

# INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION, UNITED STATES SECTION



Lower Rio Grande Citizens' Forum Orientation

July 25, 2007, Mercedes, TX



## STRUCTURE PER 1944 TREATY

### INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION (IBWC)

#### MEXICAN SECTION

- Mexican Commissioner
- Secretary
- Two Principal Engineers
- Legal Adviser

#### US SECTION

- US Commissioner
- Secretary
- Two Principal Engineers
- Legal Adviser



# IBWC STRUCTURE

- Decisions of the Commission shall be recorded in the form of Minutes
- Minutes are subject to approval by the Governments (State, SRE) and are binding
- 312 IBWC Minutes

# MISSION OF THE USIBWC

*Our mission is to provide boundary, water and environmental solutions along the United States-Mexico border region through leadership, binational cooperation, and future sustainability in a manner that is responsive to stakeholders.*

# IBWC OFFICES ON THE BORDER



# CONVENTION OF 1906

- Distribution between Mexico and the U.S. of the waters of the Rio Grande in the El Paso-Juarez region
- U.S. to deliver 60,000 acre-feet per year
- Proportional reduction in deliveries in case of extraordinary drought
- Water stored in Elephant Butte Dam, NM

# BOUNDARY TREATIES

- **Convention of 1933/Rio Grande Rectification Project** – Stabilize the international boundary in the El Paso-Juarez Valley
- **Chamizal Convention (1963)** – Relocate the Rio Grande in a new channel in El Paso-Juarez



RIO GRANDE RECTIFICATION PROJECT IN THE EL PASO-JUAREZ VALLEY



RIVER BED AND RECTIFIED CHANNEL



# BOUNDARY TREATIES

## ■ Treaty of 1970

- Maintain the Rio Grande and Colorado River as the international boundary
- Border defined as the middle of the channel of greatest average width
- Procedures to restore the border when the river shifts
- Prohibits obstruction or deflection of normal or flood flows of the river

# BOUNDARY TREATIES

## ■ Treaty of 1970

- Resolved pending boundary disputes
- Relocated river in Lower Rio Grande upstream from Hidalgo-Reynosa
  - 482 acres ceded to U.S.
- Horcon Tract and Beaver Island ceded to Mexico (482 acres)
- Relocated Rio Grande at Presidio-Ojinaga

# 1944 WATER TREATY

## Colorado River

- U.S. to deliver to Mexico a volume of 1.5 million acre-feet per year
- When there are surplus waters, U.S. to deliver to Mexico a total volume of up to 1.7 million acre-feet per year

# 1944 WATER TREATY

(Rio Grande, Ft. Quitman to the Gulf)

- Mexico to deliver annual average of 350,000 acre-feet to U.S. in cycles of five years
- U.S. allotted 1/3 of water arriving in Rio Grande from 6 Mexican tributaries
- Flows from unmeasured tributaries shared 50-50
- Two international storage dams



## *CURRENT PROJECTS*

# COLORADO RIVER

- International Task Force, Five Work Groups:
  - Sediment
  - Salinity
  - Carrying capacity and boundary preservation
  - Colorado River Delta
  - All-American Canal Lining
- Task force includes participation of Bureau of Reclamation, Mexico's National Water Commission (Conagua)

