



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
August 12, 2026

LOCATION CHNAGED: USIBWC, EPA to hold New River Roundtable on August 18

(Please note the location of the meeting has been changed. The new location is below)

The U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will hold an in-person and virtual meeting on Tuesday, August 18, 2026, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. PDT.

USIBWC, EPA, and local officials will provide updates on the status of New River improvements, agency collaboration, and the water sampling study.

The meeting will be held in person at:

NEW LOCATION
City of Calexico
Fernando “Nene” Torres Council Chambers
608 Heber Ave
Calexico, CA 92231

The meeting will also be held virtually. [Click here to join the meeting](#). If possible, it may be helpful for you to test connectivity on your own prior to the meeting by clicking on the “Join” link and ensuring your camera and microphone are functioning. Or join by phone: +1 915-320-4718,,815483226# Phone conference ID: 815 483 226#

If you would like to speak during the comment period, please sign up ahead of time by contacting Frankie Pinon at frankie.pinon@ibwc.gov or 915-832-4716 by noon on August 14, 2026.

Media Contact :

Frankie Pinon

Email: frankie.pinon@ibwc.gov

Phone: 915-832-4716

The mission of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission is to protect Americans from exposure to Mexican sewage, ensure fair allocations of water from the Colorado and Rio Grande Rivers, efficiently and effectively maintain and operate critical flood infrastructure, and reduce border flood hazards.

USIBWC NEW RIVER ROUNDTABLE

Tuesday, August 18, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. PDT

NEW LOCATION

City of Calexico

Fernando “Nene” Torres Council Chambers

608 Heber Ave

Calexico, CA 92231

And Via Teams

Agenda

- **Welcome and Introductions** – Chad McIntosh, USIBWC Commissioner; Mike Martucci, EPA Region 9 Regional Administrator
- **Key Stakeholder Remarks**
- **IBWC & EPA presentations**
- **Comment**

For more information call 915-832-4716 or email frankie.pinon@ibwc.gov

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device: [Click here to join the meeting.](#)

Meeting ID: 286 226 530 844 340

Passcode: i9X7VK9o

[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

Or call in (audio only)

+1 915-320-4718,,815483226#

Phone conference ID: 815 483 226#

VIDEO RECORDING:

www.youtube.com

Title:

“August 18, 2026 - New River Roundtable in Calexico, CA”

Link to Video:

<https://youtu.be/OSHhrmvarB4?si=KqNGvxObcSQ9R0o7>



New River at the International Boundary

August 18, 2026

Robert Cardenas, Yuma AAOM
Wayne Belzer, Environmental Engineer



INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION UNITED STATES SECTION

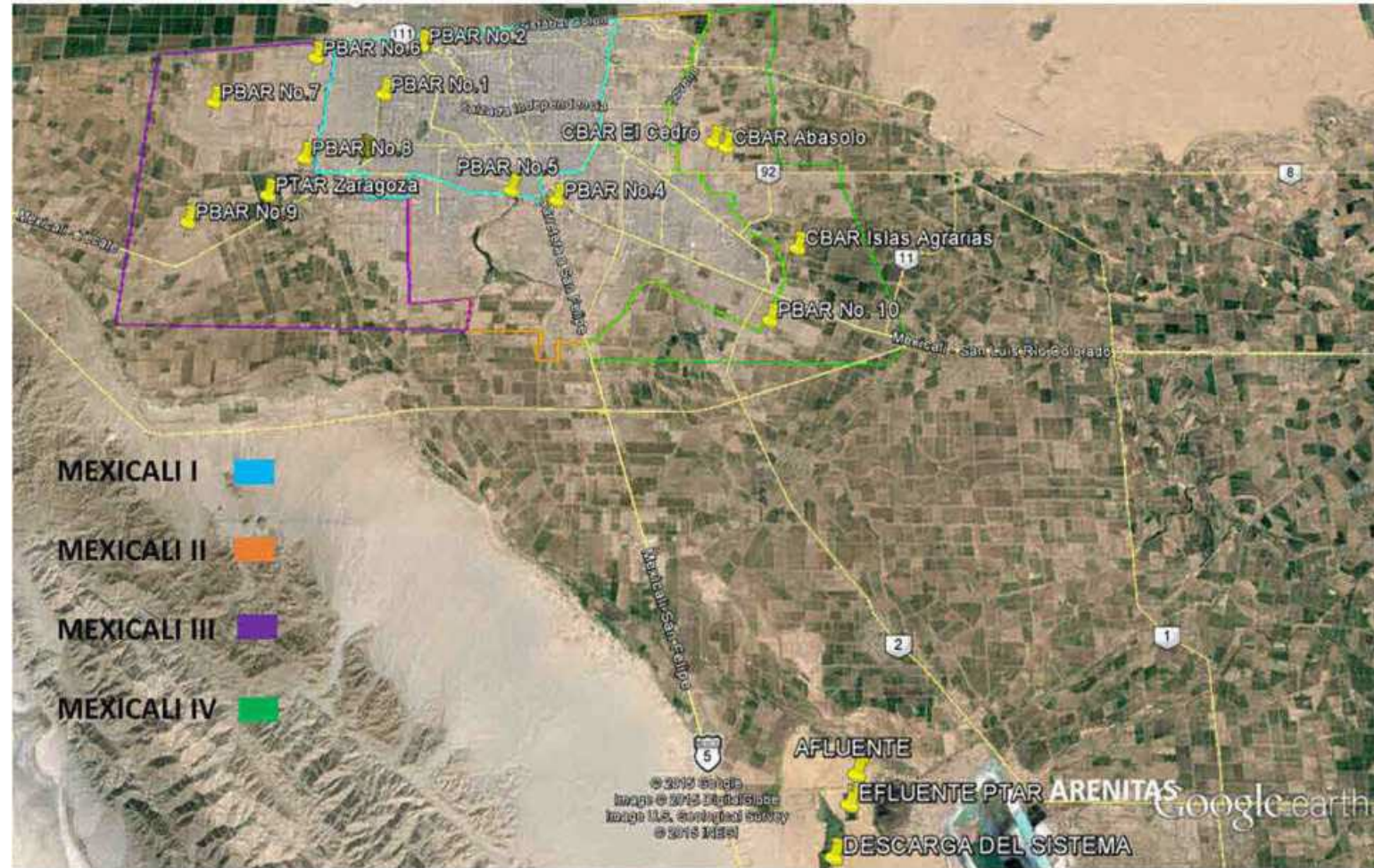
- Originates 20 river miles south of the City of Mexicali, BC
- After crossing the border, travels 65 river miles northward through Calexico and the Imperial Valley of California before emptying into the Salton Sea.
- Carries urban runoff, untreated and partially treated municipal wastes, untreated and partially treated industrial wastes, and agricultural runoff from the Mexicali Valley into the United States.
- Up until 2007, when the Las Arenitas WWTP became operational, New River water quality was most severely impacted by untreated wastewater flows from the City of Mexicali, Baja California. Approximately 15-30 million gallons per day (mgd) (675 liters per second (lps)) of untreated wastewater from the City of Mexicali flowed into the New River.
- The untreated wastewater, which made up about 10% of the New River flow at the U.S.-Mexico border, posed serious public health and environmental threats both in Mexico and in the U.S



