

For immediate release
July 11, 2007

LOWER RIO GRANDE WATER QUALITY ON AGENDA FOR JULY 25 PUBLIC MEETING

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) will discuss Rio Grande water quality at the next meeting of the Lower Rio Grande Citizens' Forum (LRGCF) on July 25, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. at the USIBWC office, 325 Golf Course Road in Mercedes, Texas. The purpose of the LRGCF is to facilitate the exchange of information between the USIBWC and members of the public about Commission activities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Environmental Protection Specialist Wayne Belzer will provide an overview of the Clean Rivers Program (CRP), a water quality monitoring program conducted by the USIBWC under contract with the State of Texas. He will discuss water quality issues in the Lower Rio Grande basin, including where and how the data are collected and analyzed, and discuss upcoming and ongoing projects involving the CRP. These projects include analyzing salinity loadings in the Rio Grande and Pecos River and their potential impacts on the rivers as a drinking water source, past and future projects to analyze metals contamination, and the CRP study to analyze pesticides and herbicides in the Rio Grande.

In other business, USIBWC Public Affairs Officer Sally Spener will describe Commission projects and duties of the Citizens' Forum Board members who were just appointed in June. The Commission, which is responsible for applying the boundary and water treaties between the United States and Mexico, has various projects in the border region including international storage dams and diversion dams, wastewater treatment plants, flood control levees, and boundary demarcation monuments.

USIBWC Project Manager Rick Reyes will provide an overview of the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project. As part of the project, the USIBWC maintains 270 miles of U.S. levees and 30,000 acres of floodway in the Valley. The Commission also operates two diversion dams in the Lower Rio Grande, which are used for irrigation and flood control – Anzalduas Dam near Mission and Retamal Dam south of Donna.

USIBWC staff will also give brief updates on Mexico's Rio Grande water deliveries to the United States, construction of Morillo Drain improvements, and other Commission activities.

A complete meeting agenda appears below. Members of the public who would like more information can contact the USIBWC's Lower Rio Grande Project Office at 956-565-3150 or the Public Affairs Office at sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov.

For more information:

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LOWER RIO GRANDE CITIZENS' FORUM

Wednesday, July 25, 2007

4:00 - 6:00 P.M.

USIBWC Conference Room

325 Golf Course Road

Mercedes, TX 78570

Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction of Board Members - Rick Reyes, Citizens' Forum Co-Chair, USIBWC
- Overview of IBWC Projects and Citizens' Forum Board Responsibilities - Sally Spener, Public Affairs Officer, USIBWC
- The Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project - Rick Reyes, Project Manager, USIBWC
- Rio Grande Clean Rivers Program Updates for 2007 - Wayne Belzer, Environmental Protection Specialist, USIBWC
- Updates on USIBWC Activities - USIBWC Staff
- 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 or e-mail sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov.