

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION  
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

El Paso, Texas  
February 7, 1975

MINUTE NO. 247

INTERNATIONAL PLAN FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE PRESIDIO-OJINAGA VALLEY  
AGAINST FLOODS OF THE RIO GRANDE

The Commission met in the offices of the United States Section at 6:00 p.m. on February 7, 1975, to consider the international plan it should recommend to the two Governments for protection of the Presidio-Ojinaga Valley against floods of the Rio Grande.

The Commission recognized the need which has long existed to protect the productive agricultural lands of the Presidio-Ojinaga Valley, in the United States and Mexico, from the frequent flooding which they suffer. It noted that the differences which formerly existed regarding the position of the international boundary in the Valley, which had obstructed the preparation of a plan for its protection, were resolved by the Boundary Treaty of 1970, so that its preparation and the construction of protection works are now timely. The Commission confirmed that Article 6 of the Water Treaty of 1944 authorizes it to recommend such a plan to the two Governments. The Commission considered that the plan should be prepared on the basis of the position that the Rio Grande will occupy in the Valley after the relocations of its channel stipulated in Article I of the Boundary Treaty of 1970 and recommended in Minute No. 246 of this Commission, are executed.

The Commission then reviewed the "Joint Report of the Principal Engineers Recommending an International Plan for the Protection of the Presidio-Ojinaga Valley Against Floods of the Rio Grande," submitted by Principal Engineers Delbert D. McNealy and Jenaro Paz Reyes, dated February 6, 1975, the English text of which is attached to this Minute and forms a part thereof.

The Commission agreed that the international plan proposed by the Principal Engineers, to augment the capacity of the channel of the Rio Grande by the addition of cleared berms and levees on both sides, constitutes the most practical plan to provide a high degree of protection for the Presidio-Ojinaga Valley against the floods of that river.

The Commission agreed that the width proposed by the Principal Engineers for the cleared berms in order that the distance from the international boundary line to the riverside toe of the levees not be less than 75 feet (23 meters) between the site of Paradero Diversion Dam and the confluence of the Conchos River and the Rio Grande, and not be less than 262 feet (80 meters) between that confluence and the confluence of Alamito Creek and the Rio Grande, would satisfy the purpose of Article IV B (1) of the 1970 Boundary Treaty, which provides that each Government shall prohibit the construction of works which, in the judgment of the Commission, may cause deflection or obstruction of the normal flow of the river or of its flood flows.

The Commission noted that a part of the Mexican lands in the Valley are also subject to the floods from the Conchos River, a Mexican tributary to the Rio Grande, and that the international plan proposed by the Principal Engineers would not provide flood protection for such lands. Their protection requires that the international plan be complemented by a Mexican project for protection against floods of the Conchos River, which would be under the jurisdiction and responsibility of the Government of Mexico.

The Commission also agreed that the division between the two countries of the costs of construction of the works provided for in the international plan proposed by the Principal Engineers is equitable; that their construction would be more economical if the flood protection works adjoining the relocations of the Rio Grande in the Presidio-Ojinaga Valley, stipulated in Article I of the Boundary Treaty of 1970, are constructed concurrently with execution of the relocations; and that, to effect such concurrent construction it would be necessary to carry out the exchanges that are proposed by the Principal Engineers of parts of the construction works of the relocations of the Rio Grande assigned to the United States, pursuant to Minute No. 246 of this Commission, for parts of equal cost of the system of flood protection construction works pertaining to Mexico.

The Commission agreed on the necessity of the maintenance of the works of the international plan for the protection of the Presidio-Ojinaga Valley against the floods of the Rio Grande, as proposed by the Principal Engineers, and that the division of the maintenance works as they proposed would be equitable and appropriate.

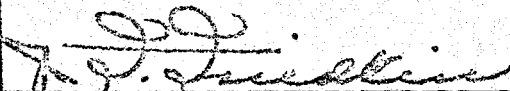
Thereupon, the Commission adopted the following Resolution, which is submitted for the approval of the two Governments:

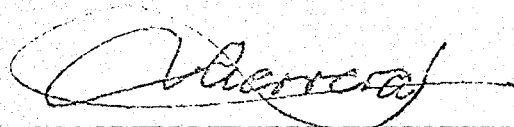
1. That the "Joint Report of the Principal Engineers Recommending an International Plan for the Protection of the Presidio-Ojinaga Valley Against Floods of the Rio Grande," dated February 6, 1975, the English text of which is attached to this Minute and forms a part hereof, be approved.
2. That the two Governments, through their respective Sections of the Commission and under its supervision, construct the works of the International Plan for the protection of the Presidio-Ojinaga Valley against floods of the Rio Grande described in the Joint Report of the Principal Engineers, and subsequently maintain them, with the division between the two countries of the works of construction and of maintenance that is described in the same Report.
3. That the flood protection works which adjoin the relocations of the Rio Grande in the Presidio-Ojinaga Valley be constructed concurrently with execution of the works for the relocations, with the exchanges that the Principal Engineers propose in their Joint Report of parts of the construction

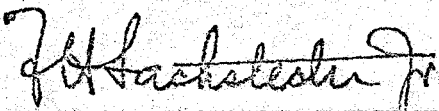
works of the relocations of the Rio Grande assigned to the United States for parts of equal cost of the flood protection works pertaining to Mexico.

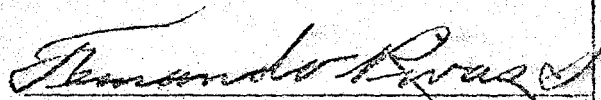
4. That to conform with the stipulations of Article IV B (1) of the Boundary Treaty of 1970, each Government prohibit the construction of levee or other works in its territory from the international boundary line for a distance of 75 feet (23 meters) between the site of the Paradero Diversion Dam and the confluence of the Conchos River and the Rio Grande, and of 262 feet (80 meters) between that confluence and the confluence of Alamito Creek and the Rio Grande, it being understood that the areas between the boundary and the limit of these distances shall be maintained clear and free of vegetation that could cause a deflection or obstruction of the normal flows of the Rio Grande or of its floods.

The meeting adjourned.

  
Commissioner of the United States

  
Commissioner of Mexico

  
Secretary of the United States  
Section

  
Secretary of the Mexican Section