The Texas Clean Rivers Program

Rio Grande Basin 2010 Calendar

January

The Rio Grande is the fifth longest river in the United States and among the top twenty in the world. It extends from the San Juan mountains of Colorado to the Gulf of Mexico (1,901 miles) and forms a 1,255 mile segment of the border between the United States and Mexico.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		The Texas Clean Rivers Program collects water quality samples throughout the Rio Grande Basin in Texas to assist the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality in assessing the health of the basin.		31	1 New Year's Day	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 Martin Luther King, Jr Day (Observed)	19	20	21	22	23
24 31	25	26	27	28	29	30

Did You Know?

The Rio Grande historically provided habitat for many species, including about 100 kinds of mammals, about 350 birds, almost 100 amphibians and reptiles, and almost 50 species of native fish. However, the current altered ecosystem does not support such a wide variety of wildlife. This picture shows a Chacalaca bird in Sabal Palm Audubon Sanctuary in Brownsville, Texas.

February

San Felipe Creek at Guyler confluence with the Rio Grande, Station 13270

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 Lincoln's Birthday	13
14 Chinese New Year Valentine's Day	15 President's Day	16	17 Ash Wednesday	18	19	20
21	22 Washington's Birthday (Observed)	23	24	25	26	27
28	1	2			Trash in the river, like these old tires, can be detrimental to the ecosystem.	

Did You Know?

The Rio Grande depends on us for survival. Community groups, like the one shown to the right during a river cleanup in the Lower Rio Grande in 2006, can help keep the river healthy and safe.

March

Amistad Dam, upstream of Del Rio, Texas, is the largest of the storage dams and reservoirs built on the international reach of the Rio Grande River. The dam was dedicated in 1969 by United States President Richard M. Nixon and Mexico President Diaz Ordaz. This international dam creates a reservoir of over 3 million acre-feet that extends up the Rio Grande about 75 miles.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20
21	22 World Water Day	23	24	25	26	27
28 Palm Sunday	29	30 Passover	31			

The international boundary at the top of Amistad Dam.

Did You Know?

The construction of the Amistad Dam has resulted in the loss of the atlantic sturgeon and the American eel in the waters of the Rio Grande in the Big Bend stretch. These are two of six species which are no longer found in the Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River due to a variety of factors. *Source: National Park Service*

TCEQ staff conduct studies of aquatic life downstream of Big Bend

April

Resacas, or oxbow lakes, are remnant river channels. They aid in flood control and water storage, and provide important habitats for an array of species of fish such as Tilapia, Alligator Gar, and Largemouth Bass, as well as hundreds of species of birds and waterfowl.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		Spotted Gar in Lower Canyons downstream of Big Bend National Park taken March 2009. *Photographer: Benjamin Schwartz*		1	2 Good Friday	3
4 Easter Sunday	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1

Did You Know?

The Burrowing Owl (Athene cunicularia) is a Texas threatened species that excavates into the ground for his home, or borrows vacated prairie dog burrows. These birds can perfectly mimic the prairie rattlesnake! Here a burrowing owl guards nesting eggs inside the den on the Rio Grande levees outside of El Paso, Texas.

May

International Bridge in Roma, Texas. In many parts of the Basin, heavy development on both sides of the river has dramatically changed the natural conditions. The river both unites and divides the two countries.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		International Bridge connecting Brownsville, Texas to Matamoros, Tamaulipas		29	30	1
2	3	4	5 Cinco De Mayo	6	7	8
9 Mother's Day	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 30	24 31 Memorial Day	25	26	27	28	29

Did You Know?

Urban and industrial runoff and discharges into the river can cause damage to the habitat and species that depend on the river. This fish kill occurred in the El Paso area near New Mexico in 2003.

June

The Rio Grande has carved canyons in the Big Bend area. The Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River protects a 196-mile (315 km) portion of the Rio Grande in Texas. Approximately 69 mi (111 km) of the Wild and Scenic River is within Big Bend National Park; the remainder is downstream of Big Bend. The Mexican side of the canyons is also protected under Mexico's National Park Service.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14 Flag Day	15	16	17	18	19
20 Father's Day	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

The Lower Canyons in the Wild and Scenic Rio Grande downstream of Big Bend taken from a canoe in March 2009.

Did You Know?

