



International Boundary and Water Commission United States and Mexico

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US AND MEXICO AGREE TO INVEST \$474 MILLION DOLLARS TO ADDRESS TIJUANA RIVER SEWAGE PROBLEM

The International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico (IBWC), today held a ceremony to announce that IBWC Minute No. 328, “Sanitation Infrastructure Projects in San Diego, California – Tijuana, Baja California for Immediate Implementation and for Future Development,” has entered into force. The agreement outlines sanitation projects to be constructed in San Diego and Tijuana using \$330 million dollars from the U.S. government and \$144 million dollars from the Mexican government. With this funding, projects are expected to be completed and operational by the end of 2027 that would result in a 50% reduction in the number of days of transboundary wastewater flow in the Tijuana River and an 80% reduction in the volume of untreated wastewater discharged to the Pacific Ocean six miles (10 kilometers) south of the border.

U.S. Commissioner Maria-Elena Giner and Mexican Commissioner Adriana Resendez announced the Minute’s entry into force at a ceremony at the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve in Imperial Beach, California. They were joined by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Office of Water Bruno Pigott, EPA Pacific Southwest Regional Administrator Martha Guzman, and Director of Engineering and Binational Water Issues for Mexico’s National Water Commission (CONAGUA) Jose Gutierrez, who marked the signing of a Statement of Intent between their two agencies to advance priority wastewater projects in the San Diego-Tijuana Region.

The Minute highlights a list of projects for implementation, including doubling the capacity of the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (SBIWTP) in the United States and constructing a new treatment plant in Mexico at San Antonio de los Buenos. With these two projects, the amount of Mexican sewage undergoing treatment in the region will increase by 43 million gallons per day (2,991 liters per second), reducing sewage in both the Tijuana River and the Pacific Ocean.

Other projects include rehabilitation or replacement of deteriorated sewer lines and pump stations in Tijuana to reduce line breaks and pump failures that result in sewage spills.

“Minute 328 marks a key milestone in our effort to improve conditions in the Tijuana River Valley in partnership with EPA,” said Commissioner Giner. “Their Statement of Intent coupled with this Minute will provide continuity over time. Once these projects are completed, residents on both sides of the border will have a healthier, cleaner environment for years to come.”

Mexican Commissioner Adriana Resendez noted, “These efforts are expected to address a need that has prevailed for many years in the communities of San Diego-Tijuana, to solve the problem of transboundary wastewater that impacts the water quality of the region’s beaches and that also constitutes a threat to the public health of residents in the area.” She emphasized the IBWC’s efforts over the years to address this problem in accordance with the provisions of the 1944 Water Treaty.

“We have more urgency than ever to upgrade the infrastructure needed to stop the cross-border pollution that burdens communities in the region,” said EPA Regional Administrator Guzman. “Today’s commitments finalize the binational agreement to fund the comprehensive set of projects that will thwart the pollution harming these communities and Tijuana River Valley ecosystems.”

CONAGUA’s Director of Engineering and Binational Water Issues, Jose Gutierrez, expressed that these efforts reflect the Government of Mexico’s interest in addressing problems that have afflicted the region for many years, such as sanitation and comprehensive water management in the Tijuana River Basin. “These projects will undoubtedly improve the quality of life of residents on both sides of the border.” He added that they will also contribute to compliance with IBWC [Minute 320](#), whose fundamental objective is to achieve binational cooperation on border issues in this important basin.

The IBWC is responsible for applying the boundary and water treaties between the two countries and settling differences that arise in the application of the treaties. The U.S. Section of the IBWC operates the SBIWTP.

For more information:

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