



October 18, 2024

News Flash

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Office of Public
Affairs

BRIDGING BORDERS AND TACKLING CHALLENGES: IBWC COMMISSIONERS LEAD THE WAY AT MEXICALI REGIONAL MEETING



USIBWC Commissioner Dr. Maria-Elena Giner and her Mexican counterpart, Adriana Reséndez Maldonado, led the discussion during the IBWC Mexicali Regional Commission meeting on August 14-15, 2024.

The IBWC Mexicali Regional Commission meeting on August 14-15, 2024, delved into several important binational issues, including implementation efforts under Minute 323 and the Salinity Policy Work Group created by Minute 330.

U.S. Commissioner Dr. Maria-Elena Giner, P.E., and her Mexican counterpart, Adriana Reséndez Maldonado, worked closely during the meeting, underscoring their ongoing commitment to cross-border collaboration.

Several Minute 323 projects valued at \$20 million are still pending, with delays anticipated in their completion. Despite this, Mexico remains committed to fulfilling its water transfer obligations as outlined in the Minute 323 schedule. A future meeting of the Projects Work Group will further address these issues and determine the path forward.

Regarding the Minute 330 Salinity Policy Work Group, the U.S. and Mexican Sections are actively developing the

Terms of Reference, with \$5 million allocated to address salinity concerns.

An update was given on the Welton Mohawk drain, which is important for salinity control. The funding for the maintenance is provided by Bureau of Reclamation.

Other water quality issues were discussed, specifically the challenges posed by transboundary flows in the Nogales Wash, which have led to elevated E. coli levels. Efforts to address these concerns are underway, with continuing discussions around wastewater treatment measures and necessary resources.

The meeting also touched on infrastructure and boundary concerns. The ongoing discussions with U.S. Customs and Border Protection aim to address issues related to border infrastructure impacting the international boundary line.

The Mexican Section also raised concerns about the condition of the Colorado River Group I and II levees, prompting plans for upcoming site visits to assess the situation further.

Other topics discussed included New River sanitation and water quality, and emergency water deliveries to Tijuana, Mexico.

Regional Commission Meetings are held four times a year by the IBWC in multiple regions along the border and focus on the issues and projects specifically related to that region. This allows for much more in-depth discussion, prioritization of issues and projects, and strategy development to address them.

Coverage of these meetings can be found on the USIBWC website at <https://www.ibwc.gov/press-releases>. Click on the drop-down menu for "Regional Meetings."