



## International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section



For immediate release  
March 28, 2011

### **RIO GRANDE LEVEE CONSTRUCTION TEMPORARILY AFFECTS LA LLORONA PARK IN LAS CRUCES**

Rio Grande levee construction near Picacho Avenue will affect access to La Llorona Park in Las Cruces, New Mexico this spring. The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) has contracted with Briston Construction to raise and rehabilitate Rio Grande flood control levees in the area to comply with standards established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). From April through June, access to La Llorona Park will be restricted. The park is located in the 3400 block of West Picacho Avenue on the east side of the Rio Grande.

From April 1 through mid-May, the portion of the park located north of Picacho Avenue will be closed to the public while construction is underway. All playground equipment north of the Picacho Bridge will be inaccessible during this time. When construction is completed north of Picacho Avenue in mid-May, that portion of the park will be reopened. Construction will then move south, requiring closure of La Llorona Park on the south side of Picacho Avenue, including the parking lot and restrooms, from mid-May until mid-June. However, the parking lot and restrooms will be open June 11 for Raft the Rio.

The temporary closures are needed for safety reasons to prevent the public from accessing an active construction zone. To allow the public to continue to enjoy the park, Briston Construction will only close half of the park at a time. All construction activities affecting La Llorona Park are scheduled to be completed by June 30.

Park infrastructure, such as sidewalks, barbecue grills, picnic tables, and trash cans will be removed during construction but will be replaced before the park reopens. Vegetation that encroaches on the levee will not be replaced.

The levee construction is being carried out with funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. 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.

Construction near La Llorona Park is being carried out as part of a \$13.74 million contract awarded to Briston Construction of Tempe, Arizona in September 2010 to construct 20 miles of levee improvements along the east side of the Rio Grande between Leasburg Bridge and Mesilla Dam to benefit the New Mexico communities of Radium Springs, Doña Ana, Las Cruces, and Mesilla. All work in this segment is scheduled to be completed in late 2011. This is one of six Recovery Act levee construction contracts currently in progress in the El Paso, Texas-Las Cruces, New Mexico region.

Access to the levee and river parks in the El Paso-Las Cruces region during levee construction will be discussed at a public meeting of the USIBWC's Rio Grande Citizens Forum on Tuesday, March 29, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at USIBWC Headquarters, 4171 N. Mesa Street, Building C, El Paso, TX 79902. Other agenda items include City of El Paso Floodplain Administration and the El Paso Regional Ports of Entry Operations Plan.

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