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The City of Mexicali Sanitation is divided into four areas for sewage services:

- ❖ Mexicali I and Mexicali III discharge into Zaragoza WWTP, is then treated in the lagoons, and put back into the New River at the boundary and eventually into the Salton Sea.
- ❖ Mexicali II and Mexicali IV discharge into Las Arenitas WWTP (+/-18 miles south of border). Effluent continues south into a drain tributary of the Rio Hardy. These discharges do not come back into the U.S.





IBWC Minutes related to

the sanitation along the international boundary at Mexicali and the New River

- **Minute 261** Recommendations for the solution to the border sanitation problems - October 2, 1979
 - Provided definition and reiteration on the 1944 treaty for the preferential treatment of border sanitation.
- **Minute 264** Recommendations for solution of the New River border sanitation problem at Calexico, California/Mexicali, Baja Norte. - December 4, 1980
 - Established a water quality goal for the New River
 - Measures to improve infrastructure for treatment of industrial and domestic wastewater in Mexico
- **Minute 274** Joint Project for Improvement of the Quality of the Waters of the New River at Calexico, California/Mexicali, Baja California - May 13, 1987
 - Provided for a jointly funded project of \$1.2 million
 - New pumping plants
 - Standby pumps for 2 of the pumping plants
 - Sewer cleaning equipment



IBWC Minutes related to
the sanitation along the international boundary at Mexicali and the New River

- **Minute 288** Conceptual Plan for the Long Term Solution to the Border Sanitation Problem of the New River at Calexico, California - Mexicali, Baja California - November 24, 1992
 - Quick Fixes
 - Mexicali I
 - Rehabilitation, replacement, and installation of sewer lines for this zone
 - Acquisition of sewer maintenance equipment
 - Control of untreated discharges into the New River
 - Expansion of Zaragoza WWTP
 - Mexicali II
 - Rehabilitation, replacement, and installation of sewer lines for this zone
 - Acquisition of sewer maintenance equipment
 - Elimination of untreated discharges in the Alamo River
 - Construction of a new treatment plant (Las Arenitas)



Minute 294 establishes IBWC Mexicali Binational Technical Committee

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UNITED STATES SECTION

- BTC's held every two months
 - Discuss sanitation issues
 - Field surveys of discharge points
 - Updates on water quality monitoring program
 - Provided sites for improvements in pretreatment, identifying non-compliant discharges
 - Infrastructure status (issues, planned projects, repairs etc.)
- Agencies that participate in the BTC:
 - IBWC Chairs, US and Mexico
 - USEPA & CalEPA
 - California Regional Water Quality Control Board- Colorado River Basin
 - Imperial County & City of Calexico
 - Imperial Irrigation District
 - NADBank
 - National Water Commission, Mexico
 - Baja California Water Commission
 - Secretariat of Infrastructure and Urban Development, BC
 - Secretariat of Protection of the Environment, BC



