IBWC History and Activities

Excellence through teamwork.

IBWC Mission

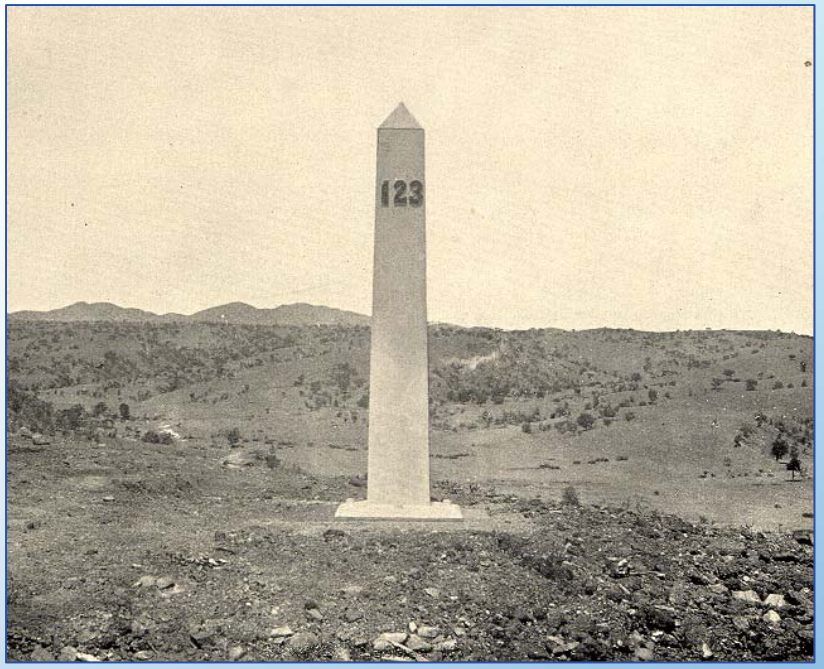
The International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, is responsible for applying the boundary and water treaties between the two countries and settling differences that arise in their application.

Early History of the IBWC

- **CONVENTION OF NOV. 12, 1884** – ADOPTED RULES ABOUT THE LOCATION OF THE BOUNDARY WHEN THE RIVERS CHANGED COURSE

- **CONVENTION OF MARCH 1, 1889** – ESTABLISHED THE INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY COMMISSION

- FOCUS ON MAINTAINING THE BOUNDARY



Convention of 1906

- DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN MEXICO AND THE U.S. OF THE WATERS OF THE RIO GRANDE IN EL PASO-JUAREZ
- U.S. TO DELIVER 60 KAF/YR
- PROPORTIONAL REDUCTION IN DELIVERIES IN CASE OF EXTRAORDINARY DROUGHT
- WATER STORED IN ELEPHANT BUTTE DAM, NM
- WATER DIVERTED BY MEXICO AT INTERNATIONAL DAM

International Dam

Convention of 1933

- STABILIZED THE BOUNDARY IN THE EL PASO-JUAREZ VALLEY
- STRAIGHTENED THE RIVER CHANNEL
- FLOOD CONTROL LEVEES IN BOTH COUNTRIES
- RIO GRANDE RECTIFICATION PROJECT

The meandering river channel was straightened.

1944 Water Treaty – Rio Grande

- MEXICO DELIVERS WATER TO THE U.S. FROM FT. QUITMAN TO GULF
- U.S. RECEIVES 1/3 OF THE WATERS ARRIVING IN THE RIO GRANDE FROM 6 MEXICAN TRIBUTARIES
- MINIMUM ANNUAL AVERAGE OF 350 KAF IN CYCLES OF 5 YEARS
- TREATY AUTHORIZED CONSTRUCTION OF UP TO THREE STORAGE DAMS ON RIO GRANDE; ONLY 2 WERE BUILT

1944 Water Treaty – Colorado River

- U.S. TO DELIVER TO MEXICO A VOLUME OF 1.5 MAF/YR
- WHEN THERE ARE SURPLUS WATERS, U.S. TO DELIVER TO MEXICO A TOTAL VOLUME OF UP TO 1.7 MAF/YR
- IN EXTRAORDINARY DROUGHT, MEXICO REDUCED IN PROPORTION TO U.S.

