



International Boundary and Water Commission United States and Mexico

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BINATIONAL TEAM COMPLETES REPORT ON SAN PEDRO RIVER AQUIFER ALONG ARIZONA-SONORA BORDER

The International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico (IBWC) announces the completion of the San Pedro River Aquifer Binational Report. The study marks the first time researchers from both countries have collaborated to collect data and jointly prepare binational maps of the San Pedro River aquifer, which spans the border between the States of Arizona and Sonora near the communities of Sierra Vista, Arizona and Cananea, Sonora. The binational database and bilingual maps created for this study, and the resulting technical analysis, are an important contribution to scientists' understanding of the aquifer.

The report is the result of a dedicated group of scientists from both countries that worked with IBWC according to an IBWC-approved binational cooperative framework to allow them to exchange ideas and information to improve the state of knowledge in the basin.

“The cooperation between our two countries resulted in the collection of key information about our shared groundwater resources,” said U.S. Commissioner Edward Drusina. “These types of partnerships benefit scientists and water managers in both countries.”

“The information included in this joint study improves our understanding of the San Pedro River transboundary aquifer and provides a more solid basis for decision making related to water management in both countries,” said Mexican Commissioner Roberto Salmon.

The technical team for this study included personnel from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Mexico's National Water Commission (CONAGUA), and two state universities, the University of Arizona and the University of Sonora, working together under the auspices of the IBWC. Funding came

from IBWC, USGS, CONAGUA, and the University of Arizona. Although scientists from each side of the border conducted research in their respective country, by virtue of the binational cooperation and collaboration, the information became accessible to the scientific communities in both countries.

The support of both countries allowed for close collaboration of researchers from the participating organizations as well as development of more detailed geophysical, hydrochemical, and hydrologic studies and monitoring of the ground and surface water of the San Pedro River binational aquifer.

There is a direct relationship between the surface water systems and the groundwater systems in this region. For this reason, it is critical for the interconnectivity to be properly defined and understood. The binational research team showed the importance of mutual collaboration and the need to develop information jointly to benefit from the greater understanding of the behavior of the binational regional aquifer. This cooperation will permit more thorough assessments by the investigators and the authorities responsible for water management and administration, along with their stakeholders.

The San Pedro River Aquifer Binational Report will be available online through the IBWC at <http://www.ibwc.gov> and <http://cila.sre.gob.mx/cilanorte/> in January 2016.

Research and data collection related to transboundary aquifers will continue in 2016 as the next study to evaluate the Santa Cruz River Aquifer, also along the Arizona-Sonora border, is well underway. Further research is planned, subject to availability of funding.

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