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Trump EPA Announces Additional Construction Timeline Reductions for Infrastructure Projects Aimed at Cleaning Up the Tijuana River Valley

Roughly 12 Years of Construction Has Now Been Slashed Across All U.S.- side and Mexico-side Projects Since Historic July MOU to Permanently End the Tijuana River Sewage Crisis

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WASHINGTON – Today, upon completion of a 100-day review of all existing Minute 328 infrastructure projects, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is announcing an additional nine months have been slashed from construction timelines for projects aimed at mitigating the impacts of raw sewage flowing across the Southern border from Mexico into the United States. This 100-day review was completed by a binational working group established in the historic July Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin and Mexico's Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) Alicia Bárcena Ibarra in Mexico City, Mexico. In addition to the nine-month reduction, this review also found that every project is on track to meet previously negotiated deadlines which were accelerated in the MOU, affirming that progress continues to be made across the board.

Since signing the MOU in July, the Trump Administration and its Mexican partners have been able to slash roughly 12 years of construction time across all projects.

Section 5 of the MOU required both nations to evaluate and pressure-test all project schedules to ensure completion on the shortest possible timelines. The binational working group, consisting of leaders from EPA, the U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC), and Mexican counterparts cut:

- Six months off work being done on the Tijuana River Gates to replace over 23,000 feet of deteriorating concrete wastewater pipes that are currently leaking untreated sewage directly into the Alamar and Tijuana Rivers; and
- Three months off the rehabilitation schedule of Pump Station 1 (PB-1) to provide critical backup pumping capacity and redundancy to prevent future sewage spills into the Tijuana River when primary pumps fail.

Minute 328 was a binational agreement signed between the U.S. and Mexico by the IBWC International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) in 2022. The Minute did not go far enough to achieve the 100% solution San Diego area residents so desperately demand. Cutting time off existing Minute 328 projects was one of the Trump EPA's primary goals with this summer's MOU.

“The Trump Administration is doing everything in its power to urgently and permanently deliver the 100% solution to the Tijuana River Sewage Crisis that the residents of Southern California have demanded for decades,” said EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin. “Reducing timelines for existing infrastructure projects is a sign of great progress and demonstrates how both the United States and Mexico are faithfully upholding their agreed-upon responsibilities from July’s MOU. Through intensive collaboration, we were able to cut through red tape, identify efficiencies, and overcome bureaucratic hurdles. While substantial construction work lies ahead, this represents a crucial step in our commitment to protect American communities from cross-border pollution.”

“U.S. IBWC is proud to be part of President Trump and Administrator Zeldin’s team implementing a 100% solution to permanently eliminate American exposure to Mexican sewage from the Tijuana River. We are protecting Americans’ health and welfare along the southern border,” said U.S. IBWC Commissioner Chad McIntosh.

The Trump Administration will continue looking for ways to cut red tape wherever possible to more quickly bring much-needed relief to the millions of Americans afflicted by this crisis.

“For decades, a toxic tide has been flowing across the border and into the waters where our Navy SEALs train, dating back to my own time as a SEAL, causing serious health issues for our troops and harming our national security. Thanks to President Trump and Administrator Zeldin’s strong leadership, Mexico is stepping up and working with America to finally put a stop to this toxic tide. This is a huge win for our warfighters and our nation that the Trump Administration is delivering at a historic pace,” said Senator Tim Sheehy (R-MT).

“For decades, the San Diego region has been plagued by a Tijuana sewage crisis that Mexico failed to address and too many on the American side of the border failed to fix. From day one, Administrator Zeldin and his team rejected the stale status quo and turned decades of apathy into decisive action. This project is going forward as never before, and today’s news is further proof that the Trump Administration doesn’t just promise results – its leaders like Lee Zeldin deliver them,” said Congressman Darrell Issa (R-CA-48).

“For too long, the Tijuana River crisis has plagued our region with pollution and red tape. It’s been a welcome sight to see this administration and the EPA, under Administrator Zeldin’s leadership, finally tackle this issue head-on. By cutting through bureaucracy and expediting construction, they’ve delivered real progress that will bring cleaner water, healthier communities, and long-overdue relief to the people of San Diego County,” said San Diego County Supervisor Jim Desmond.

“As Mayor of Coronado, a city that is greatly impacted by the millions of gallons of Tijuana Sewage flowing across our border on a daily basis, I cannot overstate my gratitude for the focus of the current Administration on expediting expansion of treatment on both sides of the border. I look forward to additional steps to be announced in the near future to ensure this decades long disaster is permanently solved. I particularly want to thank, on behalf of all Coronado residents, including our Navy Seals who train in the contaminated waters, EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin and IBWC Commissioner Chad McIntosh for their extraordinary focus, efforts and leadership to expedite the construction and document resolution with Mexico,” said Mayor of Coronado John Duncan.

The MOU established a framework for permanent resolution through three critical priorities:

1. **Securing Mexico's Financial Commitments**
2. **Accelerating Project Timelines**
3. **Adding Other Necessary Projects that Factor in Future Population Growth in the Tijuana River Valley**

Administrator Zeldin made it clear when he signed this agreement that the only way to achieve this desired end goal is to have a plan that takes into account all three of these key pillars. Sacrificing one of them would mean the “100%” solution would not be reached.

Since signing this MOU in July, the Trump Administration has made historic progress on implementing the agreement. In August, EPA and IBWC announced the completion of a 10 million gallon per day (mgd) expansion of the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (SBIWTP), which will significantly reduce wastewater flowing into the Tijuana River and help eliminate foul smells that have long plagued San Diego area residents. This project was initially projected to take two years, but the Trump Administration completed it in 100 days.

The Trump Administration is also planning on further increasing SBIWTP's treatment capacity to 50 mgd or more by December 31, 2027, as outlined in the MOU. This target date is roughly 3.5 years ahead of its previously scheduled completion date.

Next steps in implementing the MOU include releasing a joint public update and signing a new treaty “Minute” by the end of 2025. Minute negotiations are ongoing and progressing since the July MOU signing.

Please see the full [Memorandum of Understanding](#) for more information.

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