



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

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CONTRACT AWARDED FOR VEGETATION REMOVAL AND RESTORATION OF THE ARROYO COLORADO IN HARLINGEN, TEXAS

[The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission \(USIBWC\)](#) awarded a contract for removal and restoration of vegetation in the Arroyo Colorado to Swift Operating Partners, LLC, of Boulder, Colorado. The project will begin by spring and is expected to be completed within a year.

Work under this \$1.2 million contract will address vegetation maintenance required over a 6.3-mile segment between Business 77 to Cemetery Road in Harlingen and Cameron County, Texas. The project consists of removing problem vegetation along the arroyo overbanks and replacing it with native vegetation to restore the riparian corridor.

Over time, increases in vegetation and sediment caused the Arroyo Colorado to lose more than 50 percent of its capacity to carry floodwaters, which increases flood risk. In recent years, removal of vegetation and sediment has restored some of the Arroyo Colorado's flood conveyance capacity. USIBWC has considered a range of alternatives to restore the Arroyo Colorado's flood conveyance capacity. Vegetation management, together with sediment dredging, are required to restore the full flood conveyance capacity to the Arroyo Colorado in this area. The USIBWC will advertise for a separate dredging contract in the future.

"We can't prevent natural disasters, but we can prepare for them," said Senator John Cornyn. "I'm pleased to help deliver the funding needed to restore the Arroyo Colorado's native vegetation and with it, peace of mind for residents of the Rio Grande Valley that their community will be safer from unwanted flooding."

Congressman Filemon Vela also welcomed the awarding of the contract. "For several years, we have been working with IBWC on a strategy to return the Arroyo Colorado to its original design capacity and decrease the threat of flooding to the residents of Harlingen and surrounding communities," Congressman Vela said. "I appreciated IBWC's initial work last year

to begin the cleanup of sediment in the Arroyo, which helps dissipate some of the flood threat, and I am pleased the IBWC is taking another important step forward today with this contract for removal of much more vegetation. I will continue to offer my full support and work with local and federal entities to ensure that this project is completed.”

USIBWC oversees the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project (LRGFCP), which controls floodwater in the Lower Rio Grande and interior floodways in the tri-county region (Hidalgo, Cameron, and Willacy Counties). During river flooding, Anzalduas Dam south of Mission, Texas is used to divert floodwater from the Rio Grande into the interior floodway system to control flooding along the river. A portion of this water eventually flows into the Arroyo Colorado, a natural channel confined by high banks in most areas. The USIBWC maintains the LRGFCP and its levee systems and removes obstructions from the floodways to maintain conveyance capacity.

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