New River Notification Protocol

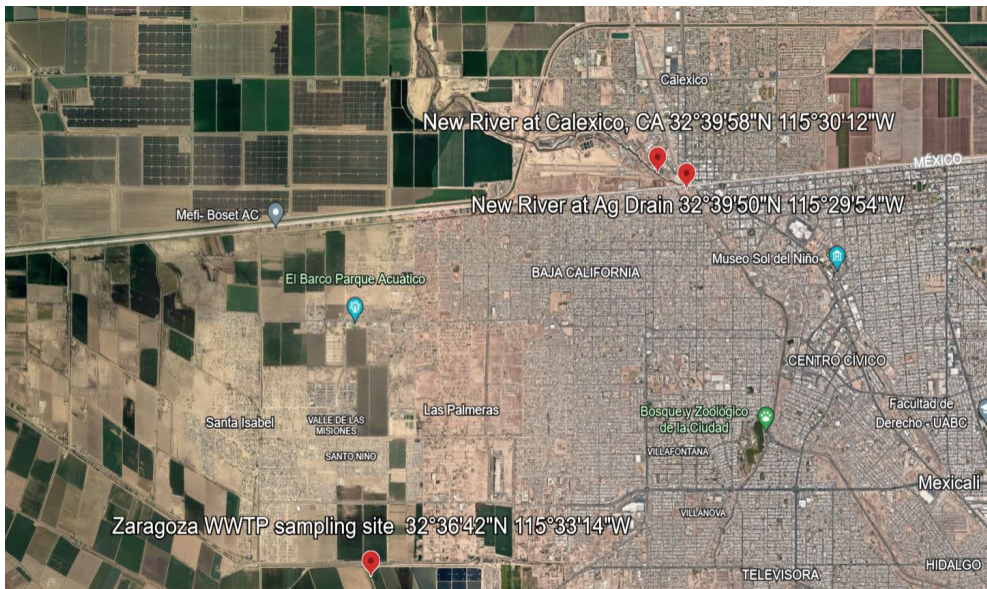
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- A formal notification protocol was finalized in 2023.
- Under the notification protocol, CESPM notifies the Mexican Section of any issue/incident.
- The information provided is then relayed to USIBWC via email. Upon receiving the notification, USIBWC sends an email notifying Headquarters, U.S. BTC members, Imperial County and other entities.
- As updates are received, the information is relayed to everyone until the issue is resolved.
- Conversely, if the US identifies an issue, the US Section notifies the Mexican Section to investigate and report back.



Water Quality Monitoring

- Routine water quality monitoring as established per Minute 264.
- E. coli analysis added to the routine water quality monitoring in late 2022
- Water quality data for the New River is available on the USIBWC Water Quality Map Application: <https://gisportal.ibwc.gov/agsportal/home/index.html>

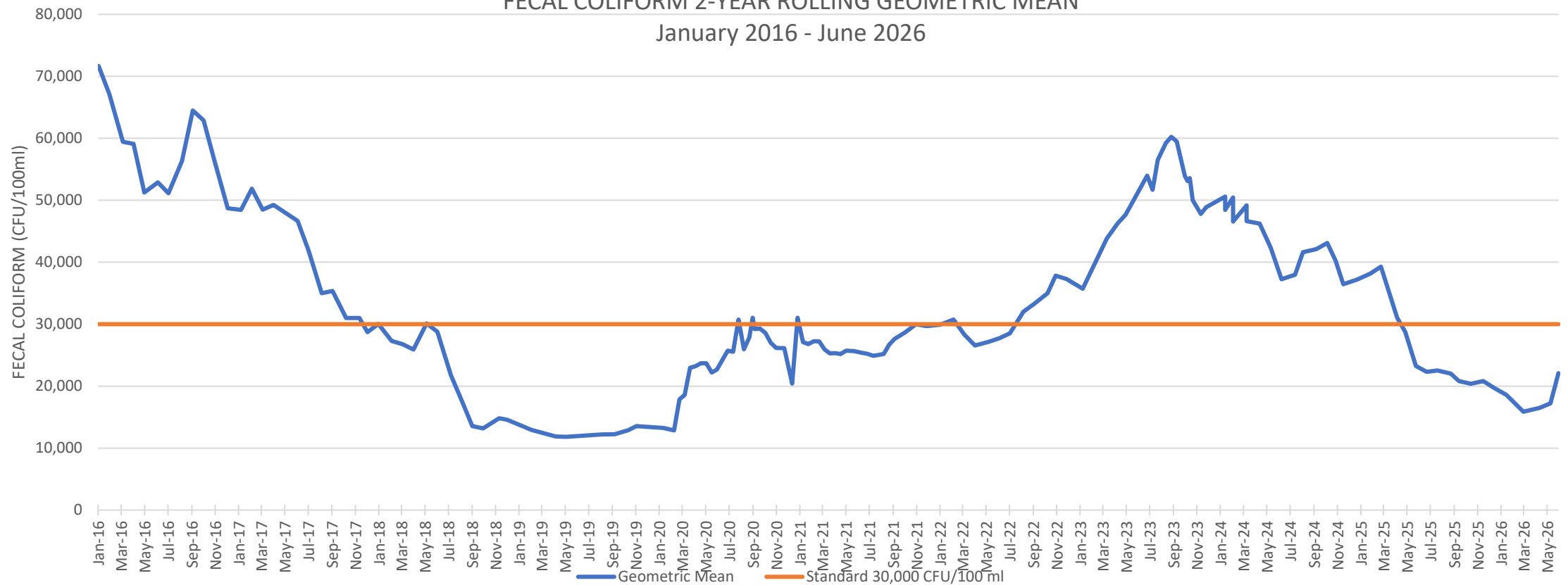


Minute 264 Quantitative Standards			
Monthly Average Values			
Sampling Location	NR @ IB	Lagoon Discharge Canal (Effluent)	Upstream of Discharge Canal (above Ag Drain)
Parameters			
BOD ₅		30 mg/l filtered	30 mg/l unfiltered
COD		70 mg/l filtered	100 mg/l unfiltered
pH	6.0 - 9.0		
DO	5.0 mg/l		
Fecal Coliform			30,000 colonies/100ml