Colorado River at NIB

Chamizal Convention (1963)

- RELOCATED THE RIO GRANDE IN A CONCRETE-LINED CHANNEL THROUGH CENTRAL EL PASO-JUAREZ
- RESOLVED A CENTURY-LONG BOUNDARY DISPUTE

President Adolfo Lopez Mateos Channel

1970 Boundary Treaty

- IBWC TO MAINTAIN THE RIO GRANDE AND COLORADO RIVER AS THE INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
- BOUNDARY IS MIDDLE OF THE CHANNEL OCCUPIED BY NORMAL FLOW OR MIDDLE OF THE CHANNEL WHICH IN NORMAL FLOWS HAS THE GREATEST AVERAGE WIDTH OVER ITS LENGTH
- IBWC TO DELINEATE THE BOUNDARY ON MAPS
- IBWC MAY STABILIZE OR RECTIFY THE CHANNEL (NUMEROUS RECTIFICATIONS CARRIED OUT)
- PROHIBITS CONSTRUCTION OF WORKS THAT WOULD OBSTRUCT OR DEFLECT NORMAL OR FLOOD FLOWS

IBWC Structure

TREATY OFFICERS

U.S. SECTION

- Commissioner
- Secretary
- 2 Principal Engineers
- Legal Advisor

MEXICAN SECTION

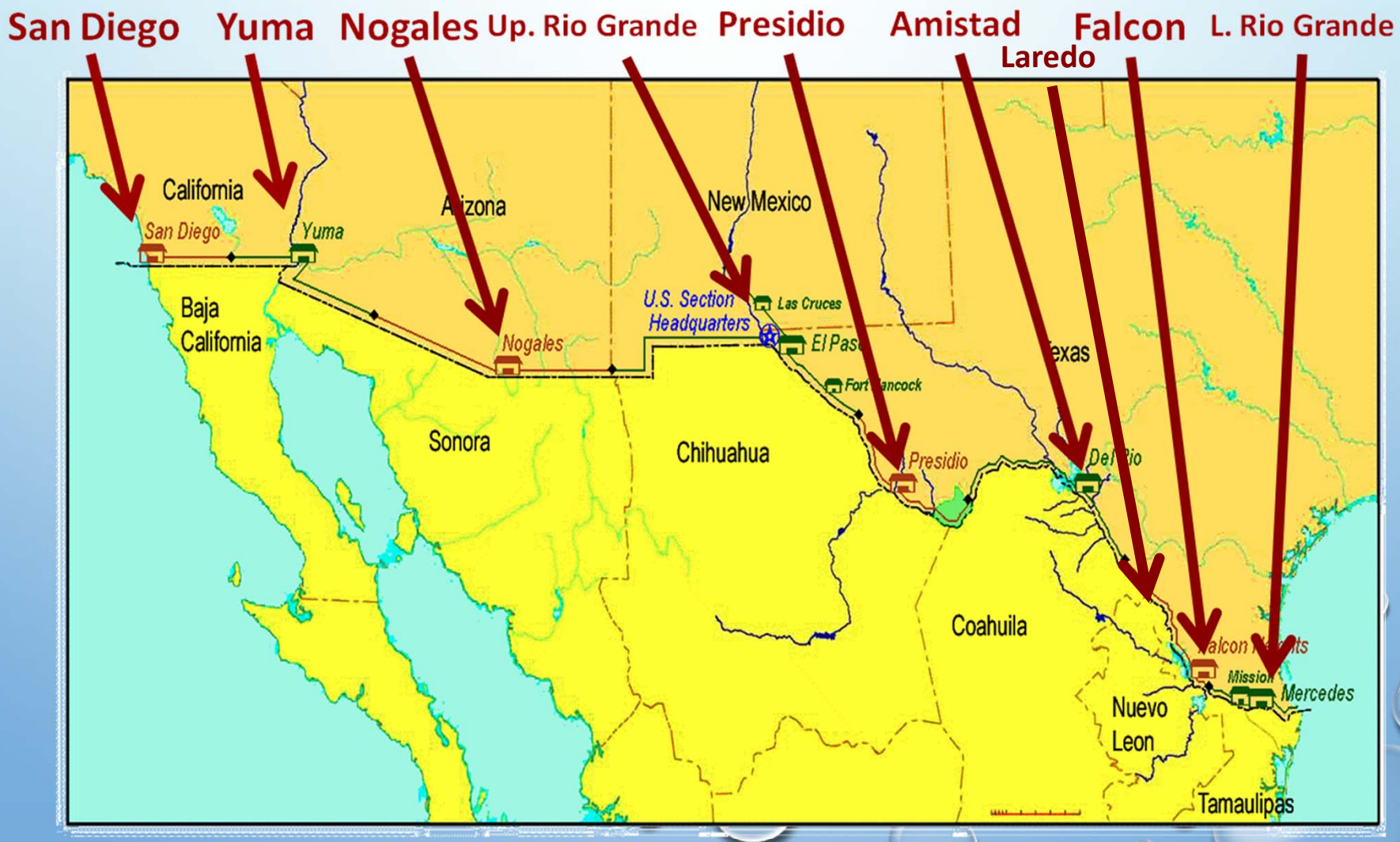
- Commissioner
- Secretary
- 2 Principal Engineers
- Legal Advisor

