



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

For immediate release  
March 4, 2015

### **MARCH 19 PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS TRANSBOUNDARY WATER QUALITY, STORMWATER, AND MINING ISSUES**

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) has scheduled a public meeting of the Southeast Arizona Citizens Forum to discuss transboundary water concerns along the Arizona-Sonora border. The meeting will take place Thursday, March 19, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., at the Holiday Inn Express, 1902 S. Highway 92, Sierra Vista, AZ. The purpose of the forum is to promote the exchange of information between the USIBWC and the community regarding Commission projects and related activities in Pima, Cochise, and Santa Cruz Counties, Arizona.

Gilbert Anaya, Chief of the USIBWC's Environmental Management Division, will discuss water issues associated with Mexican mines near the Arizona border. He will present a water quality case study of the San Pedro River related to a spill of contaminated water from a mine in Cananea, Mexico that occurred in September 2014. He will take a brief look at the spill and the role of each country in response to this type of event. The presentation will provide information and outcomes from the incident. He will also present information received from the Mexican government about the El Pilar Mine located just north of Miguel Hidalgo, Sonora. His presentation will cover the potential impacts to water resources from the mine, as well as the planned environmental mitigation activities.

In other business, Dr. Padinare Unnikrishna, Chief of the USIBWC's Engineering Services Division, will discuss stormwater management for the sister cities of Douglas, Arizona and Agua Prieta, Sonora. These cities have several major washes, including Whitewater Draw, Rio Agua Prieta, and Alamito Creek. Historically, heavy rains of short duration have resulted in frequent flooding to the west and east of Douglas and in Agua Prieta, especially in the low-lying areas. Even small magnitude storms have caused flooding, such as one in the summer of 2013 that ruined 500 acres of farmland. Some of the reasons for these frequent incidences of flooding include construction activities and increasing development within the urban boundary, undersized drainage and flow conveyance structures, and debris accumulation along the international boundary fence, which may be rerouting and causing spreading of flows outside the washes.

Flood mitigation solutions are needed to reduce or eliminate the continued risk to life and property. The presentation will focus on possible alternatives such as detention basins and downstream channel improvements to mitigate incidences of flooding and the extent of flood damage. A description of the Scope of Work that was finalized with stakeholders following a binational meeting in 2014 will also be presented.

A complete meeting agenda follows.

For more information:

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## **SOUTHEAST ARIZONA CITIZENS FORUM**

**Thursday, March 19, 2015**

**5:30 – 7:30 p.m.**

**Holiday Inn Express**

**1902 S. Highway 92**

**Sierra Vista, AZ 85635**

- Welcome and Introductions – Ben Lomeli, Citizens Forum Co-Chair
- Water Quality Case Study in the San Pedro River: Cananea Mine Spill – Gilbert Anaya, Division Chief, Environmental Management Division, USIBWC
- Environmental Impact Statement and Water Use Permit for Proposed El Pilar Mine in Sonora – Gilbert Anaya, Division Chief, Environmental Management Division, USIBWC
- Stormwater Management for Douglas-Agua Prieta – Padinare Unnikrishna, Ph.D., P.E., CFM, Supervisory Civil Engineer, Engineering Services Division, USIBWC
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion
- Suggested Future Agenda Items

**\*Directions:** From I-10, take Exit #302, AZ-90 toward Ft. Huachuca/Sierra Vista. Continue south on AZ-90 for approximately 28 miles. Turn left onto Highway 90 Bypass. Stay straight to go onto State Highway 92. Hotel is about 2 miles down on the right.

If you have a disability that you wish to self-identify confidentially that requires accommodation, please advise us ahead of time at 520-281-1832 or [sally.spener@ibwc.gov](mailto:sally.spener@ibwc.gov).