Forty-seven species of fish were found in the Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River historically; today, six of these species, including the Rio Grande silvery minnow, are no longer found in the river. In December 2008, half a million silvery minnows were released at Big Bend by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service in an effort to recover the population. *Source: National Park Service*

Photographer: Raymond Skiles

July

The Rio Grande has many tributaries that add to its flow. This picture shows the confluence of the San Juan River in Mexico with the Rio Grande. The Rio Conchos also enters the Rio Grande from Mexico, and provides the majority of the flow from Presidio to Amistad.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		The flows are highly variable, as seen in these two photos, both from the Rio Conchos confluence.		1	2	3
4 Independence Day	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Did You Know?

Saltcedar, also called tamarisk, is a non-native invasive species that disrupts the riparian ecosystem by pushing out native plants, pulling up salt from the groundwater, and using a lot of water with its long roots. There are currently many agencies in both the U.S. and Mexico working to control saltcedar populations and restore habitats encroached by saltcedar.

August

Mouth of the Rio Grande in 2004. In some drought years, the flow of the Rio Grande has not been sufficient enough to reach the Gulf of Mexico, but those extreme cases are rare. The mouth of the river, as well as the 40-mile tidal area upstream, has salinity influences from the ocean and provides a unique habitat for tidal species.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

The water hyacinth, an invasive aquatic weed, chokes the river above Brownsville. In some places along the river, the infestation can grow so strong it can impede flow.

Did You Know?

High flows during summer of 2008 resulted from hurricanes Dolly in July, Gustav in August, and Ike in September. These high flows flushed out aquatic weeds, such as the water hyacinth, from the river into the Gulf.

Endangered white pelican at the mouth of the Rio Grande.

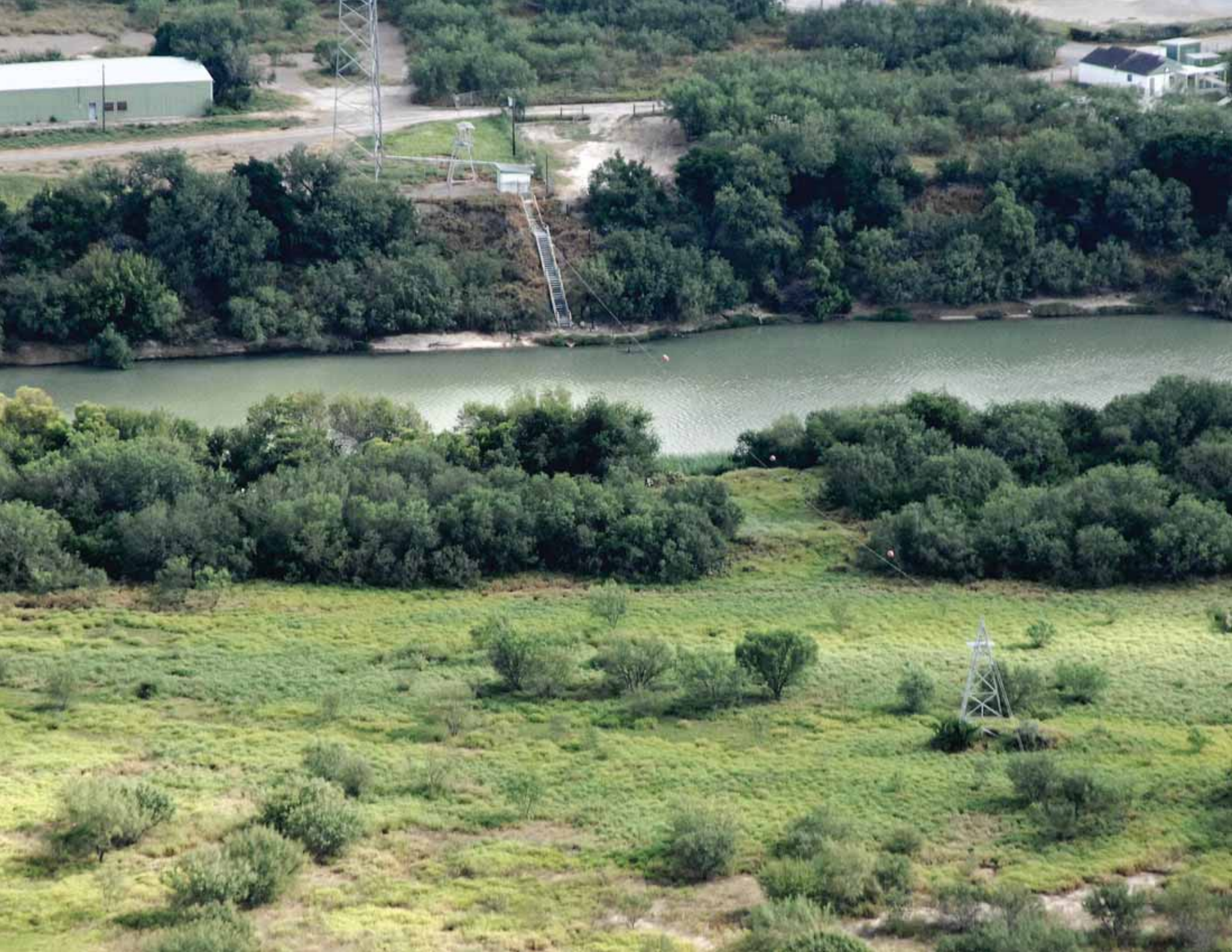
September

Anzalduas Dam is a diversion dam located in Hidalgo County, Texas approximately 11 river miles upstream of Hidalgo, Texas and Reynosa, Tamaulipas. Construction of this dam began in April 1956 and became fully operational in April of 1960. The purpose of Anzalduas Dam is to divert the U.S. share of floodwaters to it's interior floodway. It also enables the diversion of waters to Mexico's main irrigation canal.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		Anzalduas Dam from upstream.	1	2	3	4
5	6 Labor Day	7	8	9	10	11
12 Grandparent's Day	13	14	15	16	17	18 World Water Monitoring Day
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2

Did You Know?

The flow of the Rio Grande is highly variable and depends on snowmelt from Colorado and New Mexico. The flow also depends on rain throughout the basin and water carried by tributaries. These pictures show the IBWC gage station in Presidio below the confluence with the Rio Conchos during low flow and high flow periods.



October

Rio Grande at Fort Ringhold, 1 mi downstream of Rio Grande City. This station, 13185, is both an IBWC gage station and a Clean Rivers monitoring station.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		The white building at the top of the stairwell houses a gage reader that provides valuable flow information for this station downstream of Falcon Dam.		30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 Columbus Day	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 31 Halloween	25	26	27	28	29	30

Did You Know?

There is a network of continuous water quality monitoring stations throughout Texas managed by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, including 17 stations in The Rio Grande Basin. The equipment collects data on parameters such as specific conductance, temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, and flow. Data from the monitoring stations can be accessed at www.texaswaterdata.org.

November

This picture from December 2008 shows water quality monitoring station 15795 at the Alamo Grade Control Structure, about 6 miles upstream of Fort Hancock, Texas and about 60 miles downstream of El Paso, Texas.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 Veteran's Day	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Thanksgiving Day	26	27
28	29	30				

Left: TCEQ and IBWC conducted a biological survey of the Pecos River in 2006.

Right: USGS, TCEQ, and IBWC conducted a biological survey in the Rio Grande in 2003.

These scientific studies provide important information of the state of the river basin's health.

Did You Know?

The Clean Rivers Program and TCEQ collect water quality and environmental data at almost 90 stations throughout the basin. The data is used for assessment, to monitor discharges, and to understand the dynamics of the river system.

December

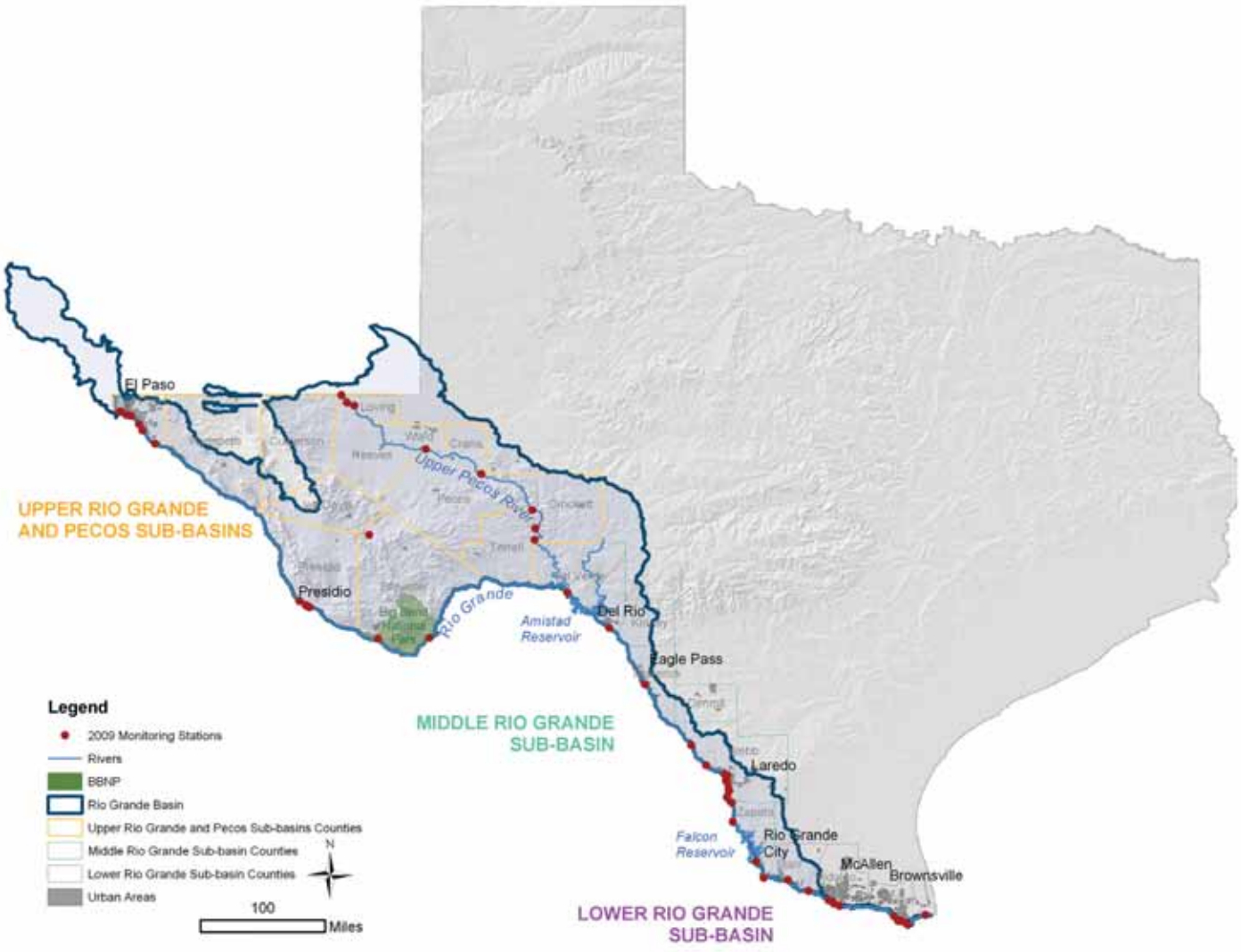
U.S. 90 Highway bridge crossing the Pecos River upstream from the confluence of the Rio Grande and the Pecos.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	With the coordination of federal, state, and local agencies and organizations in both countries of the Rio Grande Basin, as well as community participants, we can continue to study and restore the river's ecosystem in order to ensure the health of the Rio Grande and live in harmony with the river environment.		1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day
26	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve	1

Did You Know?

The Lower Rio Grande Valley in South Texas is home to endangered cats, the jaguarundi and the ocelot. The jaguarundi has no spots and is not much larger than a domestic cat, and the ocelot is slightly larger with spots. Both cats are nocturnal animals threatened by urbanization and illegal fur trading, and the animals are federally protected under the Endangered Species Act and wildlife corridors along the Rio Grande. *Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service*

Photo by: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/ Tom Smylie



This document was prepared in cooperation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).
The preparation of this report was financed through grants from the TCEQ.

The Texas Clean Rivers Program (CRP) is a state fee–funded program for water quality monitoring, assessment, and public outreach. The CRP is a collaboration of 15 partner agencies and the TCEQ. The CRP provides the opportunity to approach water quality issues within a watershed or river basin locally and regionally through coordinated efforts among diverse organizations.

The International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC), one of the 15 partner agencies with CRP, administers the CRP for the Rio Grande Basin. IBWC, a binational agency with U.S. and Mexican Sections, is responsible for fulfilling the obligations of various treaties between the U.S. and Mexico.

For more information, visit our website at www.ibwc.gov/CRP/index.htm or contact:

Elizabeth Verdecchia,
Texas Clean Rivers Program
Rio Grande Basin
International Boundary and
Water Commission
4171 N Mesa C-100
El Paso, TX 79902-1441

Phone: 915.832.4701
Fax: 915.832.4166

TCEQ Texas Water Data website can be accessed at www.texaswaterdata.org.

Design: Jackie Corpus