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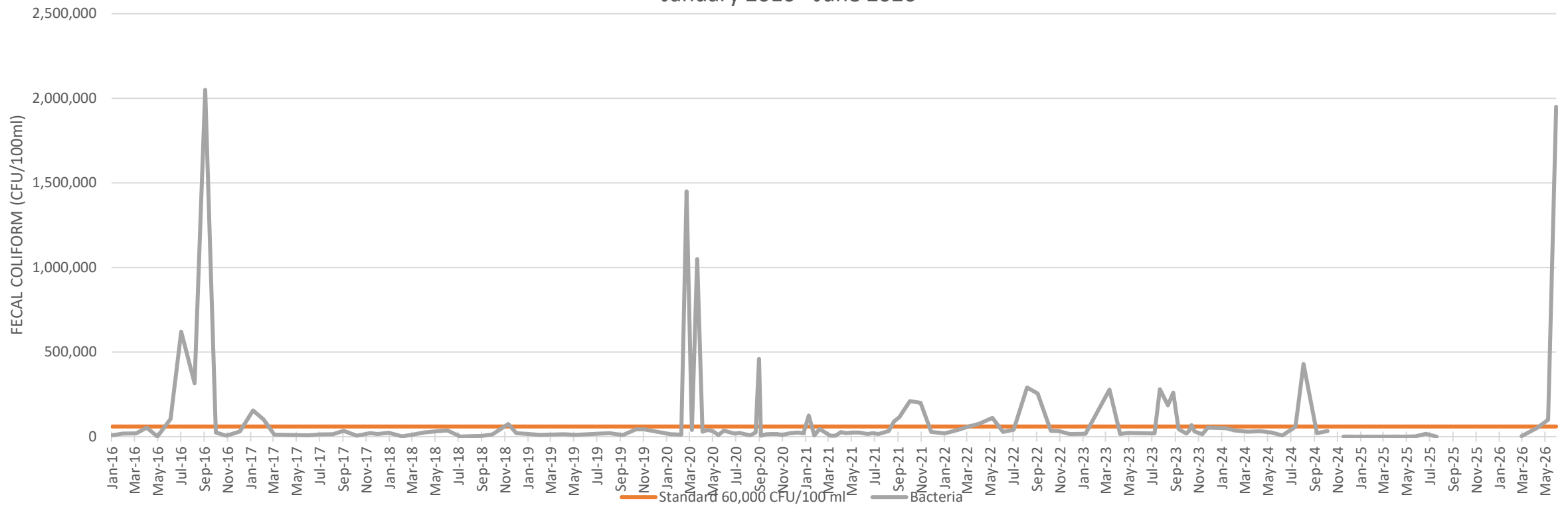
U.S. SECTION, IBWC
Water Quality Monitoring Program
IBWC Minute No. 264
NEW RIVER UPSTREAM OF DISCHARGE CANAL (ABOVE AD)
FECAL COLIFORM 2-YEAR ROLLING GEOMETRIC MEAN
January 2016 - June 2026





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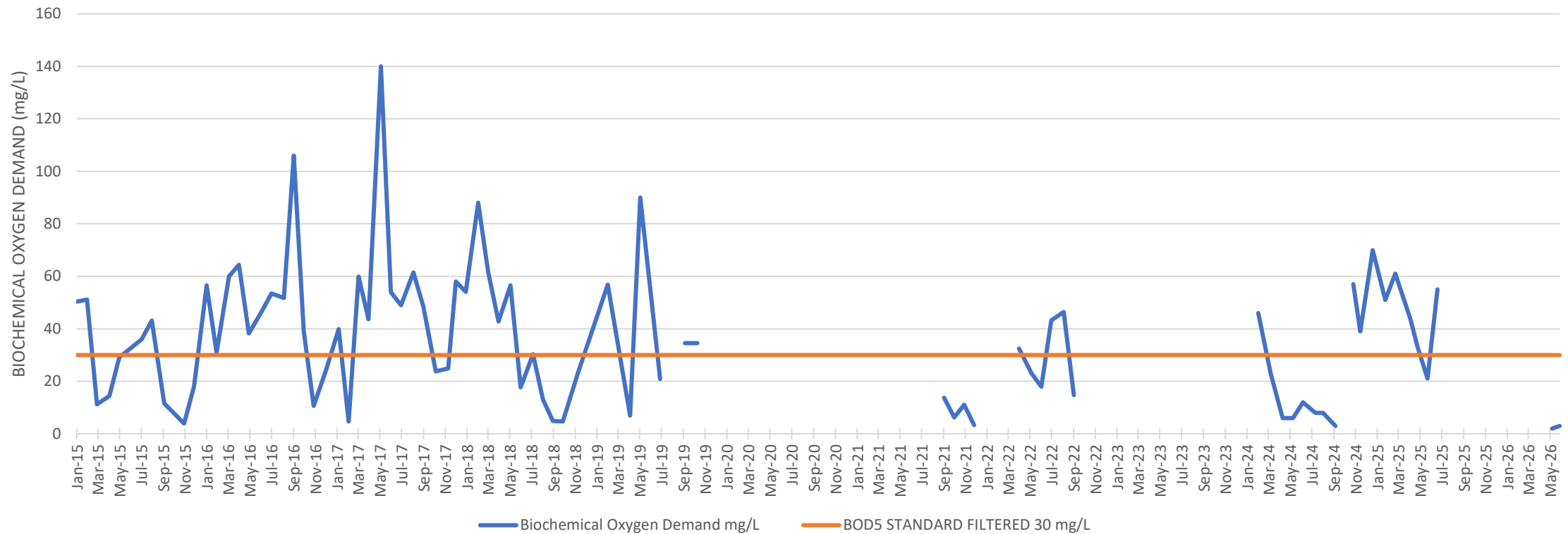
U.S. SECTION, IBWC
Water Quality Monitoring Program
IBWC Minute No. 264
NEW RIVER UPSTREAM OF DISCHARGE CANAL (ABOVE AD)
FECAL COLIFORM INSTANTANEOUS
January 2016 - June 2026





