



# International Boundary and Water Commission

Fall 2018

## The Boundary Marker

### USIBWC welcomes first woman Commissioner

**H**istory was made as President Donald J. Trump appointed Jayne Harkins, the first woman to lead the U.S. Section, International Boundary and Water Commission. Ms. Harkins is the first Commissioner for either side of the United States or Mexico in the 129-year history of the Commission.

Ms. Harkins previously worked as Executive Director for the Colorado River Commission (CRC) of Nevada for seven years. During her tenure at the CRC, she provided leadership and consultation on various efforts to secure additional water and hydropower resources for Nevada. She also represented the State in interstate negotiations of Colorado River water and power. The CRC oversees the delivery of over 500 MW of federal hydropower and supplemental resources to 23 power customers in southern Nevada.

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USIBWC Commissioner Jayne Harkins  
Photo by Lori Kuczanski, USIBWC Public Affairs Officer

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Prior to the CRC, Ms. Harkins spent 27 years with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, where she most recently served as the Deputy Regional Director of the Lower Colorado Region in Boulder City, Nevada. In that capacity, she represented Reclamation interests in meetings and conferences with the representatives of state and federal agencies, the government of Mexico, tribes, water and power users, contractors, land-owners, and the public.

She supervised water and power operations for the region and oversaw seven Reclamation offices.

Ms. Harkins received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Geological Engineering from the University of North Dakota with an emphasis in hydrology and groundwater, and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Nevada-Las Vegas.

Ms. Harkins is a Registered Professional Engineer with the States of Nevada and California.

"I am honored to join the USIBWC and look forward to working with the United States and Mexico on a variety of water and sanitation projects," said Harkins.

Ms. Harkins and her spouse are from Boulder City, NV and have two adult children.

## Projects along the Colorado River and in Mexico

Minute 319 continues with its restoration projects in the Laguna Grande and Miguel Aleman sites in Mexico. Employee's conduct regular field observations to provide project status to Headquarters.. The observation's assist in providing Headquarters the information needed to validate the status of invoices received.

Minute 319 has over 50 conservation projects and are moving along quickly in the Mexicali, BC and Sonora areas. All construction projects are tentatively scheduled to be completed in early-mid 2019. Projects consist of canal lining, new canal construction, canal encasements, modernization of structures, measurement and remote operation, and well projects. The Yuma Field Office provides field observations to provide project status to Headquarters for invoice validations.

Minute 319 conservation project construction activity in the Mexicali Irrigation District Module 12 - concrete lining and gate installations  
(Photo by Robert Cardenas, Environmental Protection Assistant, USIBWC)



## Employee Recognition Ceremony

The Human Resources Office hosted a Length of Service Ceremony, the first in more than two years, on Oct. 25 at Headquarters to honor employees for their Federal and Commission related service.

The awards ceremony recognized more than 100 employees Agency wide. USIBWC Commission service awards were given out to more than 60 USIBWC employee's totaling 745 years of service.

Length of service certificates are given out at five year increments to recognize the various milestones in an employee's Federal Career. The awards, given out since 1968, honor recognition and are presented to employees alone or in combination with a pin as they reach their significant milestone. All service, to include civilian and military, counts in computing total federal service. An employee's years in service is determined by his or her leave service computation date (SCD), which includes total civilian service and some honorable military service, if applicable.

Certificates for 5, 10 and 15 years have bronze seals, while certificates for 20 and 25 years come in silver; the same for the lapel pin. A commemorative lapel pin was also given out to recognize the years of service to the federal government.

The longest service award was given to William Rodgers, Electric Power Controller, Falcon Dam Field Office, with 35 years of IBWC service. Since the ceremony was held at Headquarters, the certificate will be mailed to Mr. Rodgers.

Each certificate is embossed with a beautiful metallic version in either bronze, or silver, the color of the Great Seal of the United States used for official Government documents. The Great Seal depicts a laurel wreath surrounding a heraldic bald eagle with a shield over its chest, clutching a bundle of 13 arrows in its left talon, referring to the 13 original states, and an olive branch in its right talon, together symbolizing that the United States has "a strong desire for peace, but will always be ready for war."

