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News Flash

Latest news and bulletin updates

Office of Public
Affairs

TEMPO HIGH AS USIBWC PUSHES FOR RIO GRANDE DELIVERIES

The U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission is going all out to bring “reliability and predictability” to Rio Grande water deliveries.

For the past several months, Commissioner Dr. Maria-Elena Giner and her team have been holding high-level binational negotiations and soliciting feedback from a variety of stakeholders.

Three groups (Rio Grande Policy Work Group, Rio Grande Minute Team, and Rio Grande Hydrology Work Group) have been formed to work on this issue through the creation of policy guided by science. All this is aimed at one result that will have positive implications for U.S. water users: the signing of a new Minute in December.

The Minute is likely to provide Mexico with new tools to make up for water delivery shortfalls.

“We know many growers in South Texas are upset over the large shortfall of Rio Grande water deliveries from Mexico and have been briefed in various meetings by the users on the impacts to the region,” Commissioner Giner said. “We have been working since early 2022 with Mexico and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to improve the reliability and predictability of Rio Grande water deliveries.”

A few of the recent activities include:

The Rio Grande Minute Team, comprised of the U.S. and Mexican sections of the IBWC, the State of Texas, and CONAGUA, with participation by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Department of State, and Mexico’s Secretariat of Foreign Relations, met in Austin, Texas, on October 4-6.

Commissioner Giner and Water Accounting Division experts, joined by TCEQ Commissioner Bobby Janecka, briefed South Texas irrigation districts on October 3-4 about the release of a

bathymetric survey and provided an update on progress toward signing a new Minute.

The Rio Grande Hydrology Work Group is developing a binational model to simulate allocation procedures and water distribution in the United States and Mexico. The model will be used to analyze the effects of proposed water management scenarios in comparison to practices that are currently in effect.

The Rio Grande Minute Team and Rio Grande Policy Work Group, which is exploring opportunities for water conservation projects and optimal watershed management to “grow the pie” (expand both countries’ sources of water), met at USIBWC headquarters in El Paso on September 20-21.



Commissioner Giner and TCEQ Commissioner Janecka listen to CILA and CONAGUA officials during a binational meeting in El Paso.

Commissioner Giner joined Commissioner Adriana Reséndez Maldonado of the IBWC Mexican Section on August 30 on a North American Development Bank Summit panel in San Antonio, Texas, where they discussed Mexico’s shortfall in Rio Grande deliveries.

Briefings also have been provided to numerous influential lawmakers, including U.S. Reps. Monica de la Cruz, Henry Cuellar, Vicente Gonzalez, as well as U.S. Sens. John Cornyn and Ted Cruz’s senior staff.