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SLIDES: Law of Colorado River: Where We Are, Where We Are Going

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Law of Colorado River
Where We Are, Where We Are Going

Steven M. Fitten, Chief Counsel
8-10 June 2011
Boulder, CO
The International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, is responsible for applying the boundary and water treaties between the two countries and settling differences that arise in their application.
Commissioners

Edward Drusina, PE
United States Commissioner

Roberto F. Salmon, PE
Mexican Commissioner
HISTORY
IBWC History
The Beginning

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848)
Established the international boundary after the Mexican-American War

Gadsden Treaty (1853)
Re-established the southern boundary of New Mexico and Arizona

Convention of July 29, 1882
Established a temporary commission to survey the land boundary and establish monuments
1944 Water Treaty
Colorado River

💧 U.S. annual delivery to Mexico = 1.5 million acre-feet of water

Colorado River at NIB

CA
BC
Arizona
1944 Water Treaty
Colorado River

U.S. annual delivery to Mexico = 1.5 million acre-feet of water

Surplus waters: U.S. annual delivery to Mexico up to 1.7 million

Morelos Dam
1944 Water Treaty

Colorado River

U.S. annual delivery to Mexico = 1.5 million acre-feet of water

Surplus waters: U.S. annual delivery to Mexico up to 1.7 million

Extraordinary drought: Mexico allotment “reduced in same proportion” to U.S. allotment
1944 Water Treaty

Colorado River

U.S. annual delivery to Mexico = 1.5 million acre-feet of water

Surplus waters: U.S. annual delivery to Mexico up to 1.7 million

Morelos Dam
IBWC Minutes

- Formalize IBWC agreements
- Legally binding
- Take effect upon signature and approval by both Governments
- Over 300 Minutes
Temporary remedy for earthquake damage to Mexico irrigation infrastructure that occurred April 2010

Allows Mexico to delay deliveries of annual allotment IAW 1944 Water Treaty:

Identify projects to minimize shortage conditions, generate additional volumes, conserve water, permit Mexico to use U.S. infrastructure to store water

Mexicali Valley Earthquake Damage
• Water stored from 2010-2013
• Mexico Annual allotment of 1.5 maf
• Mexico may accept delivery up to 1.7 maf if excess available
• Stored water increases Lake Mead’s elevation
• Forestalls Lower Basin shortages