



**International Boundary and Water Commission
United States Section**



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**SALT CEDAR BIOCONTROL AND REGIONAL
FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS ON AGENDA FOR
DECEMBER 13 PUBLIC MEETING IN LAS CRUCES**

Efforts to control invasive salt cedar and flooding will be discussed at the next public meeting of the Rio Grande Citizens Forum sponsored by the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC). The meeting will take place on Monday, December 13, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Doña Ana County Government Center, Room 113, 845 N. Motel Blvd., Las Cruces, New Mexico.

USIBWC Principal Engineer John Merino will present information about a salt cedar biocontrol program spearheaded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the Big Bend area of West Texas. The program uses a beetle to eat invasive salt cedar along the Rio Grande but concerns have arisen about the beetle defoliating other trees. The International Boundary and Water Commission has been facilitating U.S.-Mexico information exchange about this salt cedar control effort.

Valerie Beversdorf of the Elephant Butte Irrigation District will discuss the ongoing work of the South-Central New Mexico Stormwater Coalition, a regional effort to address flood control in the watershed in Sierra and Doña Ana Counties, New Mexico. A dozen agencies involved in stormwater management recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding to promote regional cooperation to identify existing problems relating to stormwater management and flood control and to collaboratively formulate potential solutions to those problems.

USIBWC Lead Civil Engineer Isela Canava will give an update on Rio Grande levee construction in Hatch, the Mesilla Valley, and El Paso County. The work is intended to bring the levees into

compliance with standards established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The USIBWC received \$220 million in funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 for rehabilitation of Rio Grande flood control levees in New Mexico and Texas. The purpose of the Recovery Act is to create and save jobs, promote economic recovery, and invest in infrastructure that will provide long-term economic benefits.

The Rio Grande Citizens Forum was established by the USIBWC in 1999 to facilitate the exchange of information regarding USIBWC activities on the Rio Grande between Percha Dam, NM and Fort Quitman, TX. It is designed to bring together community members, enabling the early and continued two-way flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between USIBWC and the general public, environmentalists, irrigation districts, municipalities, and others interested in the river. A complete meeting agenda follows.

For more information:

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RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM
Monday, December 13, 2010, 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.
Doña Ana County Government Center
Room 113
845 N. Motel Blvd.
Las Cruces, NM

AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions – Carlos Peña, Principal Engineer, USIBWC, Citizens Forum Co-Chair
- South-Central New Mexico Stormwater Coalition Update – Valerie Beversdorf, Computer Resources and GIS Services Director, Elephant Butte Irrigation District
- Upper Rio Grande Flood Control Project, Update on Levee Construction Projects – Isela Canava, Engineering Services Division, USIBWC
- Salt Cedar Biocontrol Program in the Big Bend – John Merino, Principal Engineer, USIBWC
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion
- Suggested Future Agenda Items