IBWC Minutes

- DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSION ARE RECORDED IN THE FORM OF MINUTES.
- MINUTES ARE BINDING AGREEMENTS OF THE IBWC INTENDED TO IMPLEMENT TREATY.
- THEY TAKE EFFECT ONCE APPROVED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND MEXICO'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTRY

IBWC Commissioners and Secretaries sign Min. 322

Field Offices



Boundary Demarcation

- U.S. AND MEXICAN SECTIONS OF IBWC JOINTLY DETERMINE LOCATION OF THE BOUNDARY AND DEMARCATE THE BOUNDARY
- 258 PRINCIPAL MONUMENTS BETWEEN EL PASO, TX-CD. JUAREZ, CHIH. AND THE PACIFIC OCEAN
- HUNDREDS OF INTERMEDIATE BOUNDARY MARKERS
- BOUNDARY DEMARCATION PLAQUES AT PORTS OF ENTRY/INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES
- IBWC RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING THE MONUMENTS

Boundary Demarcation

Monument No. 123, Nogales

Boundary demarcation at Tecate Port of Entry

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International Bridges

- IBWC MAINTAINS 2 INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES
  - CORDOVA INTERNATIONAL-BRIDGE OF THE AMERICAS (EL PASO-JUAREZ)
  - FT. HANCOCK, TX-EL PORVENIR, CHIH.

"BOTA" Bridge

Sanitation

- 1944 TREATY AUTHORIZES COMMISSION TO GIVE "PREFERENTIAL ATTENTION TO THE SOLUTION OF ALL BORDER SANITATION PROBLEMS"

- 3 INTERNATIONAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS
  - NOGALES
  - SOUTH BAY
  - NUEVO LAREDO

Nogales IWTP

Amistad Dam

- LOCATED AT DEL RIO, TX-CD. ACUÑA, COAHUILA
- BUILT IN 1969
- IMPOUNDED RIO GRANDE EXTENDS FOR 75 MILES, COVERS 65,000 ACRES
- NORMAL CONSERVATION CAPACITY OF OVER 3 MILLION ACRE-FEET

Amistad Dam

Falcon Dam

- LOCATED AT FALCON HEIGHTS, TX-NVA. CD. GUERRERO, COAH.
- BUILT IN 1954
- RESERVOIR COVERS 78,300 ACRES AT CONSERVATION CAPACITY
- NORMAL CONSERVATION CAPACITY OF 2.6 MILLION ACRE-FEET

Falcon Dam

Flood Control

Presidio levee during 2008 flood

- **4 USIBWC FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS**
  - **TIJUANA RIVER** – SAN DIEGO, CA
  - **UPPER RIO GRANDE** – SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO AND WEST TEXAS
  - **PRESIDIO** – BIG BEND AREA OF TEXAS
  - **LOWER RIO GRANDE** – NEAR MCALLEN, HARLINGEN, BROWNSVILLE
- **USIBWC MAINTAINS FLOOD CONTROL LEVEES, TRACKS FLOW, OPERATES DIVERSION DAMS IN COORDINATION WITH MEXICO**

Lower Rio Grande Flood Control

Anzalduas Dam in 2007

Retamal Dam on July 18, 2010

Excellence through teamwork.

Levee Construction

Excellence through teamwork.

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION, UNITED STATES AND MEXICO
UNITED STATES SECTION

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Excellence through teamwork.