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**U.S. AND MEXICAN OFFICIALS MEET TO ADVANCE SOLUTIONS TO BORDER
SANITATION PROBLEM
AT SAN DIEGO, CA – TIJUANA, BC**

Officials from the United States and Mexico met in Tijuana, Baja California, on April 19, 2024, to review progress on projects to improve sanitation conditions at the San Diego, California-Tijuana, Baja California border.

This meeting follows up on a commitment between U.S. Ambassador Ken Salazar and Baja California Governor Marina del Pilar Avila Olmeda for both sides to continue regular check-ins on progress toward completion of wastewater and sanitation infrastructure that, when completed, will significantly reduce cross-border sewage flows and improve water quality at beaches in the United States and Mexico.

Meeting participants from the United States included Commissioner Maria-Elena Giner of the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico (IBWC), and Tom Reott, U.S. Consul General in Tijuana. The Mexican delegation included Army Corps of Engineers Major General Raul Manzano Velez of the Mexican Defense Department (SEDENA), Commissioner Adriana Resendez Maldonado of the Mexican Section of the IBWC, Secretary Victor Daniel Amador Barragan of the State of Baja California water agency (SEPROA), and Director Jesus Garcia Castro of the Tijuana water utility (CESPT).

General Manzano reported on the ongoing construction by SEDENA of the new wastewater treatment plant at San Antonio de los Buenos (SAB), which will treat 18 million gallons per day (800 liters per second). The project is fully funded, with construction estimated to be completed by the end of September

2024. Once the plant is in operation, discharge of untreated wastewater into the Pacific Ocean will be greatly reduced.

CESPT Director Garcia provided an update on the repair of the 42-inch pipeline used to send wastewater and Tijuana River water to the SAB wastewater treatment plant and which has been out of service since July 2022. Now that repairs are complete, CESPT will bring the pipeline online as soon as rainy season flows in the Tijuana River diminish. Once the pipeline is in operation, transboundary flows in the Tijuana River Valley will diminish significantly. Mexican officials also reported other pump station and pipeline repairs are underway in Tijuana, with others expected to begin this year.

Commissioner Giner explained the U.S. Section of the IBWC is undertaking repairs to the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant in San Diego to return it to compliance with its permit in August 2024. A project to double the treatment capacity of the plant, which treats wastewater from Tijuana, is also advancing, with a design-build contract to be awarded this summer.

Meeting participants emphasized the importance of conducting monthly inspections of Tijuana sanitation infrastructure, enhancing communication, and controlling sediment along the border. They agreed to meet again on June 18 to review progress on Minute 328 and other priority water and sanitation projects.

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