



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
July 12, 2017

PILOT FALLOWING PROGRAM AND AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES OF THE LOWER COLORADO RIVER ON AGENDA FOR JULY 26 PUBLIC MEETING IN YUMA, AZ

A pilot fallowing program and aquatic invasive species in the lower Colorado River will be the focus of an upcoming public meeting of the Colorado River Citizens Forum of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC). The meeting will take place on **Wednesday, July 26, 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at the Yuma County Department of Development Services, 2351 West 26th Street, Yuma, Arizona.** The Colorado River Citizens Forum was established to facilitate the exchange of information with the public about Commission activities and related matters.

Perri Benemelis, Manager, Water Supply Program, Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District, will give a presentation on a pilot fallowing program that took place from 2014 through 2016. The Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District (CAGRDR) and Yuma Mesa Irrigation and Drainage District (YMIDD) program temporarily removed less than 10 percent of YMIDD irrigated lands from production to create a conservation water supply in Lake Mead to address the worsening drought. The pilot program provided a stable revenue stream for farmers, with only limited impact on farming operations. The program demonstrated the feasibility and benefits of a properly designed, temporary rotational fallowing program.

The Colorado River Citizens Forum will also hear from Russell Engel, Fish Program Supervisor, Arizona Game and Fish Department, on aquatic invasive species (AIS) of the lower Colorado River. Aquatic nuisance species (ANS) are non-indigenous AIS introduced into an environment in which they are not native, threaten the diversity of native species, and spread rapidly. The introduction of AIS in the lower Colorado River and the inland waters of Arizona threatens the ecological integrity of the state's water resources, as well as economic, public health and social conditions. Consequences of AIS presence in Arizona include the destruction of native plant and animal habitat, damaged recreational sites and opportunities, lowered property values, clogged waterways, negative impacts on irrigation and power generation, and decreased overall biodiversity. The presentation will include a brief summary of the ANS of the lower Colorado River, including giant salvinia, southern banded water snake, quagga mussels, water hyacinth, water lettuce and others.

A complete meeting agenda follows. Members of the public who would like more information about the meeting may contact 928-782-1598 or the Public Affairs Office at lori.kuczanski@ibwc.gov.

Lori Kuczanski
(915) 832-4106
lori.kuczanski@ibwc.gov

COLORADO RIVER CITIZENS FORUM
Wednesday, July 26, 2017
4:00 – 6:00 p.m. PDT/MST
Yuma County Dept. of Development Services
2351 West 26th Street
Yuma, Arizona 85364

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions – Anna Morales, Area Operations Manager, USIBWC, and Citizens Forum Co-Chair
- Yuma Mesa Irrigation & Drainage District/Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District Pilot Fallowing Program: *Good for Business, Good Water Management* – Perri Benemelis, Manager, Water Supply Program, Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District
- Update on Aquatic Invasive Species of the Lower Colorado River– Russell Engel, Fish Program Supervisor, Arizona Game and Fish Department
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion
- Suggested Future Agenda Items

***Directions:** From I-8, exit 2 US-95/16th Street. Go west on 16th Street for approximately 2 1/2 miles. Turn left on Avenue B to 26th Street. Turn left on 26th Street. Building is on your right (south side of Walmart).

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 928-782-1598 or e-mail lori.kuczanski@ibwc.gov