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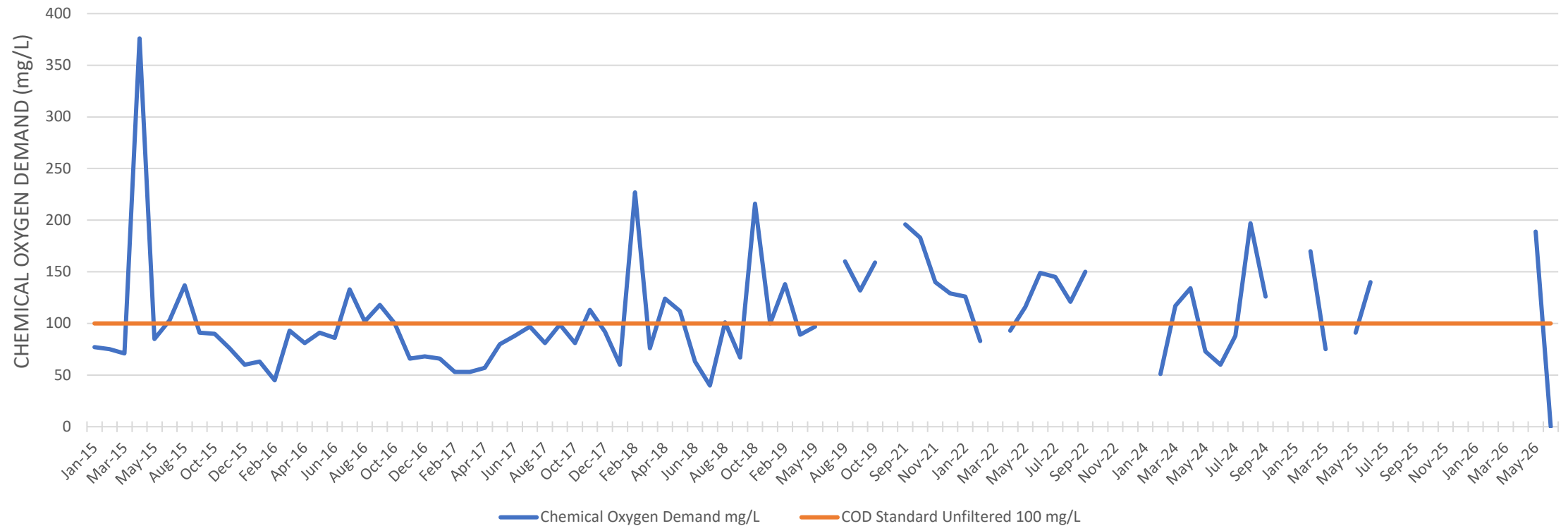
U.S. SECTION, IBWC
Water Quality Monitoring Program
IBWC Minute No. 264
NEW RIVER AT ZARAGOZA EFFLUENT
BIOCHEMICAL OXYGEN DEMAND
January 2015 - June 2026





INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION UNITED STATES SECTION

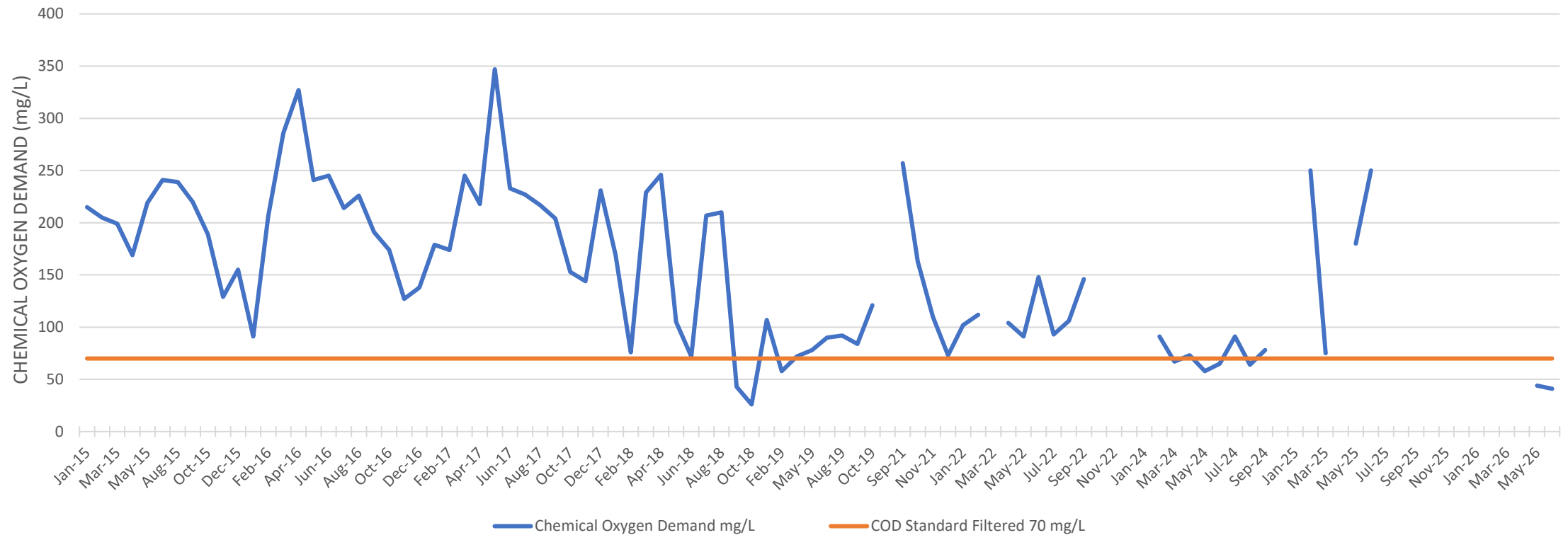
U.S. SECTION, IBWC
Water Quality Monitoring Program
IBWC Minute No. 264
NEW RIVER UPSTREAM OF DISCHARGE CANAL (Above AD)
CHEMICAL OXYGEN DEMAND
January 2015 - June 2026





INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION UNITED STATES SECTION

U.S. SECTION, IBWC Water Quality Monitoring Program IBWC Minute No. 264 NEW RIVER AT ZARAGOZA EFFLUENT CHEMICAL OXYGEN DEMAND January 2015 - June 2026





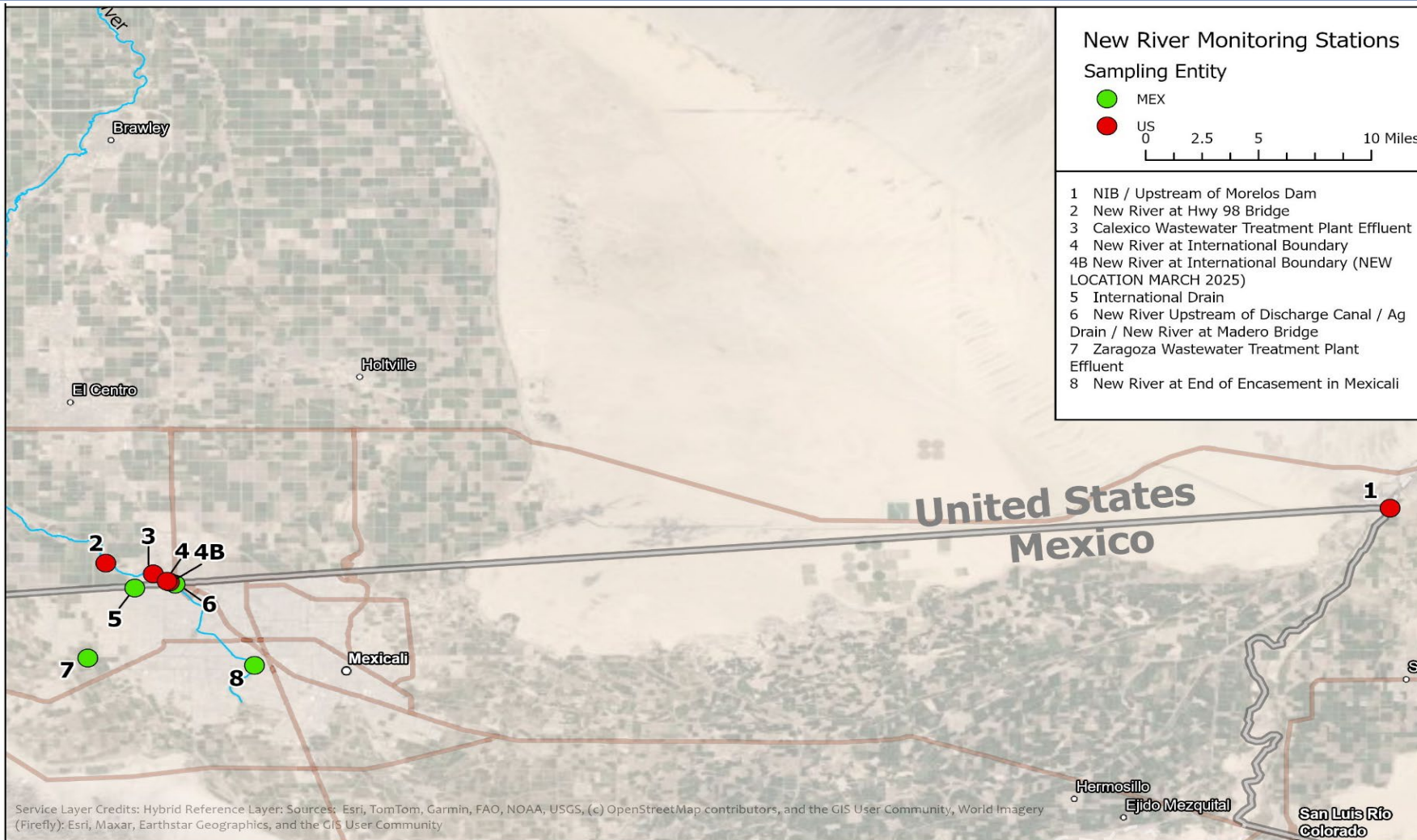
Binational Water Quality Monitoring Study

