

Spring 2016

Newsline– Issue 10

## *A Message from U.S. Commissioner Drusina*



The team from the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) has many accomplishments to be very proud of in the past few years. The most recent is the clearing of Mexico’s debt in Rio Grande water deliveries to the United States. In October 2015, Mexico accrued a debt of 263,000 acre-feet of water to the United States equivalent to more than 85 billion gallons. Thanks to the efforts of the Commission and our partners, we were able to clear the debt in January 2016.

In the recent past we have also developed a binational agreement that is focused on eliminating the sediment, trash and other contaminants that cross the international boundary from Tijuana, Baja California to San Diego, California (see article page 2).

**Inside this issue:**

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| <p><i>Message from the Commissioner</i></p>   | <p>1</p> | <p>We have implemented Minute No. 319, an international agreement that allows Mexico to store water in the United States, which at the same time protects water levels at Lake Mead, thus reducing the risk of mandatory water reductions for Colorado River users.</p>  |
| <p><i>Commissioners Sign Tijuana River Basin Agreement</i></p>                              | <p>2</p> | <p>We have submitted floodplain management reports to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) certifying levees in our system in order to demonstrate that if the big flood comes these levee segments can withstand the flow.</p>  |
| <p><i>U.S.-Mexico Partnership Highlighted at Colorado River Water Users Association</i></p> | <p>4</p> | <p>These and many more accomplishments would not have been possible without the hard work of many USIBWC personnel across the border. Anna Morales in Yuma is helping us track salinity and water deliveries along the Colorado River. Steve Smullen in San Diego is leading the effort to find solutions to the Tijuana River problems. Tony Solo at American Dam in El Paso is working to remove sediment from the Rio Grande. Diana Forti is in constant discussions with the Office of Management and Budget, making sure we have the funding to accomplish our mission. Hector Delgado, who has recently taken over the Presidio, TX office, is working to keep us ready for whatever the coming hurricane season brings. Andrea Glover is working with contractors to finish Rio Grande levee improvements and river realignments. Francisco Martinez in Mercedes, TX is also preparing us for whatever this hurricane season brings. Sarah Sauls in Human Resources is working tirelessly to fill the many vacancies we see throughout the year. Each of these people is working side by side with their USIBWC colleagues to achieve success. Teamwork got us past many obstacles and teamwork will get us through those that are ahead.</p> |
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Excellence through teamwork is helping us achieve our mission every day. Thank you and work safely.

## *Commissioners Sign Tijuana River Basin Agreement*

On October 5, 2015, the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico (IBWC) signed Minute 320 titled, “General Framework for Binational Cooperation on Transboundary Issues in the Tijuana River Basin,” which enables priority issues of sediment, trash, and water quality in the Tijuana River Basin to be addressed cooperatively.

The objective of this agreement is to benefit residents of both countries living in the Tijuana River Basin in the area of San Diego, California-Tijuana, Baja California through sustainable management of its transboundary resources. By removing trash and taking actions aimed at eliminating sediment transport into the Tijuana River channel, the goal is to achieve this sustainability.

This agreement establishes a Binational Core Group that includes representatives of the IBWC, federal, state, and local authorities, and non-governmental organizations from both countries. The BCG will recommend cooperative measures to address the issues of concern and define strategies to implement them.

In addition to the priority issues, the Binational Core Group may address other topics of mutual interest that would benefit the basin.



## *Tijuana River Basin Agreement*



IBCW Commissioners and Secretaries sign Minute 320 in Tijuana, Baja California



Mexican Commissioner Roberto Salmon (I) and U.S. Commissioner Edward Drusina celebrate the Minute signing.



Debris in the Tijuana River Basin near the international boundary

## *U.S.-Mexico partnership highlighted at Colorado River Water Users Association Meeting*

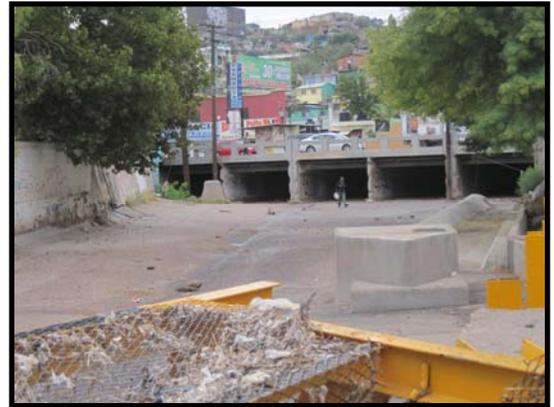
On December 16-18, 2015, the IBWC participated in the Colorado River Water Users Association (CRWUA) meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada. This conference highlighted the 70 years of Communications and Collaborations amongst the attendees. In a session focused on U.S.-Mexico cooperation, IBWC Commissioners Edward Drusina and Roberto Salmon discussed Minute 319, a five-year IBWC agreement through 2017 on international cooperative measures for the Colorado River, and their efforts to craft a successor agreement. Also participating in the panel were U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Estevan Lopez and Deputy Director General Victor Alcocer of Mexico’s National Water Commission.

**CRWUA**  
Commissioner Drusina delivered remarks.



## *Regional Commission Meetings*

On March 11-12, 2015, IBWC held its Regional Meeting in Mexicali, Mexico. During this meeting the Commission discussed sanitation and water quality, Colorado River water deliveries, flood control levees, and Morelos Dam among other things. The meeting included a field trip to inspect sanitation infrastructure.



In November, the Commission met in Nogales, Sonora to review stormwater and sanitation issues affecting the Arizona-Sonora border.

Nogales, Sonora  
Stormwater  
Infrastructure

Mexicali Field Trip

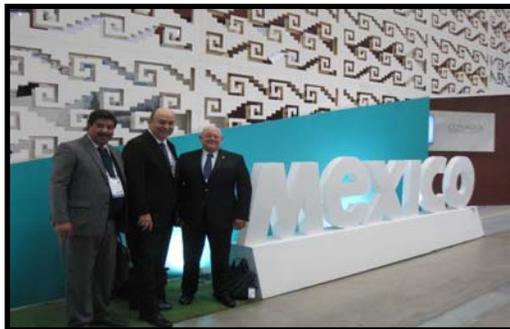


# World Water Forum 7 in Daegu & Gyeongju, Republic of Korea

In April 2015, U.S. and Mexican officials from the International Boundary and Water Commission travelled to Daegu and Gyeongju, Republic of Korea to attend the 7th World Water Forum. Approximately 170 nations, including several heads of state, gathered at this forum to discuss water challenges and solutions. With the theme Water for our Future, the forum featured four broad tracks — Science and Technology, Political, Thematic, and Regional. As with previous meetings, this Forum emphasized the democratic participation for stakeholders from diverse levels and backgrounds. Commissioners Drusina and Salmon participated in a panel on Climate Change Adaptation and a special session on Minute 319, Building Trust & Cooperation: Unprecedented Mexico-U.S. Transboundary Water Sharing, among other sessions.



IBWC participated in the World Water Forum 7 in the Republic of Korea



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