



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
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USIBWC RELEASES ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY OF PROPOSED FLOOD CONTROL IMPROVEMENTS

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) has released the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact, Improvements to the Rio Grande Rectification Project. Public comment on the document will be accepted through September 2, 2008.

The study analyzes environmental impacts of plans to raise Rio Grande flood control levees and dredge the river in the USIBWC's Rio Grande Rectification Project in El Paso and Hudspeth Counties in Texas. The proposed improvements are intended to increase the flood containment capacity of the levees and to restore the normal flow capacity of the river, which has been reduced by sediment deposition. Levee-raising in the upstream portion of the project in east and central El Paso was completed in 2007. The EA addresses proposed levee improvements downstream from the Zaragoza International Bridge and sediment removal at various sites. Improvements would be undertaken in phases as funding becomes available.

According to the EA, the proposed improvements would have a very significant socioeconomic benefit for the community by providing increased flood protection. Agricultural lands would also benefit by the increased efficiency in delivery of irrigation water resulting from dredging. All work would be conducted within the existing project right-of-way and no significant effects on wildlife habitat are expected.

The work is also consistent with Minute No. 313, an agreement of the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, which defines each country's maintenance responsibilities in the Rio Grande Rectification Project.

Electronic copies of the EA are available on the USIBWC web page at:

http://www.ibwc.gov/Organization/Environmental/EIS_EA_Public_Comment.html .

Comments should be sent by September 2 to:

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