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- Binational toxic substances study done in 1996
- Wastewater Characterization study done in 2003
- Finalizing 2026 comprehensive binational study to assess the New River water quality.
 - Binational study
 - Multiple agency collaboration from both countries
 - Sampling sites in Mexico and the US
 - Metals, semi volatile organics, nutrients, bacteria
 - One year study with seasonal collections

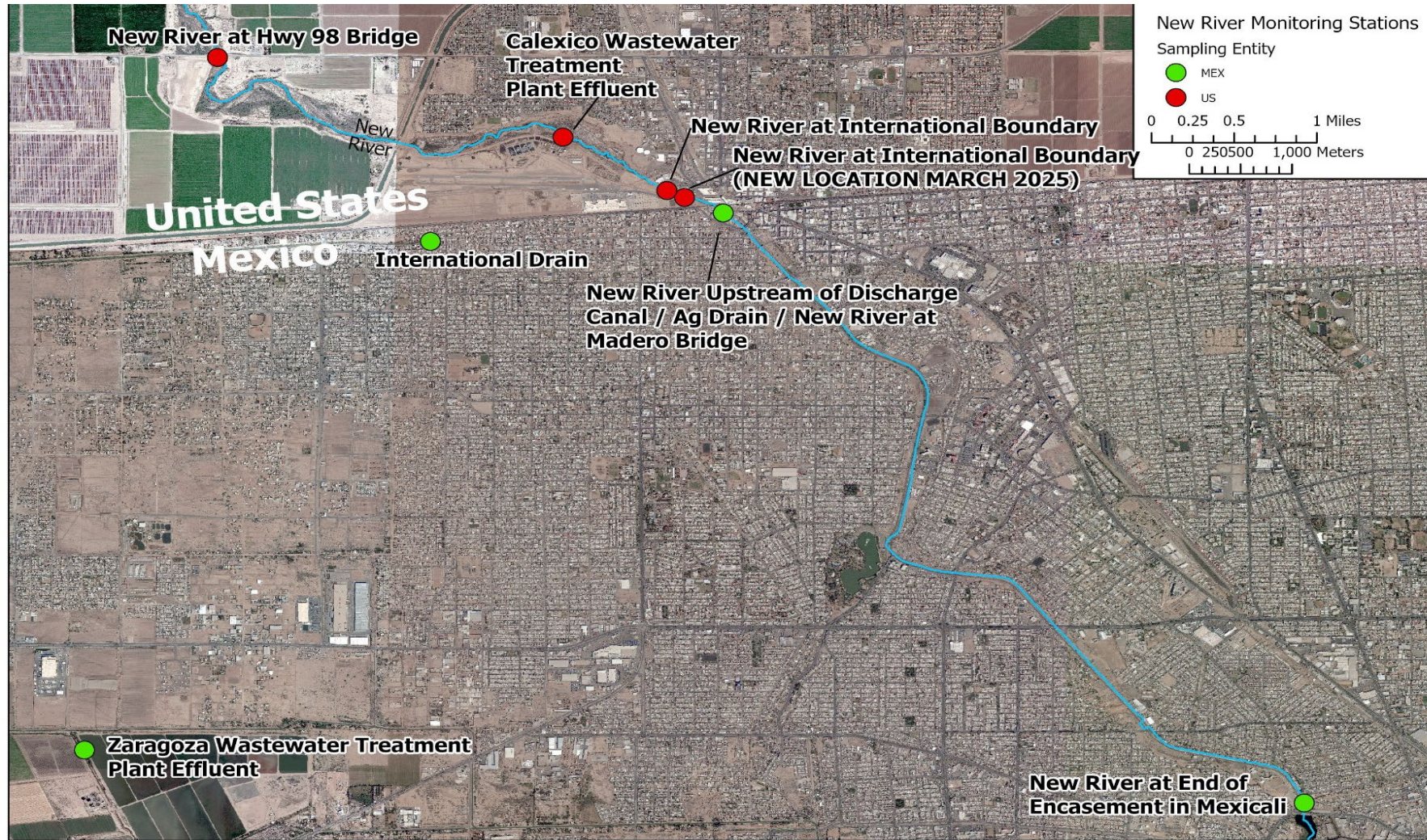


INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION UNITED STATES SECTION





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Binational Water Quality Monitoring Study

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- Data was compared where applicable to US or Mexican water quality standards or objectives
- Draft report is currently with CILA for review
- Final report will be shared with public and posted on IBWC websites
- Mexican wastewater treatment effluent standards require the treatment plants in Mexico to perform upgrades to improve water quality, which will address some of the bacteria and nutrient issues identified in the report
- Preliminary results show impacts from agricultural (salinity and pesticides) and industrial discharges (metals and organics) as well
- Final report will be used to evaluate potential future solutions on both sides of the border and potential minutes to the treaty



THANK YOU!





