

For immediate release
May 3, 2004

PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS RIO GRANDE FLOOD PREPAREDNESS

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) and the United States National Weather Service (NWS) have scheduled a meeting with local officials to ensure that emergency managers are prepared in the event of a Rio Grande flood. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 19, 1:00 p.m., at the Weslaco National Guard Armory, 1100 Vo-Tech Drive in Weslaco, Texas. The public is encouraged to attend, especially those with property adjacent to the Rio Grande.

In the event of a Rio Grande flood, the USIBWC will provide to the NWS the projected flood releases from the Commission's two upstream dams, Amistad Dam at Del Rio-Ciudad Acuña and Falcon Dam at Falcon Heights-Nueva Ciudad Guerrero. The NWS will use this information in preparing flood forecasts for the Rio Grande. At the meeting, the federal agencies will join with local emergency response officials to discuss how data can be shared and used appropriately during storms so that timely decisions can be made about evacuations, road closures, and other measures designed to protect life and property.

Additionally, the USIBWC will present its latest Rio Grande hydraulic model, indicating how water levels would be affected by floods of various magnitudes. The model shows that flood control levees could be overtopped during the 100-year flood. The USIBWC will also discuss the status of investigations into the structural integrity of the flood control levees. The USIBWC is using the hydraulic model and levee investigations as the basis for a plan to raise and rehabilitate the levees in the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project, which covers 180 river miles from the Gulf of Mexico upstream to Penitas, Texas.

The USIBWC will also give a status report on storage and releases from upstream reservoirs in Mexico. Heavy rainfall in the San Juan River basin in recent months has filled some Mexican reservoirs in the states of Tamaulipas and Nuevo Leon. The excess water released from these dams makes its way to the Rio Grande near Rio Grande City, Texas just downstream of Falcon Dam. Should a flood occur upstream on the Rio Grande, there is sufficient capacity to store substantial floodwaters since storage at both Falcon and Amistad Dams remains well below normal.

For more information:

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**Flood Emergency Coordination and
Rio Grande Hydraulic Modeling Presentations**

Wednesday May 19, 2004

1:00 p.m.

**Weslaco National Guard Armory
1100 Vo-Tech Drive
in Weslaco, Texas**

Agenda

- Welcome - USIBWC - Jim Robinson
- Background/Reason for Meeting - USIBWC- Jim Robinson
- Flash Flood Warning Video - USIBWC- Jim Robinson
- Weather Forecast Procedures and Organizational Coverage - NWS- Frank Bell
- Presentation of the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project Rio Grande Hydraulic Model - USIBWC- Dr. Raymundo Aguirre
- Status of U.S. Lower Rio Grande Valley Flood Levee Investigations - Jim Robinson
- Provide Latest Mexican Reservoir Status - Jim Robinson
- Lower Rio Grande Valley Flood Emergency Coordination Discussions
- Other Speakers on Flood Emergency Coordination Activities
- Open Discussion/Questions

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 915-832-4175 or e-mail sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov