



## International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release  
January 11, 2013

### **RIO GRANDE WATER QUALITY AND REGIONAL FLOOD CONTROL ISSUES ON AGENDA FOR JANUARY 16 PUBLIC MEETING IN LAS CRUCES**

Rio Grande water quality and studies required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help determine flood risk are on the agenda for the next public meeting of the Rio Grande Citizens Forum sponsored by the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC). The meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 16, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Elephant Butte Irrigation District Board Room, 530 S. Melendres Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

Chris Canavan with the State of New Mexico will give an update on efforts to address *E. coli* bacteria in the Rio Grande in southern New Mexico. *E. coli* pollution is associated with human and/or animal waste. The Paso del Norte Watershed Council received a grant from the New Mexico Environment Department in late 2009 to fund water quality sampling, bacterial source tracking, data analysis, and community outreach and education. This stakeholder-driven process is intended to develop a Watershed Based Plan to reduce pathogenic-based pollution in the river. Water quality samples have been examined to determine *E. coli* concentrations and the species associated with the *E. coli* sample. Analysis of data is ongoing and the Watershed Based Plan is being written.

In other business, Paul Dugie, Doña Ana County Flood Commission Director, will discuss interior drainage studies required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to help determine flood risk and accredit the Rio Grande flood control levee system in Doña Ana County.

The Rio Grande Citizens Forum was established by the USIBWC in 1999 to facilitate the exchange of information regarding USIBWC activities on the Rio Grande between Percha Dam, New Mexico and Fort Quitman, Texas. It is designed to bring together community members, enabling the early

and continued two-way flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between USIBWC and the general public, environmentalists, irrigation districts, municipalities, and others interested in the river. A complete meeting agenda follows.

For more information:

Sally Spener  
915-832-4175  
sally.spener@ibwc.gov

**RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM**  
**Wednesday, January 16, 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.**  
**Elephant Butte Irrigation District Board Room**  
**530 S. Melendres Street**  
**Las Cruces, NM 88005**

**AGENDA**

- Welcome and Introductions – Conrad Keyes, Jr., Citizens Forum Co-Chair
- FEMA Internal Watershed Studies – Paul Dugie, Doña Ana County Flood Commission Director
- Update on Water Quality Focused Planning Project in the Lower Rio Grande in New Mexico –Chris Canavan, New Mexico Environment Department
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion
- Suggested Future Agenda Items