



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
April 19, 2013

WATER RELEASES FROM AMISTAD DAM INCREASE; HIGH FLOWS EXPECTED IN RIO GRANDE AS LAKE LEVEL DROPS

Water releases from Amistad Dam, located on the Rio Grande at Del Rio, Texas-Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila, are increasing this month, bringing high flow to the river and rapidly-declining lake levels approaching the record low. At Del Rio, the National Weather Service expects the Rio Grande to approach and remain near flood stage over the period of release. The river is forecast to reach action stage at Colombia International Bridge just upstream from Laredo, TX-Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas beginning on Sunday, April 21. Action stage is a predetermined level at which forecasts are issued to increase awareness for people, companies, and government agencies with interests near rivers. While flood conditions may not appear to occur at action stage, in many cases actions might be needed to avoid negative impacts as the river flow increases.

The water is being transferred downstream to Falcon Dam where it will be released to meet irrigation and municipal water demand in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. The releases are in response to water needs in both the United States and Mexico and do not impact Mexico's deficit in deliveries to the United States under the 1944 Water Treaty.

At midnight on April 18, releases increased to nearly 8,000 cubic feet per second, including approximately 5,300 cubic feet per second of Mexican water and 2,600 cubic feet per second of U.S. water. On Sunday morning, April 21, there will be an additional increase, for a total release rate of nearly 9,000 cubic feet per second, including approximately 5,300 cubic feet per second for Mexico and 3,500 cubic feet per second for the United States. Releases are expected to be reduced beginning around April 27.

The new release rate is expected to cause the level of Amistad Lake to drop by as much as several feet before the end of the month, approaching the record low elevation of 1058 feet that occurred in August 1998.

Amistad Dam is operated by the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico. During normal and low reservoir conditions, the rate of U.S. releases is determined by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Rio Grande Watermaster based on the need to deliver water to Texas users.

For more information:

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