# MORELOS DAM

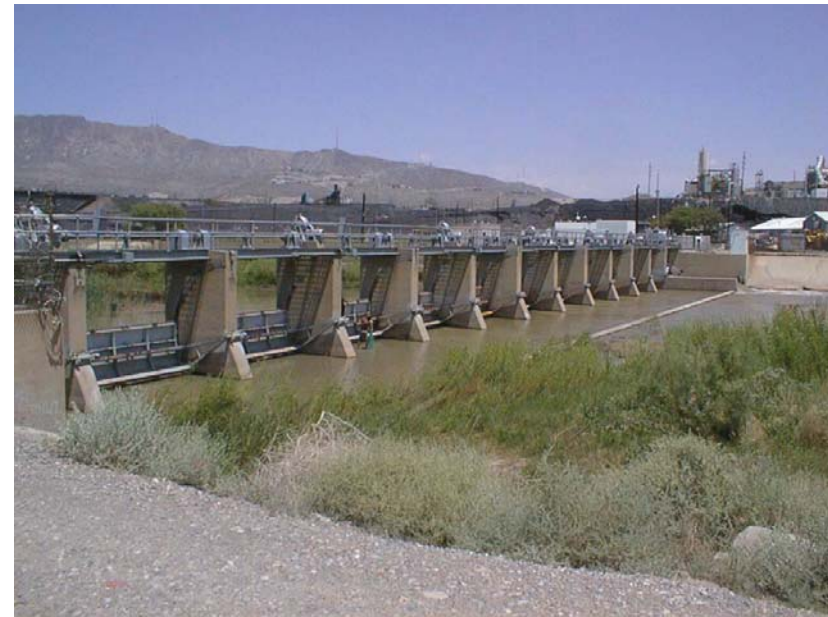
- Located west of Yuma near Algodones
- Constructed in 1950
- 1400 feet long
- 20 gates
- Diverts Colorado River water to Mexico
- Mexico covers all costs





# UPPER RIO GRANDE PROJECTS

- Canalization Project
  - Water delivery and flood control, S. NM and El Paso, TX
- Chamizal Project
  - Boundary stabilization at El Paso, TX-Cd. Juarez
- Two diversion dams



American Dam, El Paso

# CHAMIZAL PROJECT





# **RIO GRANDE RECTIFICATION PROJECT**

- El Paso, TX to Fort Quitman, TX
- Flood protection and boundary stabilization
- 85 miles of U.S. levees

# INTERNATIONAL STORAGE DAMS

- Amistad Dam (Del Rio, TX)
- Falcon Dam (Falcon Heights, TX)
- Purposes
  - Flood Control
  - Recreation
  - Hydroelectric Power
  - Water Supply



AMISTAD DAM



# OTHER FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS

- Presidio, TX
- Tijuana River
- Lower Rio Grande

# CLEAN RIVERS PROGRAM (U.S.)

- Established under cooperative agreement between USIBWC and State of TX (1998)
- 72+ stations on the Rio Grande and tributaries
- Water quality monitored by USIBWC and other partners

# SANITATION PROJECTS

- 3 international wastewater treatment plants
  - San Diego, CA
  - Nogales, AZ
  - Nuevo Laredo, Tamps.



Nuevo Laredo TP effluent

# INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES AND BORDER CROSSINGS

- International bridges (34+)
- Border Crossings/Ports on the land boundary (23+)
- Crossing of utility/service lines (43+)
- Review border infrastructure projects to ensure no deflection of surface water





# BOUNDARY MONUMENTS

- 258 principal monuments between El Paso-Cd. Juarez and the Pacific Ocean
- Hundreds of intermediate boundary markers
- Official demarcation of the boundary

# MAINTENANCE OF BOUNDARY MONUMENTS



# PURPOSE OF THE CITIZENS' FORUM

- To facilitate the exchange of information between the USIBWC and the local community regarding ongoing and future USIBWC projects in the area
- The Citizens' Forum is intended to bring together community members enabling the early and continued two-way flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between the USIBWC and the general public, environmentalists, government agencies, irrigation districts, municipalities, etc.



# **CITIZENS' FORUM BOARD MEMBER DUTIES**

- Attend public meetings four times per year
- Meetings in Hidalgo or Cameron County
- Board term is for two years
- Board members are expected to be available to the public to facilitate the exchange of information

# CITIZENS' FORUM BOARD MEMBER DUTIES

- Review and comment on technical documents and activities associated with USIBWC projects in the area
- Discuss plans and issues related to ongoing and future USIBWC projects
- RGCF is not a federal advisory board; goal is to exchange information and to receive feedback from a diversity of viewpoints
- Members serve as volunteers. There is no reimbursement for expenses.

# CITIZENS' FORUM LEADERSHIP

- Two Co-Chairs
- USIBWC Co-Chair
  - Project Manager Rick Reyes
- Community Co-Chair
  - Selected by the board



# INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION

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