STRUCTURE PER 1944 TREATY

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION (IBWC)

MEXICAN SECTION
- Mexican Commissioner
- Secretary
- Two Principal Engineers
- Legal Adviser

US SECTION
- US Commissioner
- Secretary
- Two Principal Engineers
- Legal Adviser
IBWC STRUCTURE

- Established in 1889 to address issues when boundary rivers shifted
- Each Commissioner appointed by his respective president
- When the two Sections meet as a Commission, they have the status of an International Organization
- Each Section employs its own staff
- IBWC staff operate projects, including joint operation of dams

U.S. Com. Carlos Marin
Decisions of the Commission shall be recorded in the form of Minutes.

Minutes are subject to approval by the Governments (State, SRE) and are binding.

312 IBWC Minutes
MISSION OF THE USIBWC

Our mission is to provide boundary, water and environmental solutions along the United States-Mexico border region through leadership, binational cooperation, and future sustainability in a manner that is responsive to stakeholders.
CONVENTION OF 1906

- Distribution between Mexico and the U.S. of the waters of the Rio Grande in the El Paso-Juarez region
- U.S. to deliver 60,000 acre-feet per year
- Proportional reduction in deliveries in case of extraordinary drought
- Water stored in Elephant Butte Dam, NM
OTHER BOUNDARY TREATIES

- **Convention of 1933/Rio Grande Rectification Project** – Stabilize the international boundary in the El Paso-Juarez Valley

- **Chamizal Convention (1963)** – Relocate the Rio Grande in a new channel in El Paso-Juarez
RIO GRANDE RECTIFICATION PROJECT IN THE EL PASO-JUAREZ VALLEY

RIVER BED AND RECTIFIED 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 international boundary on maps
- IBWC may stabilize or rectify the channel
1944 WATER TREATY
Colorado River

- U.S. to deliver to Mexico a volume of 1.5 million acre-feet per year
- When there are surplus waters, U.S. to deliver to Mexico a total volume of up to 1.7 million acre-feet per year
- In extraordinary drought, Mexico reduced in proportion to U.S.
1944 WATER TREATY
(Rio Grande, Ft. Quitman to the Gulf)

- Mexico to deliver annual average of 350,000 acre-feet to U.S. in cycles of five years
- U.S. allotted 1/3 of water arriving in Rio Grande from 6 Mexican tributaries
- Flows from unmeasured tributaries shared 50-50
- Two international storage dams
PROJECTS IN THE COLORADO RIVER
CITIZENS’ FORUM REGION
MORELOS DAM

- Located west of Yuma near Algodones
- Constructed in 1950
- 1400 feet long
- 20 gates
- Diverts Colorado River water to Mexico
- Mexico covers all costs
- Sedimentation of spillway
COLORADO RIVER INTERNATIONAL TASK FORCE

Five Work Groups:
- Sediment
- Salinity
- Carrying capacity and boundary preservation
- Colorado River Delta
- All-American Canal Lining

Task force includes participation of Bureau of Reclamation, Mexico’s National Water Commission (Conagua)
SEDIMENT AT MORELOS DAM
COLORADO RIVER SALINITY CONTROL

- Minute 242 (1973) regulates the salinity of water delivered to Mexico
- Water delivered to Mexico must be similar in quality to water delivered to U.S. users at Imperial Dam
- Wellton Mohawk Canal bypasses saline flows to the Santa Clara Slough in Mexico
- Desalination plant in the U.S. can be made operational when needed
- Additional pumps and channels at SIB reduce spikes
PROJECT FOR THE PERMANENT & DEFINITIVE SOLUTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM OF THE SALINITY OF THE COLORADO RIVER
CARRYING CAPACITY AND BOUNDARY PRESERVATION

- Studies for long-term channel capacity improvements
- Maintain the river channel as the international boundary
- Project could include new river alignments, dredging, levee work
CARRYING CAPACITY AND BOUNDARY PRESERVATION

