



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
July 19, 2023

USIBWC HOSTS SECOND ANNUAL WATER PROGRAM IN SOUTH TEXAS

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico (USIBWC) hosted a meeting in Weslaco, Texas, on July 19, 2023, to offer farmers, ranchers, and rural communities' information about federal and state water programs.

USIBWC Commissioner Dr. Maria-Elena Giner welcomed invited guests representing agriculture and municipal water interests at the Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center Auditorium in Weslaco, the same location where the agency hosted a similar conference last summer.

She was joined by U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Deputy Commissioner of Operations David Palumbo; Gloria Montañó Greene, U.S. Department of Agriculture Deputy Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation; and representatives from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and Texas Water Development Board.

"After the success of last year's stakeholders meeting, I wanted to return with our federal and state partners to review how the Valley's irrigation districts are coping with the water supply challenges they told me about, and how we can continue to help," Commissioner Giner said.

USDA currently offers a suite of programs to help agricultural producers recover from losses to drought as well as build resilience to future climate challenges. This includes disaster assistance, loans, risk management, and conservation programs. Looking ahead, USDA will continue to serve as a leader on using the best science, research, and conservation tools to support producers

in building resiliency across their operations and mitigating the impacts of drought, floods, wildfire, and other climate-related disaster events while ensuring the Department is doing its part to support clean air, water, and communities. USDA's farmers.gov website offers important disaster protection and recovery resources including the Disaster Discovery Tool and a drought-specific webpage.

“In the West, water is paramount, and USDA is working with agricultural producers to build resilience to drought as well as recover after the impacts of drought,” said USDA Deputy Under Secretary Montaña Greene. “Drought is extremely complex, and partnerships and efforts like this one are critically important as we leverage resources and best practices to help mitigate the impacts of droughts on agricultural lands. For any producers impacted by drought, we encourage them to connect with their local USDA Service Center to learn about our programs that can help them recover and prepare for the future.”

The Bureau of Reclamation works cooperatively with states, tribes, and local entities to plan for and implement actions to increase water supply through investments to modernize existing infrastructure and avoid potential water conflicts. Through programs like WaterSMART, Reclamation offers assistance to irrigation and water districts, tribes, states and other entities with projects that build long-term resiliency to drought and conserve and use water more efficiently. Through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, Reclamation is maximizing the benefit of these programs in the Rio Grande and across the West. For more information on all of these activities, please visit the WaterSMART, BIL and IRA web pages linked directly from www.usbr.gov.

"The Rio Grande Basin provides critical economic and ecosystem benefits to large areas in the United States and Mexico. Our partnership with the IBWC and our local, state, and NGO partners continues to be a high priority for Reclamation and the Department of the Interior. Stakeholder meetings like this one present an excellent opportunity for people representing diverse interests to come together with a common goal of working collaboratively to address the water resource needs of the Rio Grande," Deputy Commissioner Palumbo said.

The International Boundary and Water Commission is responsible for applying the boundary and water treaties between the United States and Mexico and settling differences that may arise in the application of the treaties. Along the Rio Grande, the Commission operates Amistad and Falcon Dams, which store water for both countries, as well as the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project.

For more information:

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