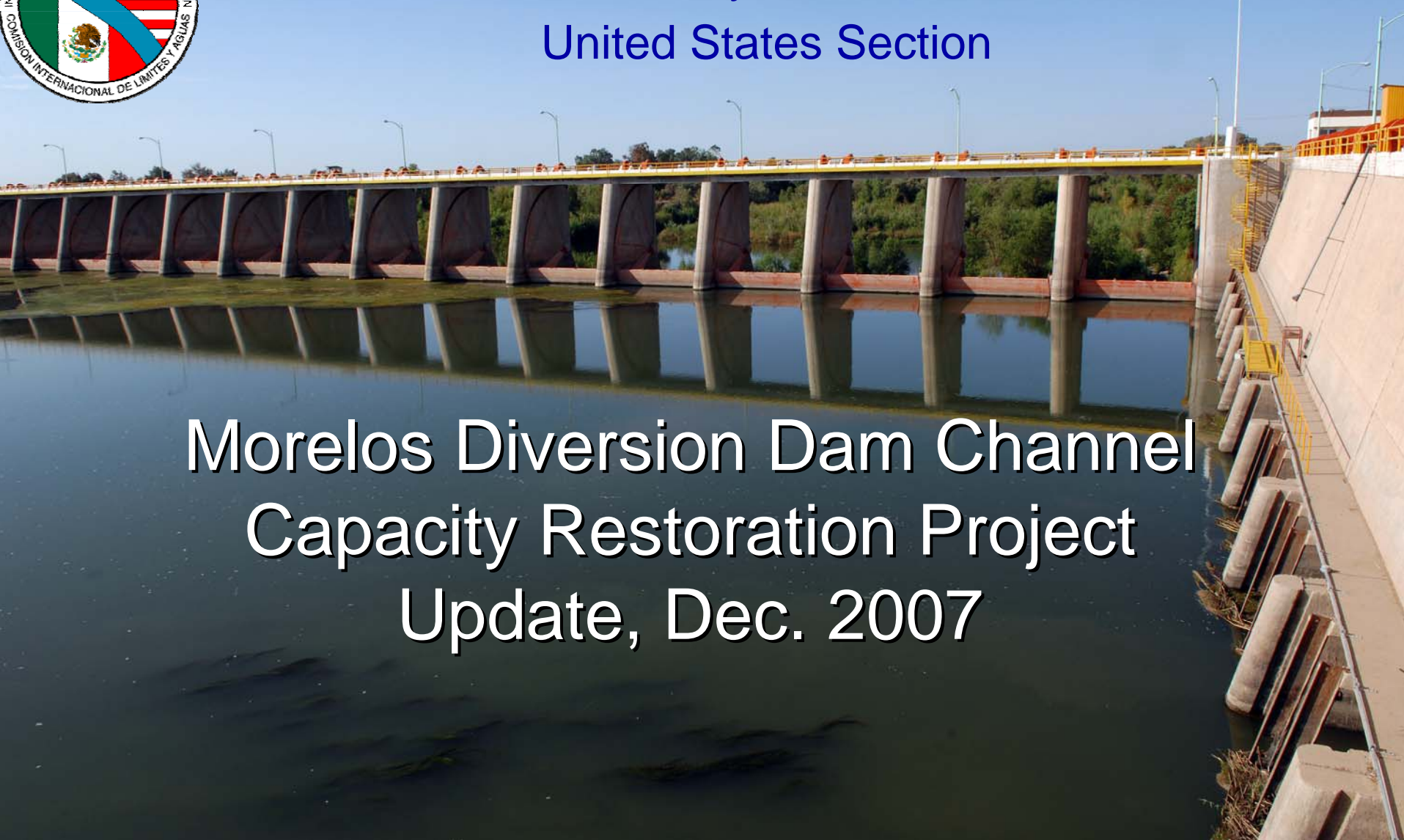




International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

Morelos Diversion Dam Channel Capacity Restoration Project Update, Dec. 2007



Project Update

- Background
- Issues/Goals
- Elements of the project
- Resource Agency Coordination
- Current status

Background

- The USIBWC is mandated by the 1944 Treaty to maintain the flood capacity of the Limitrophe Reach of the Colorado River.
- 1944 Treaty authorized construction of Morelos Dam to divert flows allocated to Mexico.
- Constructed in 1950.

