



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
November 4, 2019

REAL-TIME WATER SENSORS AND TEXAS FLOOD INFRASTRUCTURE FUND TO BE DISCUSSED AT NOVEMBER 13 MEETING IN MERCEDES

Real-time water monitoring sensors and the Texas Flood Infrastructure Fund will be discussed at the next public meeting of the Lower Rio Grande Citizens Forum of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) on **Wednesday, November 13, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the USIBWC office at 325 Golf Course Road in Mercedes, Texas.** The purpose of the forum is to promote the exchange of information between the USIBWC and the community regarding Commission projects and related activities.

Dr. Andrew N.S. Ernest, President and CEO of Research, Applied Technology, Education and Service, Inc. (RATES), will be speaking on the River and Estuary Observation Network (REON). REON is a near real-time sensor network of hydrologic and water quality stations premised on a belief that “99% of environmental change occurs on the order of 1% of the time” – which in essence means that if you weren’t looking, you didn’t see it, you don’t know it happened, and you can’t make any management decisions in response to it. Real-time sensing technology has, and continues to be, priced outside the affordability of local and regional environmental and water resource management entities. RATES has invested the last 15 years in the research, development and deployment of real-time water and water quality sensor technologies that are affordable for small, local government, academic, educational and research entities. This presentation will cover some of the core technologies that have been deployed in

New York state, and are being currently deployed in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. REON is one pillar of RATES' mission – the democratization of water intelligence – making water data, analytics and decision-making affordable for sustainable environmental management at the local level. The other pillars include decision support tools developed specifically for small and medium-size entities, and regional coordination networks that synergize local decision-making at the regional level.

Texas State Representative Alex Dominguez (D-Brownsville), a member of the House Natural Resources Committee, will be speaking on the newly created Texas Flood Infrastructure Fund. This discussion will include the background and history of the legislation which created the Flood Infrastructure Fund (FIF), including what we learned from Hurricane Harvey and other floods in the state. Rep. Dominquez will discuss the funding mechanisms for this newly-created fund, what types of funding will be available, and a general overview of how those funds will be accessed. Finally, he will provide an update of where the Texas Water Development Board is in the rule making process regarding the fund.

A complete agenda follows. Members of the public who would like more information about the meeting may call 956-565-3150 or e-mail lori.kuczanski@ibwc.gov.

News media may contact:

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LOWER RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM
Wednesday, November 13, 2019
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
- **River and Estuary Observation Network (REON)** – Andrew N.S. Ernest, President and CEO, Research, Applied Technology, Education and Service, Inc. (RATES)
- **The Legislature and Flood Infrastructure Funding**– State Representative Alex Dominguez (D-Brownsville)
- **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 information, call 956-565-3150 or e-mail lori.kuczanski@ibwc.gov