



**International Boundary and Water Commission
United States Section**

For immediate release
October 15, 2015

**RIO GRANDE SEDIMENT TRANSPORT AND HABITAT
RESTORATION ACTIVITIES TOPICS OF OCT. 22 PUBLIC
MEETING OF RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM**

A study of sediment transport and channel maintenance alternatives along the Rio Grande, and an update on Rio Grande habitat restoration activities will be the topics of the next public meeting of the Rio Grande Citizens Forum, an outreach program of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC). The meeting will take place from 6:30-8:30 p.m., Thursday, October 22, at the Las Cruces City Hall Council Chambers, 700 N. Main Street, Las Cruces, NM.

USIBWC Supervisory Civil Engineer Padinare Unnikrishna will discuss how USIBWC is conducting a sediment transport modeling study as part of evaluating channel maintenance alternatives (CMA) along the USIBWC's Rio Grande Canalization Project (RGCP), a 105-mile segment of the Rio Grande in Southern New Mexico and West Texas that is managed for flood control and water delivery. The CMA study is intended to build upon previously developed conceptual restoration plans and river management plans to specifically address issues associated with sedimentation along the RGCP. The study evaluates five CMAs, including alternatives that involve sediment removal and others that do not. Unnikrishna will explain how the alternatives were evaluated, taking into consideration such things as reduction in water surface elevations, reduction in sediment buildup, improved irrigation return flows, habitat restoration, and costs.

In other business, Elizabeth Verdecchia, natural resources specialist for USIBWC, will give a presentation on the progress of river habitat restoration activities. Under USIBWC's 2009 Record of Decision for the Rio Grande Canalization Project, the agency committed to restore habitat on about 550 acres and develop managed grasslands on another 2000 acres. Implementation activities have included planting thousands of trees, removing nonnative saltcedar, and establishing a mechanism to obtain water for habitat restoration.

The USIBWC established the Rio Grande Citizens Forum in 1999 to facilitate the exchange of information regarding USIBWC activities on the Rio Grande between Percha Dam, New Mexico and Fort Quitman, Texas. It is designed to bring together community members, enabling the early and continued two-way flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between USIBWC and the general public, environmentalists, irrigation districts, municipalities, and others interested in the river. A complete meeting agenda follows.

For more information:

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RIO GRANDE CITIZENS FORUM
Thursday, October 22, 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.
Las Cruces City Hall
Council Chambers
700 North Main Street*
Las Cruces, NM 88001-3512

- Welcome and Introductions – Carlos Peña, Citizens Forum Co-Chair, USIBWC

- **Update on the Sediment Transport and Channel Maintenance Alternatives (CMA) Study along the Rio Grande Canalization Project (RGCP):**
Padinare Unnikrishna, supervisory civil engineer for USIBWC, will discuss the CMA study and how it is intended to build upon previously developed conceptual restoration plans and river management plans to specifically address issues associated with sedimentation along the RGCP.

- **Update on Rio Grande Habitat Restoration Activities:**
Elizabeth Verdecchia, natural resources specialist for USIBWC, will give a presentation on the progress of the river habitat restoration activities under USIBWC's 2009 Record of Decision for the Rio Grande Canalization Project.

- Public Comment

- Board Discussion

- Suggested Future Agenda Items

***Directions:** From El Paso, take I-10 west. Take exit 142 Valley Drive. Keep left at the fork in the ramp and continue onto Valley Drive. Travel about ¼ of a mile and veer right onto Main Street. Continue on Main about 2.4 miles to City Hall.

If you have a disability that you wish to self-identify confidentially that requires accommodation, please advise us ahead of time. For more information, call 915-832-4794 or e-mail mario.montes@ibwc.gov.