Colorado River below Morelos Dam
COLORADO RIVER DELTA

- Minute 306 – Framework for U.S.-Mexico cooperation on Colorado River Delta ecosystem
- Binational Advisory Committee established
- Restoration and conservation projects
  - Advisory Committee has proposed various restoration and conservation projects
  - Projects relate to improving flow regimes to benefit ecosystems, habitat improvement, native plants, and hydraulic modeling
ALL-AMERICAN CANAL

- Located parallel to the border
- Project to line the canal to conserve water for U.S. users
- Potential impact on groundwater seepage to Mexico
- Mexico is opposed to the canal lining
- Issue has been the subject of consultations within the IBWC
ALL-AMERICAN CANAL
NEW RIVER

- Flows from Mexicali north to U.S. through Calexico to Salton Sea
- Water quality a longstanding concern
- New wastewater treatment plant in Mexicali is improving water quality

Other Proposals
- Trash screen at border
- Create wetlands to clean the water
- Encase the river in Calexico
Giant Salvinia Molesta, 2003
MAINTENANCE OF BOUNDARY MONUMENTS
BORDER FENCING

- Plans for hundreds of miles of fence along the border
- Per 1970 Boundary Treaty, fence may not obstruct or deflect the normal or flood flows of the river
- USIBWC requires monument access, line of sight
- Stormwater concerns on land boundary
OTHER PROJECTS
UPPER RIO GRANDE PROJECTS

- Canalization Project
  - Water delivery and flood control, S. NM and El Paso, TX

- Chamizal Project
  - Boundary stabilization at El Paso, TX-Cd. Juarez

- Rectification Project
  - Boundary stabilization and flood control

- Two diversion dams

American Dam, El Paso
CHAMIZAL PROJECT
OTHER FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS

- Presidio, TX
- Tijuana River
- Lower Rio Grande
  - Hidalgo and Cameron Counties, TX
  - 270 miles of levees
  - 2 diversion dams
- Upgrade of Rio Grande levees is underway
INTERNATIONAL STORAGE DAMS

- Amistad Dam (Del Rio, TX)
- Falcon Dam (Falcon Heights, TX)

**purposes**
- Flood Control
- Recreation
- Hydroelectric Power
- Water Supply

AMISTAD DAM
SANITATION PROJECTS

- 3 international wastewater treatment plants
  - San Diego, CA
  - Nogales, AZ
  - Nuevo Laredo, Tamps.

SBIWTP in San Diego, CA
INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES AND BORDER CROSSINGS

- International bridges (34+)
- Border Crossings/Ports on the land boundary (23+)
- Crossing of utility/service lines (43+)
- Review border infrastructure projects to ensure no deflection of surface water
CITIZENS’ FORUM PROGRAM
CITIZENS’ FORUM PROGRAM

- Program established in 1999
- USIBWC has 5 Citizens’ Forum Boards:
  - San Diego, CA
  - Colorado River (Yuma and Imperial Counties)
  - Southeast Arizona (Cochise and Santa Cruz Counties)
  - Upper Rio Grande (El Paso and Las Cruces area)
  - Lower Rio Grande (Hidalgo and Cameron Counties, Texas)
PURPOSE OF THE CITIZENS’ FORUM

- To facilitate the exchange of information between the USIBWC and the local community regarding ongoing and future USIBWC projects in the area.

- The Citizens’ Forum is intended to bring together community members enabling the early and continued two-way flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between the USIBWC and the general public, environmentalists, government agencies, irrigation districts, municipalities, etc.
CITIZENS’ FORUM BOARD MEMBER DUTIES

- Attend public meetings approximately four times per year
- Meetings in Yuma and Imperial Counties
- Board term is for two years
- Board members are expected to be available to the public to facilitate the exchange of information
CITIZENS’ FORUM BOARD MEMBER DUTIES

- Review and comment on technical documents and activities associated with USIBWC projects in the area
- Discuss plans and issues related to ongoing and future USIBWC projects
- CRCF is not a federal advisory board; goal is to exchange information and to receive feedback from a diversity of viewpoints
- Members serve as volunteers. There is no reimbursement for expenses.
CITIZENS’ FORUM LEADERSHIP

- Two Co-Chairs
- USIBWC Co-Chair
  - Yuma Project Manager John Turner
- Community Co-Chair
  - Selected by the board
INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION

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