



International Boundary and Water Commission

Fall 2017

The Boundary Marker

Minute 323 signed after two years of negotiations

The International Boundary and Water Commission signed a 9-year agreement, Minute 323, "Extension of Cooperative Measures and Adoption of a Binational Water Scarcity Contingency Plan in the Colorado River Basin," after two years of negotiations.

The signing was held on Sept. 21 in Ciudad, Juarez, Mexico, in a private ceremony.

The signing took place after domestic agreements involving partners from the seven Colorado River Basin states were signed.

A ceremony was held Sept. 27 in Santa Fe, NM at the Water Education Foundation's Colorado River Symposium. More than 200 stakeholders were present to mark the Minute's entry into force.

The Minute is an implementing agreement to the 1944 Water Treaty that governs how the U.S. and Mexico share and manage the river, which flows from the United States into Mexico.



U.S. Commissioner Edward Drusina, left, and Mexican Commissioner Roberto Salmon, sign Minute 323 on Sept. 21 in Ciudad Juarez. Photo by Lori Kuczumanski/IBWC Public Affairs Officer

The Colorado River is 1,400 miles long, originating in the Colorado mountains, to the Mexican states of Sonora and Baja California.

The agreement includes provisions for the countries to share water shortages if they should occur. The deal gives Mexican water users the ability to store their water in Lake Mead, NV, to give Mexico flexibility in managing its water and to boost Lake Mead elevation.

U.S. water agencies will

contribute funds for water efficiency improvements to Mexican infrastructure, with some of the water saved for use in the U.S. The agreement will also set aside water for habitat conservation.

"Minute 323 is the result of many rounds of technical discussions involving a broad group of stakeholders from both countries. This agreement puts us on a path of cooperation rather than conflict as we work with Mexico to address the Colorado River Basin's many challenges," said U.S. Commissioner Edward Drusina of the International Boundary and Water Commission.

The agreement will remain in effect through 2026, and replaces key elements of Minute 319, a previous agreement that expires at the end of 2017.

The agreement is available at www.ibwc.gov, or <https://www.ibwc.gov/Files/Minutes/Min323.pdf>



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Measuring Water for Mexico

The Yuma, AZ Field Office has a requirement to measure Colorado River water delivered to Mexico under the 1944 Water Treaty and Minute 197, "Adoption of Rules for the Operation and Maintenance of the Morelos Diversion Dam on the Colorado River," dated June 30, 1951.

The Yuma Field Office operates and maintains a cableway located on the Colorado River at the Northerly International Boundary (NIB) to conduct such measurements. Marker balls are required to identify and increase visibility of the structure and the cable that run across the river from the U.S. side to Mexico. Due to normal wear and tear, the markers were in

dire need of replacement this year.



Kannon Welhouse of the U.S. Geological Survey, left, is teaching Juan Vargas, Yuma Field Office, IBWC, the proper installation of the markers. (Courtesy Photo)

Pictured are the orange ball markers installed on the cableway. (Courtesy Photo)



USIBWC rehabilitates Manhole 89 in Nogales, AZ



Shoring is being installed to prevent the bank of the Nogales Wash from caving in while KE&G workers repair Manhole 89. (Courtesy photo)

Heavy monsoon storms wreaked havoc on the International Outfall Interceptor on July 25, 2017 in Nogales, AZ. The City of Nogales workers noticed Manhole 89, located in Potrero Creek, was bubbling, and it was determined it was the result of a partial pipeline rupture.

Commonly known as the IOI, the pipeline carries 10 to 14 million gallons of wastewater from Nogales, Sonora and Nogales, AZ north to the Nogales International Wastewater Treatment Plant (NIWTP) in Rico Rico, AZ.

Although the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) does not own or operate the IOI, utilizing emergency authority, funds were diverted from border-wide projects to protect the health and safety of Arizona citizens.

The USIBWC contracted KE&G Construction, Inc. of Tucson, AZ, to install a bypass system diverting the sewage that had been leaking from the damaged pipeline. Sewage was being conveyed for treatment at the NIWTP.

