYSTEM IN THE ARROYO COLORADO ON AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 11 PUBLIC MEETING IN MERCEDES

The Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum (LRGCF) of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) will discuss issues related to the USIBWC's Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project and recreational activities along the Arroyo Colorado during its next public meeting. The LRGCF was established 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. The meeting will be held Wednesday, February 11, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m., at the USIBWC office at 325 Golf Course Road in Mercedes, Texas.

Ramon F. Navarro, USIBWC Civil Engineer, will give a presentation about the Upper Brownsville Levee Geotechnical Site Investigation in Cameron County, Texas. The investigation is intended to determine the cause of cracks in the Rio Grande flood control levee near the Gateway International Bridge in Brownsville that were discovered during a routine inspection in 2014. The USIBWC contracted with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to perform the study. The USACE is scheduled to complete its investigation and make recommendations for a long-term fix by February 16, 2015. The cracks pose no immediate

flood risk at current river levels and are considered safe under conditions similar to the 2010 flood.

In other business, Rodolfo Montero, Area Operations Manager for the USIBWC, will give an update on efforts to restore the flood conveyance capacity of the Arroyo Colorado, an important component of the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project. During Rio Grande flood conditions, some of the floodwaters are diverted off the river into interior floodway channels in Mexico and the United States, including the Arroyo Colorado in Harlingen. Recent studies indicate that growth of dense vegetation and accumulation of sediment along the Arroyo Colorado have greatly reduced the channel's ability to convey flood flows. Mr. Montero will describe plans to remove brush and trees along the Arroyo Colorado between Business 77 and FM 509 while leaving the ground cover and slope vegetation in place.

The Citizens Forum will also hear from City of Harlingen Director of Parks and Recreation Javier Mendez, who will discuss the future of Harlingen's trail system along the Arroyo Colorado. The system includes both hike and bike trails as well as water trails for kayaks and canoes. The City of Harlingen is currently working on the Park and Recreation Master Plan and a grant application to extend the existing Arroyo Hike and Bike Trail to Dixieland Park. Also under consideration is establishment of a kayak trail from Harlingen to Rio Hondo.

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 Project Office at 956-565-3150 or sally.spener@ibwc.gov.

For more information:

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LOWER RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

3:00 - 5:00 P.M.

USIBWC Conference Room

325 Golf Course Road*

Mercedes, TX 78570

AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions – Rodolfo Montero, Citizens Forum Co-Chair, USIBWC
- Harlingen’s Trail System along the Arroyo Colorado - Javier Mendez, Director of Parks and Recreation, City of Harlingen
- Arroyo Colorado Vegetation Maintenance to Restore Flood Control Capacity – Rodolfo Montero, Area Operations Manager, USIBWC
- Geotechnical Site Investigation of Upper Brownsville Levee Cracks – Ramon F. Navarro, Civil Engineer, USIBWC
- 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.