



## International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release  
September 27, 2018

### **DESALINATION OF BRACKISH WATER AND SEDIMENT CONTROL PROJECTS ON AGENDA FOR OCTOBER 11 PUBLIC MEETING IN LAS CRUCES**

The Rio Grande Citizens Forum (RGCF) of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) will discuss desalinating brackish groundwater in New Mexico as a potential future water supply and construction of Rio Grande sediment control projects. The meeting will take place on **Thursday, October 11, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at Las Cruces City Hall, 700 N. Main Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001**. The Rio Grande Citizens Forum was established to facilitate the exchange of information with the public about Commission activities and related matters.

Phil King, PE, Ph.D, MBA, Professor and Associate Department Head of the Department of Civil Engineering at New Mexico State University, will discuss how the planned economic development in southern New Mexico will require a hard look at water supply sources. The surface water and groundwater of the Rio Grande system is drought-stressed, over-appropriated, and the subject of on-going interstate litigation. With funding from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and support from the New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute, New México State University faculty Phil King, Pei, Xu, Sam Fernald, and Kenneth Carroll are examining the potential for desalination in the Santa Teresa, New Mexico area using brackish groundwater. Recognizing the region's strong ties with Mexico, potential for binational cooperation is also being examined in collaboration with the USIBWC. Dr. King, Principal

Investigator on the project, will provide an overview of project, water resource information, treatment options, and binational aspects of the proposed development.

Apurba Borah, Ph.D., P.E., CFM, Lead Hydraulic Engineer, USIBWC, will discuss construction of channel maintenance structures in the Rio Grande to control sediment. Sediment accumulation can impede draining of irrigation return flow to the Rio Grande and may result in increases in water surface elevations which could increase the flooding risk to adjoining communities.

The USIBWC contracted Tetra Tech in 2015 to conduct a study of sediment transport and channel maintenance alternatives at nine problem locations, focusing on arroyo confluences. Based on this study, sediment basins are designed for Thurman Arroyo I and Thurman Arroyo II and the project has been awarded recently for construction. The USIBWC is also working to design and construct channel maintenance structures at three other problem locations: Placitas Arroyo, Rincon Arroyo, and Reed Arroyo. This plan also includes long channel excavation within the Rio Grande from Rincon Arroyo to Bignell Arroyo to remove existing sediment.

A complete meeting agenda follows. Members of the public who would like more information about the meeting may contact 915-832-4106 or the Public Affairs Office at [lori.kuczanski@ibwc.gov](mailto:lori.kuczanski@ibwc.gov)

For more information:

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## **RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM**

**Thursday, October 11, 2018**

**6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

**Las Cruces City Hall  
700 North Main Street \*  
Las Cruces, NM 88001**

### **Agenda**

- **Welcome and Introductions** –Walton Low, Citizens Forum Co-Chair
- **Desalination of Brackish Water in the Southern Mesilla Valley: Preliminary Planning**– Phil King, PE, Ph.D. MBA, Professor and Associate Department Head, Department of Civil Engineering, New Mexico State University
- **Design and Construction of Rio Grande Channel Maintenance Alternatives for Sediment Control** – Apurba Borah, Ph.D., P.E., CFM, Lead Hydraulic Engineer, USIBWC
- **Public Comment**
- **Board Discussion**
- **Suggested Future Agenda Items**

**\*Directions:** From El Paso, take I-10 west. Take exit 142 Valley Drive. Keep left at the fork in the ramp and continue onto Valley Drive. Travel about ¼ of a mile and veer right onto Main Street. Continue on Main about 2.4 miles to City Hall.

*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 915-832-4106 or email [Lori.Kuczanski@ibwc.gov](mailto:Lori.Kuczanski@ibwc.gov)