

For immediate release
October 5, 2007

ARROYO COLORADO WATER QUALITY, WATER TREATY ISSUES, AND WATER SUPPLY PLANNING ON AGENDA FOR OCTOBER 17 PUBLIC MEETING

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) will discuss water quality and supply issues at the next meeting of the Lower Rio Grande Citizens' Forum (LRGCF) on October 17, 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.

Laura de la Garza, Arroyo Colorado Watershed Coordinator, will discuss efforts to improve water quality in the Arroyo Colorado. Forty-nine meetings over 2 ½ years went into the development of a *Watershed Protection Plan for the Arroyo Colorado: Phase I*. The plan is the culmination of a long effort (about eight years) to restore water quality of the impaired Arroyo Colorado. This is considered the first phase for a number of reasons. First of all, implementation of the calculated load reduction measures outlined in the plan may not actually result in water quality improvements that meet the current state standards. Moreover, input to plan development was not received by all critical stakeholders, and by the nature of adaptive management, it is acknowledged that plan priorities change as more knowledge is gained. This presentation highlights measures and strategies identified in the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan (ACWPP), reviews the top priorities for water quality improvements, and outlines current implementation measures ongoing in the Arroyo Colorado Watershed.

Glenn Jarvis, Chair of the Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group established by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), will discuss the 2006 Regional Water Plan. The Regional Water Planning Group was established to coordinate long-range water supply planning by bringing together

stakeholders representing a variety of interests. Since the early 1990s, questions have arisen about application of the 1944 Water Treaty's provision regarding Mexico's water deliveries to the Rio Grande during periods of extraordinary drought. In the course of this discussion, many issues and recommendations have been explored and were considered in the latest round of regional planning by the Texas Water Development Board. In the 2006 Regional Water Plan for Region M (covering all counties in Texas along the Rio Grande below Amistad Dam), the Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group made recommendations which were adopted by the TWDB and included in the State Water Plan. These recommendations offer a local and state perspective on some of the treaty issues involved and future actions.

In other business, USIBWC staff will give an update on Mexico's Rio Grande water deliveries to the United States under the 1944 Water Treaty. Staff will also discuss the current status of efforts to raise and rehabilitate Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project levees.

A complete meeting agenda is attached. 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, October 17, 2007
4:00 - 6:00 P.M.
USIBWC Conference Room
325 Golf Course Road
Mercedes, TX 78570

AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions - Bill Lewis, Citizens' Forum Co-Chair
- Implementation of the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan - Laura de la Garza, Arroyo Colorado Watershed Coordinator
- Water Supply Issues under the 1944 Treaty, Recommendations for the Future in the 2006 Regional Water Plan (Rio Grande Regional Planning Group/TWDB, Region M) - Glenn Jarvis, Chair, Rio Grande Regional Water Planning Group
- Update on Mexico's Water Deliveries under the 1944 Water Treaty - USIBWC Staff
- Update on Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project Levee Rehabilitation Plan - 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.