



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release

July 9, 2015

RIO GRANDE WATER QUALITY AND FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS ON AGENDA FOR JULY 23 PUBLIC MEETING IN EL PASO

Rio Grande water quality concerns and flood control projects will be discussed at the next public meeting of the Rio Grande Citizens Forum, an outreach program of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC). The meeting will take place Thursday, July 23, 6:30-8:30 p.m., at USIBWC Headquarters, 4171 N. Mesa Street, El Paso, TX 79902.

USIBWC Environmental Protection Specialists Leslie Grijalva and Andres Garcia will discuss Rio Grande water quality in the Upper Rio Grande region of Texas. The USIBWC Texas Clean Rivers Program collects water quality information throughout the basin. Routine monitoring has shown that bacteria continues to exceed standards in the El Paso area. The Clean Rivers Program staff will discuss issues associated with the bacteria concern. They will also discuss salinity, monitoring activities, outreach, and ongoing and future projects in the Rio Grande affecting water quality.

In other business, USIBWC Civil Engineer Derrick O'Hara will give an update on levee certification, design, and construction in the greater El Paso-Las Cruces region. His presentation will cover completed levee construction in the Mesilla and Vado areas and the ongoing coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the City of El Paso, and Doña Ana County for levee certification and accreditation. Communities protected by FEMA-accredited levee systems benefit not only from the enhanced flood protection but from better rates on flood insurance.

Mr. O'Hara will also present on ongoing construction of the box and overchute structure at the American Canal at the College Arroyo confluence in El Paso. Several hydraulic structures at this location are important for irrigation flow through the American Canal and for the conveyance of flood waters into

the Rio Grande. The box and overchute structure allows stormwater from the College Arroyo to be conveyed over the irrigation canal and into the Rio Grande. The USIBWC has coordinated with the El Paso County Water Improvement District No. 1, United States Bureau of Reclamation, El Paso Water Utilities, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection in preparation for the 2015 irrigation season. The performance of the box and overchute structure during the ongoing irrigation season will be discussed.

The USIBWC established the Rio Grande Citizens Forum in 1999 to facilitate the exchange of information regarding USIBWC activities on the Rio Grande between Percha Dam, New Mexico and Fort Quitman, Texas. It is designed to bring together community members, enabling the early and continued two-way flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between USIBWC and the general public, environmentalists, irrigation districts, municipalities, and others interested in the river. A complete meeting agenda follows.

For more information:

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RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM
Thursday, July 23, 2015
6:30 - 8:30 P.M.
USIBWC Headquarters
4171 N. Mesa St., The Commons, Building C*
El Paso, TX 79902

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions – Miguel Teran, Citizens Forum Co-Chair
- Water Quality in the Upper Rio Grande: Annual Water Quality Update and Basin Advisory Meeting – Leslie Grijalva and Andres Garcia, Environmental Protection Specialists, USIBWC Texas Clean Rivers Program
- Status of Rio Grande Flood Control Levee Certification, Design, and Construction in this Region – Derrick O’Hara, CFM, Civil Engineer (Hydraulic), Engineering Services Division, USIBWC
- Structures for Irrigation and Flood Control at the Confluence of the American Canal and College Arroyo – Derrick O’Hara, CFM, Civil Engineer (Hydraulic), Engineering Services Division, USIBWC
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion
- Suggested Future Agenda Items

***Directions:** From I-10, exit Executive Center Blvd. Go east to Mesa Street. Turn right on Mesa. The Commons office buildings are on the right.

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