EPA's role in Wastewater Infrastructure in Mexicali to Address Transboundary Pollution

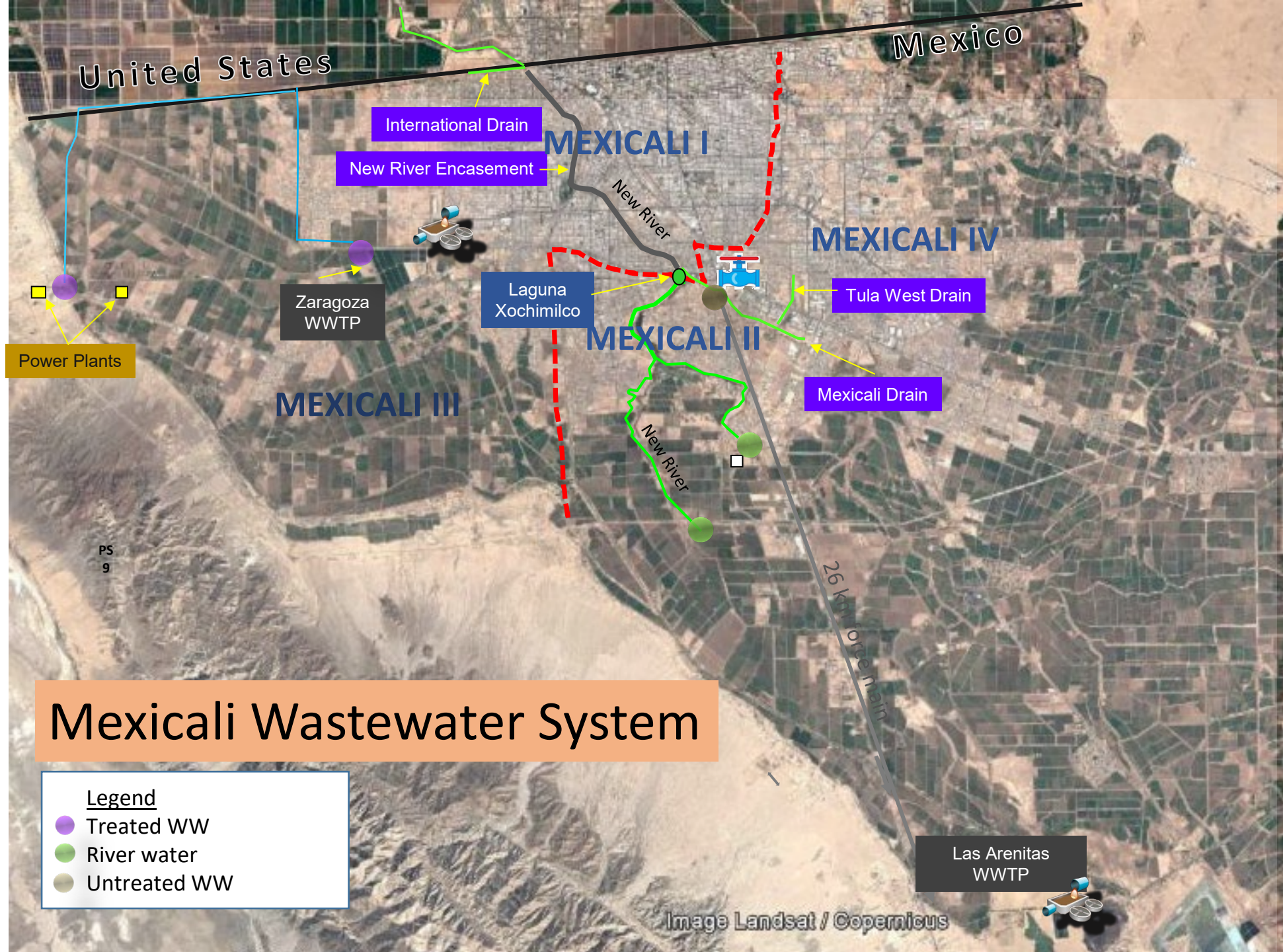
Region 9
Water Division

Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP)



EPA's U.S.-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP) funds the planning, design, and construction of high priority water and wastewater infrastructure projects along the U.S.- Mexico border.

- Requires 100% funding match by Mexico
- Mexico-side projects must benefit the U.S.
- Funding managed by NADBank
- Big lever to influence Mexico's investment along the border
- Since 2021, the BWIP has received between 30-36M in annual appropriations which has been split evenly between R6 and R9



Investments in Mexicali Infrastructure

EPA has invested roughly \$44M USD across
7 infrastructure projects.

<u>Project</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>EPA Funding</u>	<u>Mexico Funding</u>
Las Arenitas WWTP Construction	Completed (2007)	\$10.1M	\$16.5M
Mexicali Sanitation Program	Completed (2007)	\$20.6M	\$34.4M
Rehabilitation of the Wastewater Collection System in Colonias Loma Linda y Esperanza	Completed (2018)	\$587,000	\$478,000
Rehabilitation of Small Lift Stations	Completed (2024)	\$2.7M	\$2.98M
Lift Station Construction and Rehabilitations (PB2, PB4, & PB5)	Completed (2025)	\$4.3M	\$4.4M
Sewage main collector construction and lift station rehabilitation	Completed (2025)	\$2.3M	\$2.54M
Lift Station Forcemains Rehabilitation	In Construction	\$3.4M	\$3.4M
Las Arenitas WWTP Expansion	In Development	TBD	TBD
	TOTAL	\$44M	\$65M



Emergency pump



Inflatable plug

Mexicali Las Arenitas WWTP Expansion

Sponsor:	CESPM
Estimated Cost:	US\$ 50 M
EPA Funding:	TBD
Funding Partners:	TBD
Expected Results:	Protect the New River from raw sewage spills by upgrading the treatment plant to handle more wastewater and safely redirect the flow.

