



INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

For Immediate Release
December 18, 2024

IBWC, Elephant Butte Irrigation District Strengthen Collaboration with Sediment Agreement

The U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID) to expand a long collaboration by including sediment management.

Under the agreement, which entered into force on November 5, 2024, USIBWC will provide technical assistance while EBID will oversee awarding and managing contracts.

The move is intended to address large quantities of sediment entering USIBWC's 105-mile Rio Grande Canalization Project (RGCP) in southwestern New Mexico, where EBID also operates.

Part of the USIBWC's mission includes ensuring the RGCP is maintained so the United States can deliver Rio Grande water to Mexico in compliance with the 1906 Convention between the two countries.

USIBWC manages sediment within the RGCP, which extends along the Rio Grande from American Dam in El Paso, Texas, to Percha Dam, near Arrey, New Mexico. USIBWC also maintains five sediment control dams in southern New Mexico and has built sediment basins as a pilot project in Hatch, New Mexico, to address sediment issues.

For more than a hundred years, EBID has operated and maintained irrigation and drainage structures to deliver water to farmers within the area covered by the RGCP.

USIBWC and EBID have successfully worked together on previous agreements, including habitat restoration, irrigation infrastructure, maintenance of flood gates, and rehabilitation of the Montoya Intercepting Drain.

Sediment entering the RGCP through Rincon and Placitas arroyos, among others, has created problem areas in urgent need of maintenance.

“This no-cost agreement between our agencies pledges our cooperation in sediment management projects that will improve flood control and benefit irrigation and habitat restoration,” said **Dr. Maria-Elena Giner, P.E., USIBWC Commissioner**. “We plan to share technical data such as sediment models and assist in identifying future projects. This is a great example of how two great agencies can share the burden and leverage each other’s programs to benefit the community.”

“This Memorandum of Agreement with the IBWC is an exciting first step in the process of tackling the sediment issues in the Lower Rio Grande,” said **Joshua Smith, EBID Treasurer-Manager**. “Elephant Butte Irrigation District looks forward to working with the IBWC to identify projects and

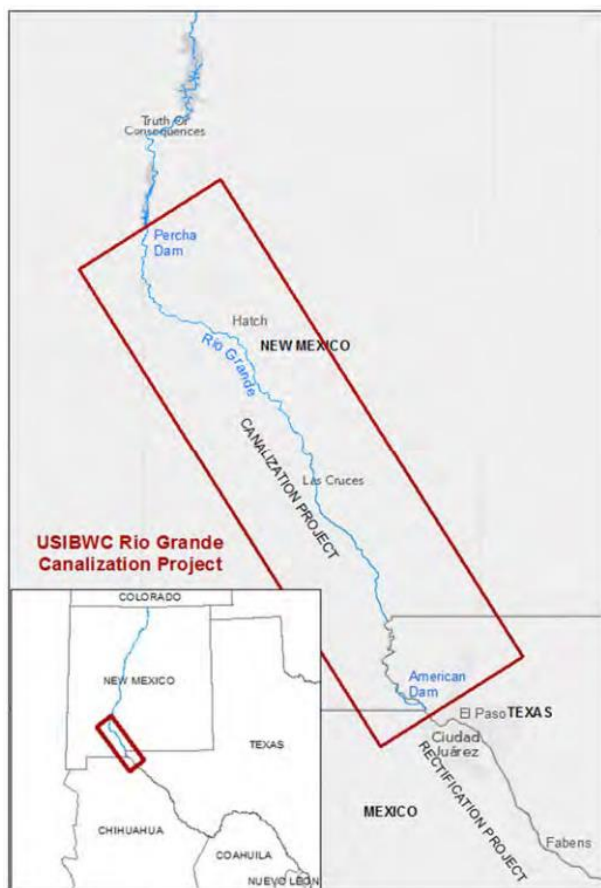
begin work on the ground to address the sediment problem, improve efficiency in our system, and restore habitat in the valley.”

USIBWC has previously committed to restoring more than 500 acres of riparian and aquatic habitat within the project, and potential projects under this agreement could complement existing habitat restoration efforts.

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Before and after photos of USIBWC's Thurman II sediment basin near Hatch, New Mexico. On the left, the basin filled with sediment in 2022; on the right, after being cleaned and filled with water in 2024. (Photos courtesy of USIBWC)