INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION, UNITED STATES AND MEXICO
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER

- Land Boundary – 674 miles
- Colorado River – 24 miles
- Rio Grande – 1,254 miles
- Over 12 million residents
INTERNATIONAL RIVER BASINS

- Tijuana River Basin
- Colorado River Basin
- Rio Grande Basin

Pacific Ocean
Gulf of Mexico
MISSION OF THE COMMISSION

The International Boundary and Water Commission is responsible for applying the boundary and water treaties between the United States and Mexico and settling differences that arise in their application.
IBWC STRUCTURE

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION (IBWC)

MEXICAN SECTION
- Mexican Commissioner
- Secretary
- Two Principal Engineers
- Legal Adviser

US SECTION
- US Commissioner
- Secretary
- Two Principal Engineers
- Legal Adviser
IBWC STRUCTURE

- Each Commissioner is appointed by his respective president
- When the two Sections meet as a Commission, they have the status of an International Organization
- Each Section employs its own staff
- IBWC staff operate projects, including joint operation of dams
IBWC STRUCTURE

- Decisions of the Commission shall be recorded in the form of Minutes
- Minutes are subject to approval by the Governments (State, SRE) and are binding
- 130 Minutes entered into since treaty ratification
IBWC STRUCTURE

- Joint Reports or Joint Memoranda of the Principal Engineers include technical recommendations to the Commissioners.
- Commissioners, Principal Engineers, Secretaries, and Legal Advisers are diplomatic officers.
- Significant day-to-day contact between the two Sections.
CONVENTION OF 1906

- Distribution between Mexico and the U.S. of the waters of the Rio Grande in the El Paso-Juarez region
- U.S. to deliver 60,000 acre-feet per year
- Proportional reduction in deliveries in case of extraordinary drought
- Water stored in Elephant Butte Dam, NM
American Dam (El Paso-Juarez)
OTHER BOUNDARY TREATIES

- Convention of 1933/Rio Grande Rectification Project – Stabilize the international boundary in the El Paso-Juarez Valley


- Treaty of 1970 – Maintain the Rio Grande and Colorado River as the international boundary
RIO GRANDE RECTIFICATION PROJECT IN THE EL PASO-JUAREZ VALLEY

RIVER BED AND RECTIFIED CHANNEL
1944 WATER TREATY
Colorado River

- U.S. to deliver to Mexico a volume of 1.5 million acre-feet per year
- When there are surplus waters, U.S. to deliver to Mexico a total volume of up to 1.7 million acre-feet per year
1944 WATER TREATY
(Rio Grande, Ft. Quitman to the Gulf)

- Waters allotted to Mexico
  - All water from the following Mexican rivers:
    - San Juan and Alamo
  - 2/3 of the flow arriving in the Rio Grande from the following Mexican tributaries:
    - Conchos, San Diego, San Rodrigo, Escondido, Salado, Arroyo de las Vacas
  - 50% of flows from the unmeasured tributaries
1944 WATER TREATY
(Rio Grande, Ft. Quitman to the Gulf)

- Waters allotted to the United States
  - All water from the following U.S. rivers/creeks:
    - Pecos, Devils, Good-enough Spring, Alamito, Terlingua, San Felipe, Pinto
  - 1/3 of the flow arriving in the Rio Grande from the following Mexican tributaries:
    - Conchos, San Diego, San Rodrigo, Escondido, Salado, Arroyo de las Vacas
    - Minimum annual average of 350,000 acre-feet
  - 50% of flows from the unmeasured tributaries
EVOLUTION OF THE DEFICIT IN THE ALLOTMENTS OF WATER TO THE UNITED STATES FROM THE RIO GRANDE, IN Mm³

- Mexico faced an unprecedented deficit in deliveries from the Rio Grande.
- In response, a series of agreements were necessary to be able to use available volumes in the basin.
- These agreements were undertaken from 2002 to 2005, which permitted the total elimination of the deficit.
2. CURRENT PROJECTS
AMISTAD DAM

- International Storage Reservoir
  - Total Capacity – 4.9 million acre-feet (6025 million cubic meters)
  - Silt and Conservation – 3.15 million acre-feet (3887 million cubic meters)
- Flood Control
- Recreation
- Hydroelectric Power
AMISTAD DAM
FALCON DAM

- **International Storage Reservoir**
  - Total Capacity – 3.16 million acre-feet (maf) (3897 million cubic meters)
  - Silt and conservation – 2.65 maf (3273 million cubic meters)

- **Flood Control**

- **Hydroelectric Power**
U.S. Hydroelectric Plant
LOWER RIO GRANDE FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT

- 340 miles of levee
- Anzalduas Diversion Dam
- Retamal Diversion Dam
- Floodways
- Flood protection for hundreds of thousands of people in the U.S. and Mexico
Anzalduas Diversion Dam

1966 Flood at
Brownsville-Matamoros
SANITATION PROJECTS

- 3 international wastewater treatment plants
  - San Diego, CA
  - Nogales, AZ
  - Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas
SOUTH BAY INTERNATIONAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT
WATER QUALITY MONITORING

- 3 Rio Grande binational toxic substances studies
- Binational toxic substances study of the New and Colorado Rivers
- Intensive water quality monitoring study of the Rio Grande at Laredo-Nuevo Laredo
COLORADO RIVER SALINITY CONTROL

- Minute 242 (1973) regulates the salinity of water delivered to Mexico
- Wellton Mohawk Canal bypasses saline flows to the Santa Clara Slough in Mexico
- Desalination plant in the U.S. can be made operational when needed
WATER ACCOUNTING

- More than 50 gaging stations in the Rio Grande basin in the United States and Mexico
- 11 gaging stations on the Colorado River
- Data reviewed weekly by the U.S. and Mexican Sections
- Determination of the national ownership of waters of the Rio Grande
- Publication of flow data, rainfall, reservoir storage, evaporation, and water quality data in annual water bulletins
WATER ACCOUNTING

Rio Grande gaging station at Presidio-Ojinaga

Telemetry system at North Floodway, Lower Rio Grande