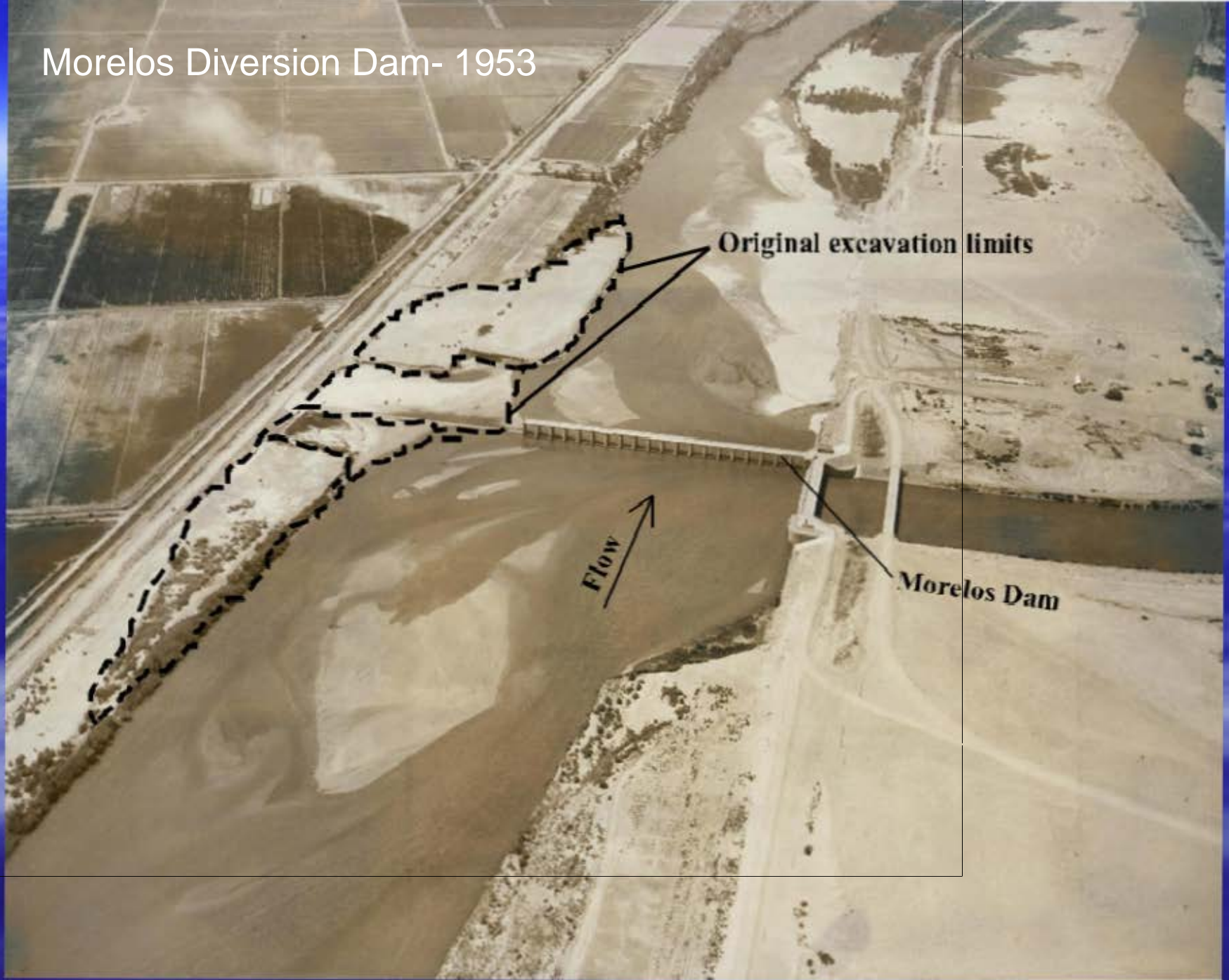
Background

- IBWC Minute 182 (1946), Minute 188 (1948), and Minute 208 (1958) adopted recommendations for the design of Morelos Dam and flood control works within the Limitrophe Division.
- IBWC Minute 217 and Minute 291 established requirements for the clearing and removal of vegetation and sediment to preserve Mexico's diversion capacity and the long-term flow capacity of the Limitrophe Reach.

Issues

- Flood events in the 1980s and 1990s, on the Colorado and Gila Rivers
 - Deposited a substantial amount of silt within the portion of the Colorado River channel and floodplain between the confluence of the Gila River and SIB,
- Increased vegetation within the floodplain
- Morelos Diversion Dam Inspections:
 - In 2001 and 2006, binational inspections revealed that the dam gates and spillway were severely impaired due to extensive sedimentation and vegetative growth.
 - Conditions pose unacceptable dam safety and flood control issues

Morelos Diversion Dam- 1953



Morelos Diversion Dam- Aug 2007





Goal

- Restoration of the spillway to the original design in order to safely operate the structure
- The proposed action would allow full functionality of the diversion dam to discharge the required design flood flow as required by international treaty

Project Elements

- Phase I (1 month)
 - Clearing of vegetation (38 acres)
 - Temporary access road across the Colorado River
- Phase II (2 months)
 - Excavation and removal of approx. 3 ft. soil to bring the terrace elevation above and below the spillway to approximately 107.6 feet mean sea level (msl)

Project Elements

- Phase III- (1 month)
 - Excavation of approx. 2.5 ft. sediment directly above and below spillway to lower the site elevation to 103 feet msl
 - Sediment would be dried and transported to disposal site
- Annual Maintenance
 - Selected mowing to keep designated areas clear



Resource Agency Coordination

- Biological Assessment conducted by USIBWC
- Entered into Section 7 consultation with USFWS in March 2006 with a biological opinion drafted in July 2006
 - The amount of habitat lost will be replaced and restored with southwestern willow flycatcher habitat and will be maintained and protected
 - Final BO issued on August 23, 2006

Resource Agency Coordination

- Arizona State Parks- No adverse affect finding, October 15, 2001
- USACE- Verified wetland delineation, November 30, 2006
- USACE Section 404 Permit Application
 - Submitted March 2007
 - Permit request suspended due to additional request for information by USACE

Current Status

- Acquire USACE individual permit
 - Additional information has been compiled and will be sent to the Corps for permit application
- Develop Restoration Plan and attain USFWS approval
- Identify potential offsite mitigation sites
- Coordinate with Mexico

Schedule

- Funding available for project planning, permitting, development of a restoration plan
- Construction and onsite restoration
 - 8 months once approvals and funding are in hand
- Offsite mitigation
 - up to 4 years allowed
- Construction could begin in FY 09 subject to availability of funding

Thank you!

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