



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
April 3, 2012

USIBWC COMMISSIONER TO ATTEND APRIL 18 PUBLIC MEETING IN MERCEDES; RIO GRANDE WATER QUALITY ON AGENDA

U.S. Commissioner Edward Drusina of the International Boundary and Water Commission will attend the April 18 public meeting of the Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum (LRGCF). The LRGCF was established by the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) to facilitate the exchange of information between the USIBWC and members of the public about Commission activities and related issues in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. The meeting will be held Wednesday, April 18, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. at the USIBWC office at 325 Golf Course Road in Mercedes, Texas.

Commissioner Drusina, head of the U.S. Section of the Commission, will recognize the new LRGCF board members who were appointed at the beginning of the year, share his expectations for the LRGCF, and be available to hear about boundary and water issues of interest in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

In other business, Leslie Grijalva, Environmental Protection Specialist with the USIBWC Texas Clean Rivers Program, will present a water quality update for the Rio Grande. Is it safe to go swimming in the river? Is the river providing good water for crop irrigation? In her annual update on water quality, Grijalva will discuss bacteria and salinity, monitoring activities, and both ongoing and future water quality projects in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

USIBWC Engineer Planner Gabriel Duran will give an overview of the activities of the USIBWC's Master Planning Office for the Lower Rio Grande Valley. The USIBWC's Lower Rio Grande

Flood Control Project (LRGFCP) extends from the town of Penitas, Texas to the Gulf of Mexico. In 2010, Rio Grande floodwaters from Hurricane Alex were safely conveyed through the communities of Mission, McAllen, Weslaco, Mercedes, Harlingen, and Brownsville. However, the upstream communities between Falcon Dam and La Joya, Texas not protected by a flood control project were damaged. These communities include Roma, Rio Grande City, La Casita/Garciasville, El Refugio, La Grulla, and La Joya. Damage included bank erosion, flooded homes and farmland, and contamination of potable water supplies. Duran will present the findings of the USIBWC Master Planning Office after the hurricane event and present conceptual plans to prevent flooding in the future.

The Citizens Forum will also hear from Jaime Flores, Arroyo Colorado Watershed Coordinator, about the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan (ACWPP). He will discuss the ACWPP implementation grant that ended last September, the current sustainability and continued ACWPP implementation grant, and the upcoming updating of the ACWPP that starts this September. The presentation will describe all of the various best management practices that are being implemented in an effort to reduce pollutant, sediment, and nutrient loading into the Arroyo Colorado.

A complete meeting agenda follows. Members of the public who would like more information about the meeting may contact the USIBWC's Lower Rio Grande Project Office at 956-565-3150 or the Public Affairs Office at sally.spener@ibwc.gov.

For more information:

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LOWER RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM

Wednesday, April 18, 2012

3:00 - 5:00 P.M.

USIBWC Conference Room

325 Golf Course Road

Mercedes, TX 78570

AGENDA

- Welcome and Introductions – Rodolfo Montero, Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum Co-Chair, USIBWC
- Expectations for the Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum – Edward Drusina, Commissioner, USIBWC
- Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan– Jaime Flores, Arroyo Colorado Watershed Coordinator, Texas A & M Agri-Life Extension
- USIBWC Master Planning Office, Conceptual Plans to Reduce Flood Impacts – Gabriel Duran, Engineer Planner, USIBWC
- How's the Water? Annual Water Quality Update for the Rio Grande – Leslie Grijalva, Environmental Protection Specialist, USIBWC Texas Clean Rivers Program
- 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 956-565-3150.