



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
March 9, 2011

REGIONAL STORMWATER PLANNING AND ARROYO COLORADO FLOOD CONTROL ON AGENDA FOR MARCH 23 PUBLIC MEETING

Drainage and flood control issues will be discussed at the March 23 public meeting of the Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum (LRGCF). The LRGCF was established by the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) 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, March 23, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. at the USIBWC office at 325 Golf Course Road in Mercedes, Texas.

Sharlotte Teague, Senior Project Manager with S & B Infrastructure, will provide an overview of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Regional Economic Adjustment Plan. The Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC) has obtained a federal grant to develop a project entitled "Regional Economic Adjustment Plan for Building Disaster Resilient Communities." The purpose of the grant is to develop a regional stormwater and drainage master plan for Starr, Hidalgo, Cameron, and Willacy Counties that will ensure economic growth and economic recovery following natural disasters. Associated with the master plan will be a Geographic Information System centralized database for the collection and maintenance of infrastructure and assets that will be housed at the LRGVDC's Lower Rio Grande Valley Economic Development Department and available for use by the public and government entities.

In other business, USIBWC Principal Engineer Carlos Peña will discuss the Commission's vegetation management plans for the Arroyo Colorado. An analysis of water surface elevations in the Arroyo Colorado during last year's flood coupled with additional studies by the USIBWC indicate that plants in the Arroyo Colorado have restricted the flow of water, leading to higher water levels when the stream is in flood conditions. Because this increases the risk of flood control levees failing or being overtopped, the USIBWC has begun planning to remove vegetation in the Arroyo where it poses increased flood risk, including at bottlenecks in the channel identified in the Harlingen area.

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 the Public Affairs Office at sally.spener@ibwc.gov.

For more information:

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LOWER RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM

Wednesday, March 23, 2011

4:00 - 6:00 P.M.

USIBWC Conference Room

325 Golf Course Road*

Mercedes, TX 78570

AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions – Bill Lewis, Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum Co-Chair
- Stormwater and Drainage Issues in the Lower Rio Grande Valley Regional Economic Adjustment Plan – Sharlotte Teague, Senior Project Manager, S & B Infrastructure, Ltd.
- Vegetation Management in the Arroyo Colorado to Reduce Flood Risk – Carlos Peña, Principal Engineer, USIBWC
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion
- Suggested Future Agenda Items