



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
October 2, 2012

FUTURE WATER SUPPLY FOR SOUTH TEXAS AND THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ECOTOURISM ON AGENDA FOR OCTOBER 10 PUBLIC MEETING IN MERCEDES

Future water supply issues and the economic impact of ecotourism will be discussed at a public meeting of the Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum (LRGCF), an outreach program of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC). 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, October 10, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. at the USIBWC office at 325 Golf Course Road in Mercedes, Texas.

Jeff Gerber, Environmental Protection Specialist with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, will discuss the Lower Rio Grande Basin Study. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority (RGRWA) are conducting a basin study to evaluate the impacts of climate variability and change on water supply imbalances within an eight county region along the U.S.-Mexico border in South Texas (Cameron, Willacy, Hidalgo, Starr, Zapata, Jim Hogg, Webb and Maverick Counties).

This basin study will perform hydrologic projections of water supply and demand in the face of the changing climate, evaluate how existing water infrastructure will perform in the face of changing water realities, formulate a range of alternative regional water management options to meet water needs in 2060, and evaluate and screen alternatives based on several factors

including cost/benefits, public acceptance, and various political, institutional, regulatory, and environmental constraints. Finally, the study will also recommend a preferred alternative plan to meet planning objectives.

The Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum will also hear from Kyle R. O'Haver, Natural Resource Specialist with the Estero Llano Grande State Park World Birding Center about the economic impact of nature tourism in the Rio Grande Valley. He will explain in his presentation what some of the highlighted natural resources and nature locations are in the Rio Grande Valley and how nature/eco tourism impacts the Rio Grande Valley with money and jobs.

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 media inquiries:

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LOWER RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM

Wednesday, October 10, 2012

3:00 - 5:00 P.M.

USIBWC Conference Room

325 Golf Course Road*

Mercedes, TX 78570

AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions – Rodolfo Montero, Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum Co-Chair
- Lower Rio Grande Basin Study – Jeff Gerber, Environmental Protection Specialist, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Oklahoma-Texas Area Office
- Economic Impact of Nature Tourism in the Rio Grande Valley – Kyle R. O'Haver, Natural Resource Specialist, Estero Llano Grande State Park, World Birding Center
- 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.