

For immediate release  
April 21, 2004

## **IRRIGATION DISTRICT WATER CONSERVATION PROJECTS, MEXICO'S COLORADO RIVER INFRASTRUCTURE, AND INDIAN WATER RIGHTS ON AGENDA FOR APRIL 26 MEETING**

The Colorado River Citizens' Forum (CRCF) of the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) will hold a public meeting on Monday, April 26 in Yuma, Arizona. The purpose of the CRCF is to promote the exchange of information between the USIBWC and the community about Commission projects and related issues in the area. The meeting is scheduled for 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. MST at the Yuma Crossing State Historic Park, 201 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Yuma, Arizona.

Francisco Bernal of the Mexican Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission will give an overview of Mexico's Colorado River infrastructure, including the irrigation system in the Mexicali Valley. Under the 1944 Water Treaty, the United States delivers 1.5 million acre-feet per year of Colorado River water to Mexico.

Citizens' Forum Board Member Wade Noble will give a briefing on planned water conservation projects for irrigation districts in the Yuma area. These include the Gila Gravity Main Canal Water Conservation Improvement Project, which will improve canal efficiency, benefitting several irrigation districts as well as domestic water users. Another project, the Yuma County Water Users' Association Canal Improvement Plan, features concrete lining and rehabilitation of 25 miles of existing unlined canals and replacement of deteriorated structures. The Bard Water District is also undertaking a canal lining project affecting 20 miles of unlined canals. The canal lining projects will conserve water by significantly reducing seepage losses.

In another presentation, Rodney B. Lewis, General Counsel to the Gila River Indian Community, will discuss the status of Indian water rights on the Colorado River. Lewis is the first Native American admitted to the Arizona State Bar Association and the first to argue a case before the United States Supreme Court.

The Colorado River Citizens' Forum Board is comprised of 12 residents of Yuma County, Arizona and Imperial County, California who represent diverse interests in the region. The board has two co-chairs, Marie Barrett, New River Wetlands Project Outreach Coordinator, and USIBWC Deputy Commissioner Carlos Marin, who serves as the agency's representative on the board. The board conducts quarterly public meetings in the area to discuss plans and issues related to ongoing and future USIBWC projects and related activities.

A complete meeting agenda follows. Members of the public who would like more information about the meeting can contact the USIBWC's Yuma Projects Office at (928) 782-1598 or Public Affairs Officer Sally Spener at (915) 832-4175 or via e-mail at [sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov](mailto:sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov).

For more information:

Sally Spener  
(915) 832-4175  
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## **COLORADO RIVER CITIZENS' FORUM**

**Monday, April 26, 2004**

**4:00 - 6:00 P.M.**

Yuma Crossing State Historic Park, Quechan Conference Rm.

201 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Yuma, Arizona

### **Agenda**

- Welcome and Introductions - Carlos Marin, USIBWC
- Status of Indian Water Rights on the Colorado River - Rod Lewis, Gila River Indian Community
- Mexico's Colorado River Irrigation and Conveyance Infrastructure - Francisco Bernal, Mexicali Manager, IBWC Mexican Section
- U.S. Irrigation District Water Conservation Projects - Wade Noble, Irrigation District Consultant and Citizens' Forum Board Member
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion/Suggested Future Agenda Items

The next Citizens' Forum meeting will be July 26 in Imperial County, California.

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 928-782-1598 or e-mail [sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov](mailto:sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov).