



THE BOUNDARY MARKER

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PRESIDENT NAMES MARIN ACTING COMMISSIONER

President George W. Bush in August named Carlos Marin Acting United States Commissioner of the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico. Marin is a civil engineer who has worked at the United States Section of the Commission (USIBWC) since 1979. Marin succeeds Arturo Q. Duran who submitted his resignation effective August 31 after 20 months on the job.

“I am thrilled to have the opportunity to serve as U.S. Commissioner,” said Marin. “I feel like I’ve been preparing for this job during my entire career with the agency.”

Since 1997, Marin has served in various executive positions at the USIBWC including Deputy Commissioner/Principal Engineer; Principal Engineer, Operations Department; and Principal Engineer, Treaty Compliance.

The position of Principal Engineer is a key technical and policy position provided for by treaty. In this capacity, Marin has been a primary source of technical, diplomatic, and policy advice to the U.S. Commissioner concerning the agency’s field operations and issues related to the boundary and water treaties between the U.S. and Mexico. He has overseen the Operations Department which is responsible for operating and maintaining various flood control projects, power plants and reservoirs, wastewater treatment plants, water accounting systems, and hydrographic data collection. As Deputy Commissioner, he was second in charge at the agency and served as the Commissioner’s representative in public events and administered and developed agency policies and programs.



Acting Commissioner Carlos Marin

Prior to his selection as Principal Engineer, Marin managed various divisions and projects for the USIBWC. Notably, he was the Project Manager for construction of the Nuevo Laredo International Wastewater Treatment Plant, which provides cost-effective treatment of sewage that previously flowed untreated to the Rio Grande.

Marin is a licensed professional engineer in the State of Texas. He received his Bachelor’s Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Texas at El Paso in 1978

In his role as Acting Commissioner, Marin plans to restore agency functions that have suffered from personnel shortages in recent months.

“I intend to implement changes to rebuild the Commission so that it can perform at the level required to achieve our mission. I will also work to enhance cooperation with the Mexican Section of the Commission,” Marin added.



HURRICANE AFFECTS LOWER RIO GRANDE

Hurricane Emily made landfall 80 miles south of Brownsville, Texas on July 20, damaging villages in Mexico and generating high flows in the Rio Grande. The IBWC operates the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project, which includes a system of levees and floodways covering 180 river miles from Peñitas, Texas to the Gulf of Mexico. Emergency personnel worked around the clock at Anzalduas and Retamal Dams for several days immediately following the hurricane.

In the wake of the storm, Rio Grande flow at Roma, Texas peaked at more than 25,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) and flow at Rio Grande City exceeded 20,000 cfs. Still, flow remained within the river's conveyance capacity. The USIBWC coordinated with the Mexican Section of the Commission and with agencies in the United States to disseminate information and monitor flows, including inflows from Rio Grande tributaries.

U.S. Commissioner Arturo Duran conducted an aerial tour of the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project on July 27. The following day, he met with community leaders in Weslaco at a meeting hosted by the Rio Grande Valley Partnership where he discussed proposed improvements to the region's Rio Grande levees.

The USIBWC recently assessed the structural condition of the levees and developed a hydraulic model indicating where levees might be overtopped in the event of a large flood. The results of

these studies were used to determine priorities for rehabilitating levee segments. The agency has developed a multi-year work plan affecting nearly 38 miles of levee at an estimated cost of \$75.2 million. Priorities include levees near Hidalgo, Mission, McAllen, Progreso, and between the Hidalgo-Reynosa Bridge and Retamal Dam south of Donna.



High flow passes through Retmal Dam



View of the storm from the USIBWC office in Mercedes, Texas



USIBWC APPOINTS CITIZENS' FORUM BOARD MEMBERS

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) in June appointed ten individuals to serve as board members of the Lower Rio Grande Citizens' Forum (LRGCF). The USIBWC established the LRGCF two years ago to facilitate the exchange of information between the USIBWC and members of the public about Commission activities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

The following individuals were appointed:

- Mary Lou Campbell - Conservation Chair, Lower Rio Grande Sierra Club, Mercedes
- Joseph Coulter - President, Lower Rio Grande Water Committee, Brownsville
- Kika de la Garza - Vice Chairman, Lower Rio Grande Water Committee, retired Congressman, McAllen
- Laura de la Garza - Arroyo Colorado Watershed Coordinator, Weslaco
- Jerry Freeman - South Texas College, Weslaco
- Neil Haman - Texas Water Development Board, Harlingen Rotary, Harlingen
- Bill Lewis - Halff Associates, American Society of Civil Engineers, Water Environment Federation, McAllen
- Jose Muñoz - Harlingen resident
- Martha Noell - President/CEO, Weslaco Chamber of Commerce, World Birding Center, Inc. Advisory Board, Weslaco
- Wayne Wells - University of Texas-Brownsville, American Society for Engineering Education, fisherman, Rancho Viejo



J. Muñoz, L. de la Garza, W. Wells, N. Haman, J. Coulter, B. Lewis, M. Campbell, J. Freeman, M. Noell, R. Reyes (*l tor*)

USIBWC Lower Rio Grande Project Manager Rick Reyes will serve as the agency representative on the Board. The board members will serve a two-year term.

The first public meeting with the new board was held June 28 in Weslaco, Texas.

The agency has also appointed two people to the Southeast Arizona Citizens' Forum Board to replace board members whose terms had expired. Brian Prescott of Sierra Vista, Arizona has been involved in various environmental organizations in the area including the Friends of the Huachuca Mountains, Huachuca Audubon, and Friends of the San Pedro River. Also joining the board is Alejandro Barcenas of the Arizona Department of Water Resources in Nogales, Arizona, who has considerable experience addressing regional water issues.

The Southeast Arizona Citizens' Forum covers USIBWC programs and related activities in Cochise and Santa Cruz Counties, Arizona. The Forum is co-chaired by USIBWC Acting Nogales Project Manager John Light and Ben Lomeli of the Friends of the Santa Cruz River.

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