KE&G was also contracted to install shoring along the bank of the Wash once the water levels recede. This allowed the construction crews to safely enter the Wash. KE&G inspected the pipeline at Manhole 89 and made the necessary repairs. Construction began Oct. 9 and was complete Oct. 27.

The total cost of the project is estimated at \$1.65 million dollars.



Shown here, Manhole 89 is being dug up to allow KE&G Construction to repair the pipeline that ruptured July 25, 2017 due to the heavy monsoon rain. A piece of concrete became dislodged and hit the pipeline causing the rupture. (Courtesy photo)

Bridge Demarcation

The Falcon Dam Field Office works on the demarcation of the Ports of Entry in the area of Laredo, Texas -Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico, along the International Boundary per Minute No. 302, “Enhanced Demarcation and Monumentation of the International Boundary at International Boundary River Bridges, and Land Boundary Ports of Entry,” dated December 13, 1999.

As part of the International Boundary and Water Commission's mission, the IBWC does demarcation at the ports of entry and along the boundary with the United States and Mexico.

The work completed by the Falcon Dam Field Office included the following ports: Solidarity (Laredo III-Colombia), Bridge 1 (Laredo-Nuevo Laredo I), Bridge 2 (Lincoln-Juarez) and World Trade (Laredo IV-Nuevo Laredo III).

The demarcation is conducted by a three-person team during the late and early hours of the day. This is done to minimize the impact to bridge traffic per the request of the bridge operator. Each bridge is worked on in “halves” to minimize traffic delays. Colombia and Bridge 2 have six lanes, so three lanes are shut down while the crew works on the bridge section that does not have traffic. World Trade and Bridge One have four lanes, so two lanes are shut down during the demarcation work.

Demarcation objectives are accomplished by placing traffic control barriers to re-route traffic onto the bridge section that is not being worked on.



Using a two-component epoxy structural adhesive, yellow traffic buttons made of ceramic are placed along the roadway. The white pavement markers (reflectorized) are placed directly on the international boundary. Only missing buttons and damaged buttons are replaced annually. The work is accomplished during a 5-day work week.

A worker from Falcon Dam removes damaged traffic buttons on the Solidarity Bridge, and will replace with new yellow traffic buttons. (Courtesy Photo)

Pillow Drive for Hurricane Harvey Survivors



The Boundary Employees Social Association (BESA) and USIBWC employees teamed up to donate pillows and blankets to the survivors of Hurricane Harvey, which made landfall on Aug. 25, 2017. More than 20 pillows and 15 blankets were donated. The items were delivered to El Paso Community College, where they were placed in a trailer to be transported to Houston. (Photo by Lori Kuczanski, IBWC Public Affairs Officer)

Iowa State University Architecture and Design Students Visit IBWC



Shelby Doyle, Assistant Professor of Architecture and Design, Iowa Sate University, and 10 students toured American and International Dams during their visit to El Paso, Texas. Lastly, the students went to Monument #1 on the border of the U.S. and Mexico. (Photo by: Lori Kuczanski, IBWC Public Affairs Officer)

Who is the IBWC?

The International Boundary and Water Commission was first established in 1889 as the International Boundary Commission. The IBWC has the responsibility for applying the boundary and water treaties between the United States and Mexico and settling differences that may arise out of these treaties.

The mission of the United States Section of the IBWC is to provide sensitive, timely, and fiscally responsible boundary, water, and environmental services along the United States and Mexico border region. We pledge to provide these services in an atmosphere of binational cooperation and a manner responsive to public concern and our stakeholders.

The 1944 Water Treaty distributed between the United States and Mexico the waters of the Colorado River as well as the waters of the Rio Grande from Fort Quitman, Texas to the Gulf of Mexico; authorized the joint construction and operation of international storage dams on the Rio Grande, and entrusted the Commission to give preferential attention to the solution of border sanitation problems. In addition, the treaty changed the name of the International Boundary Commission to the International Boundary and Water Commission to reflect the Commission's expanded role. The IBWC also has an active role in the operation of international wastewater treatment plants, water quality monitoring, regional water planning, enhancing boundary demarcation, flood control, including maintenance of levees and floodways, silt removal, and the operation of dams and hydroelectric plants.



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