



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
April 26, 2017

TRENDS IN THE BORDER PATROL'S RIO GRANDE VALLEY SECTOR AND MEXICO'S RIO GRANDE WATER DELIVERIES TO THE UNITED STATES SET FOR MAY 10 PUBLIC MEETING IN MERCEDES

The Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum (LRGCF) of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) will discuss U.S.-Mexico water issues and border security at its upcoming public meeting. The meeting will take place on **Wednesday, May 10, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the USIBWC office at 325 Golf Course Road in Mercedes, Texas.** The Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum was established to facilitate the exchange of information with the public about Commission activities and related matters.

Sally Spener, USIBWC Secretary, will discuss current U.S.-Mexico water issues on the Rio Grande and the Colorado River in the Western United States. In accordance with the 1944 Water Treaty, the United States receives one-third of the flow arriving in the Rio Grande from six Mexican streams. The treaty indicates that water from these tributaries should provide a minimum annual average of 350,000 acre-feet to the United States in cycles of five years. This water is critical for farmers and cities in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Spener will present the current status of Mexico's water deliveries and what to expect in the coming months.

Spener will also discuss U.S.-Mexico cooperation in the Colorado River Basin, which provides water to more than 5 million acres of farmland and more than 40 million residents in

communities such as Phoenix, Los Angeles, and Tijuana. After years of declining reservoir levels, diverse interests in the basin reached agreement in 2012 on Minute 319, a 5-year pilot program through the International Boundary and Water Commission, to address the challenges. That effort has laid the groundwork for a longer-term agreement.

The Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum will also hear from Tony Ibarra, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Border Patrol, on “The Shift.” When an area experiences a high volume of activity and/or dangerous incidents, Border Patrol Agents adapt by providing more manpower, technology, and infrastructure. Working alongside other federal, state and local law enforcement, it is their goal to gain operational control of our nation’s border.

The presentation will also include a video, “Rio Grande Valley Sector End of the Year 2016.” The video will discuss how the Rio Grande Valley, (RGV) Sector has become the focal point of Border Patrol Operations. The presentation will show the shifting trends of alien and narcotic traffic throughout the United States Border Patrol Sectors; the RGV Sector has seen an increase in apprehensions. The RGV has also seen an increase in deaths and rescues. U.S. Border Patrol Agents are working on forming better partnerships with our foreign counterparts and with our local communities. The U.S. Border Patrol has created the “Missing Migrant Initiative,” a program in place that is assisted by the RGV Evidence Collection Team.

A complete meeting agenda follows. Members of the public who would like more information about the meeting may contact 956-565-3150 or the Public Affairs Office at lori.kuczanski@ibwc.gov.

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LOWER RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM

Wednesday, May 10, 2017

3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

USIBWC Conference Room

325 Golf Course Road

Mercedes, TX 78570

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions – Omar Rios, Citizens Forum Co-Chair
- The Shift – Tony Ibarra, Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Border Patrol
- Mexico’s Rio Grande Water Deliveries to the United States – Sally Spener, Secretary, USIBWC
- U.S.-Mexico Colorado River Cooperation – Sally Spener, Secretary, USIBWC
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion
- Suggested Future Agenda Items

Directions: From Expressway 83, exit Mile 2 W. Travel south for approx. 1.5 miles to Golf Course Rd. Turn left. The USIBWC is the first building on your left.

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 or email Lori.Kuczanski@ibwc.gov