



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
February 16, 2021

RIO GRANDE LEVEE REHABILITATION, AQUATIC HABITAT RESTORATION, AND RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES ON USIBWC LANDS ON AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 25 WEBINAR

The Rio Grande Citizens Forum (RGCF) of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) will discuss the Rio Grande flood control levee rehabilitation project in the Upper Valley of El Paso, Texas, signs installed along the levee notifying the public of restricted activities, and proposed aquatic habitat restoration along the Rio Grande in southern New Mexico and west Texas. The meeting will take place on **Thursday, February 25, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. MST via webinar**. The Rio Grande Citizens Forum was established to facilitate the exchange of information with the public about Commission activities and related matters.

Andrea Glover, Civil Engineer, USIBWC, will discuss the 2.8-mile segment of levee along the west side of the Rio Grande in El Paso from Country Club Road to Borderland Road currently under construction to place impervious clay on the levee to improve flood protection. The \$6.3 million project is expected to be completed in June. Glover's presentation will also include an update on future work downstream of Borderland Bridge, including work on the east levee.

Elizabeth Verdecchia, Natural Resources Specialist, USIBWC, will give a presentation on proposed aquatic habitat restoration along the Rio Grande in southern New Mexico and west Texas. The USIBWC has revised the *Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact for Aquatic Habitat Restoration in the Rio Grande Canalization Project*, which will be open for a 30-day public comment period through March 31, 2021. The document identifies five sites as preferred alternatives for restoration of wetlands and aquatic and riparian habitat.

Xochitl Aranda, Acting Principal Engineer, USIBWC, will be speaking about the prohibited activities signs that were recently installed along the Rio Grande levees and floodplains in the Canalization Project, the Commission's water delivery and flood control project between Percha Dam, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. Along the Canalization Project, there are distinct areas where the public is allowed to carry out recreational activities, while other areas, such as the habitat restoration sites, are completely off limits. The regulatory signs identify the different areas and permitted activities for the safe use by the public while reducing damage to the flood control system. With installation of these signs, the Doña Ana County Sheriff's Office will take enforcement action against those engaged in prohibited activities.

A complete meeting agenda follows. Members of the public who would like more information about the meeting may contact 915-494-6027 or the Public Affairs Office at lori.kuczmanski@ibwc.gov.

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RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM
Thursday, February 25, 2021
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

To join our Teams Meeting, go to our web page:

https://www.ibwc.gov/Citizens_Forums/CF_URG.html and click on “Join Meeting”. If you do not have Teams installed on the device you will use to attend the meeting, it will work through any internet browser. If possible, it may be helpful for you to test connectivity on your own prior to the meeting by clicking on the Join link and ensuring your camera and microphone are functioning.

Or join by phone: Call in number: (915) 320-4718 | Conference ID: 912 159 601#

Agenda

- **Welcome and Introductions** –Erin Ward, Citizens Forum Co-Chair
- **Levee Rehabilitation in the Upper Valley of El Paso, Texas** —Andrea Glover, Civil Engineer, USIBWC
- **Aquatic Habitat Restoration in the Rio Grande Canalization Project** — Elizabeth Verdecchia, Natural Resources Specialist, USIBWC
- **Rio Grande Canalization Project - Prohibited Activities Signs** — Xochitl Aranda, Acting Principal Engineer, USIBWC
- **Public Comment**
- **Board Discussion**
- **Suggested Future Agenda Items**

If you have a disability that you wish to self-identify confidentially that requires accommodation, please advise us ahead of time.

For more information, call 915-494-6027 or email Lori.Kuczanski@ibwc.gov