Mexico’s Rio Grande Water Deliveries to the United States

Sally E. Spener, Secretary
International Boundary and Water Commission
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1944 WATER TREATY

- Covers Rio Grande from Ft. Quitman to the Gulf
- Mexico delivers water to US from 6 tributaries
- US receives 1/3 of flow arriving in the Rio Grande from the 6 tributaries
- 1/3 shall not be less, as an average amount in cycles of 5 consecutive years, than 350,000 acre-feet annually
1944 WATER TREATY

- Mx tributaries allotted 1/3 to US, 2/3 to Mx:
  - Conchos, Arroyo las Vacas, San Rodrigo, Escondido, Salado, San Diego
- Mx tributaries allotted 100% to Mx
  - Alamo, San Juan
- All major US tributaries allotted 100% to US
- Historically 70% of water originates in Mexico but 50% allotted to US

Conchos-Rio Grande confluence
Current cycle began 10/25/15
Mexico has until 10/24/20 to deliver 1.75 maf

Exceptions:
- Extraordinary drought
- Serious accident
- When US conservation capacity fills in the reservoirs all debts are canceled and a new cycle begins

If a cycle ends in deficit, Mexico repays in next cycle
1944 WATER TREATY

- Waters for both countries are stored at the 2 international reservoirs
  - Falcon Dam – near Falcon Heights, TX
  - Amistad Dam near Del Rio, TX:
PRECENT CYCLE STATUS

Rio Grande River Basin
Estimated Volumes Allotted to the United States by Mexico from Six Named Mexican Tributaries under the 1944 Water Treaty
(October 25, 2015 thru April 29, 2017)

- U.S. Accumulated Five-Year Cycle Deliveries - 316,825 AF (391 MCM) as of April 29, 2017
- 350,000 Acre-Feet Minimum Average Annual Commitment - Linear Target Delivery Rate
- Minimum Annual Commitment with the Pattern of Historical Runoff (1953-2015)

Current Seasonal 5-Year Cycle Delivery Deficit:
-137,792 AF (-170 MCM) as of April 29, 2017
69.7% of expected minimum delivery

Data Provisional after Nov. 30, 2016

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Mx delivered 482 kaf 10/25/15-10/24/16
- 263,250 a/f to cover 2010-2015 debt
- Remainder credited to 2015-2020 cycle

Current deficit is 137,792 kaf

Rio Grande in Big Bend region, downstream from Conchos River confluence
Deliveries 10/25/16 - 4/8/17

Graph provided by CONAGUA

Volumen (hm³)

Difference
-2.594 MCM (2100 AF)

431.721 MCM
(350 KAF)

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CURRENT BASIN STATUS

◆ Storage on Mexico’s 6 Tributaries (05/08/2017)
  ▶ Current Usable Storage: 2.95 MAF
  ▶ 70.7% of conservation capacity

◆ Storage in Rio Gr. Basin in Mx
  ▶ Current Usable Storage: 3.99 MAF
  ▶ 70.2% of conservation capacity

Francisco Madero Dam

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CURRENT BASIN STATUS

❖ Storage in International Reservoirs (05/08/17)
  ► Amistad
    ■ 50.9% of conservation capacity
    ■ 1,667,000 acre-feet
  ► Falcon
    ■ 26.9% of conservation capacity
    ■ 713,300 acre-feet

❖ National Ownership in International Reservoirs (04/29/17)
  ► U.S. – 60.3% of U.S. Conservation Capacity
  ► Mexico – 18.5% of Mexico’s Conservation Capacity

Falcon Dam, 2010 flood

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1944 WATER TREATY

- Mexican deliveries to the US are continuous
- USIBWC always receives at least 1/3 of the flow arriving from the 6 tributaries

Boquilla Reservoir in the Conchos Basin (2013)
TREATY COMPLIANCE

- Commission has been meeting periodically to address the deficit
- Working to implement short- and long-term strategies
- IBWC has developed modeling tools and a naturalized flow approach for equitable distribution of waters
- Mexican Stakeholders working on long-term domestic solution to resolve shortfalls in the Basin

2016 Commission meeting in Mercedes, TX
Mexico to release water from 3 treaty tributaries April-June to reduce deficit:
- San Rodrigo
- Salado
- Conchos

Est. delivery of 49,000 acre-feet to US, covering about 1/3 of year 1 deficit

Current year deliveries depend on conditions; full delivery expected under median conditions
TREATY COMPLIANCE

- IBWC to form Binational Hydrology Work Group
- Group will consider data, modeling, and operations to address treaty compliance
- Policy group will meet every few months to discuss treaty compliance actions
- State of Texas and CONAGUA serve as technical advisors

Meeting with technical advisors in Austin, TX
HEADQUARTERS

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