



## **International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section**

For immediate release  
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### **UPDATE ON RIO GRANDE FLOOD CONDITIONS; RIVER LEVEL DROPS AT PRESIDIO, AMISTAD DAM ON THE RISE**

The U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) continues to monitor Rio Grande flood control levees at Presidio, Texas due to ongoing flood conditions. Rio Grande flow peaked on September 16 at approximately 1500 cubic meters per second (53,000 cubic feet per second), overtopping the levee downstream of the urban area of Presidio. This caused the levee to fail near Alamito Creek, sending floodwaters onto adjacent farmland and a golf course. Sandbagging operations coordinated with state and local agencies prevented this water from backing up into the urban part of Presidio.

As of September 23, Rio Grande flow has decreased to approximately 1000 cubic meters per second (35,000 cubic feet per second) and the water is four to five feet below the top of the levee. USIBWC crews continue to take efforts to shore up the structural integrity of the levee with sandbags and plastic sheeting. On the Mexican side, the failure of levees on the Rio Grande and its tributary, the Conchos River, has caused widespread flooding in Ojinaga, Chihuahua. Rio Grande flood conditions are expected to continue into October.

At Amistad Dam at Del Rio, Texas-Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila, a dam and reservoir operated jointly by the U.S. and Mexican Sections of the International Boundary and Water Commission, reservoir storage is increasing as the high flows of the Rio Grande move downstream. Forecasts indicate the dam has the potential to be at or near conservation capacity toward the end of September. As of September 23, storage was at 89% of conservation capacity. Amistad Dam was designed to store floodwaters well in excess of conservation capacity so there is presently no concern of exceeding the dam's flood control capacity.

At the request of the State of Texas, water is being released from Amistad Dam at the rate of 500 cubic meters per second (17,657 cubic feet per second). The USIBWC has advised the community that releases of this volume cause flooding of Vega Verde Road downstream of the dam. On average, releases of this magnitude occur every three to five years.

Farther downstream at the Commission's Falcon Dam at Falcon Heights, Texas-Nueva Ciudad Guerrero, Tamaulipas, storage was at 55% of conservation capacity.

The USIBWC operates and maintains 15 miles of Rio Grande flood control levees in the Presidio area, providing protection to 5403 acres of land on the United States side of the

Presidio-Ojinaga Valley. The U.S. levees range in height from 6 to 14 feet and protect the river reach between Haciendita and Alamito Creek.

Since late August, flood conditions have existed on the Conchos River, a Mexican tributary that flows into the Rio Grande at Presidio-Ojinaga. Due to heavy rainfall in Mexico, Mexican dams in the Conchos River basin are full and spilling floodwaters. These flows have created flood conditions in the Rio Grande.

USIBWC crews have been in active flood fight operations since September 5, conducting regular levee patrols, using heavy equipment and sandbags to repair levee seepage and sand boils as needed. Over 50 additional USIBWC employees and heavy equipment from other USIBWC offices have been deployed to Presidio to assist in flood fight operations. The USIBWC has also been coordinating closely with Mexican officials regarding flows and dam releases on the Conchos River.

Residents concerned about Rio Grande flood conditions should continue to monitor National Weather Service forecasts and any announcements from local emergency managers.

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