"Length of service awards are considered one of the most important forms of recognition because they reward staff for loyalty," said Linda Wilfred, Human Resources Specialist.



Vivian Gonzales, Master Planner, accepts her 25-year Length of Service Award from Principal Engineer Jose Nuñez on Oct. 25 at Headquarters. Gonzales previously worked for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and has been with the USIBWC for two years.

(Photo by Lori Kuczanski, USIBWC Public Affairs Officer)

## Supervisory Training

The Human Resources Office held a 40-hour Supervisor Training at Headquarters Oct. 29 – Nov. 2 for new supervisors or supervisors who needed a refresher course.

More than 25 employees attended the week-long course covering topics such as Federal Supervisors and Human Resources Management, Equal Employment Opportunity diversity, leave administration, handling grievances and appeals, filling vacancies, and more.

Carmella Speer, Chief, Acquisitions, is the newest supervisor to attend the training. Speer’s first week at the IBWC was in training as a new supervisor.

“I liked it,” said Speer. “As a new supervisor it gave me a foundation to build on.”

The 40-hour training is required every three years or when an employee gets promoted to a supervisory position.

Commissioner Harkins was able to meet many of the Area Operations Managers from the Field Offices while they were at Headquarters. Commissioner Harkins told the AOMs and Supervisor’s that the training they were receiving is very important, so we can carry out our mission effectively. She thanked them for taking the time to take this training and looks forward to seeing them at their Field Office.



More than 25 supervisors within the Agency attended the Supervisory Human Resources Training Oct. 29 through Nov. 2 at Headquarters. (Photo by Lori Kuczanski, USIBWC Public Affairs Officer)

## A New Face at Nogales Field Office



Angelo Valdez, Wastewater Treatment Plant Operation, Nogales Field Office. Courtesy photo

The Nogales Field Office welcomes Mr. Angelo Valdez, Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator.

Mr. Valdez performs a wide variety of tasks and duties related to the operation and maintenance of pretreatment, primary and secondary waste water treatment processes, permit compliance, and other technical and substantive support duties.

Mr. Valdez worked for another municipality in the wastewater treatment industry the last eight years. He received his Grade 2 certification Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator from the Arizona Dept. of Environmental Quality. He is also Level 1 certified in

Wastewater Collections Systems Operator, Water Distribution System Operator, and Water Treatment Plant Operator.

In addition to his certifications, he earned the National Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification from the American Backflow Prevention Association.

Mr. Valdez is proud to have received his certification in Pre-treatment Facility Inspector from Sacramento State University, Office of Water Programs.

Mr. Valdez knows this may not be the most prestigious type of work, but believes it is vital to the health and well-being of the environment and to the people in the surrounding areas. He enjoys learning and working hard.

Welcome to the IBWC, Mr. Valdez!

## U.S. and Mexico meet to discuss bi-national projects

Juan F. Uribe Jr., Area Operations Manager, Lower Rio Grande Field Office, and Francisco Martinez, Asst. Area Operations Manager, USIBWC, met with Engineers' David Negrete and Alfonso Carmona from CILA and their proposed contractor Commission Federal de Electricidad (CFE) at Retamal and Anzalduas Dam to discuss digital upgrades to both dam control rooms instrumentation. Some of upgrades include the Pool Level Instrumentation, Tail water Level Instrumentation, the Flow Instrumentation, and Analog Gate Operations Instrumentation. The systems should include digital recording and user friendly downloadable capabilities. Repair of the center gate of Retamal Dam was also discussed in the contractor's proposal. Repairs on the center gate are needed due to potential damage on hoist components stemming from a 9,000 cfs flow release in August of 2005.

All repairs are needed and required because both dams have a high population and high infrastructure risks in both the U.S. and Mexico.

Repairs and upgrades for both dams are bi-national projects to comply with the international agreements. CILA and USIBWC have regular monthly meeting to discuss project goal, project deliverables, project scheduling, project risk management, and project completion for each project.



USIBWC and Mexican Engineers, along with contractors, meet at Retamal Dam to discuss digital upgrades to both dam control room instrumentation. Courtesy photo