

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION

MINUTE 323 ON US-MEXICO COLORADO RIVER COOPERATION

Sally Spener, U.S. Secretary
October 25, 2017
Colorado River Citizens Forum



1944 WATER TREATY

COLORADO RIVER

- ◆ U.S. to deliver to Mexico a volume of 1.5 maf/year
- ◆ When there are surplus waters, Mexico may receive an additional 200 kaf
- ◆ In extraordinary drought, Mexico reduced in proportion to U.S.
- ◆ U.S. has always met its delivery obligation



Mexico diverts most of its allotment at Morelos Dam.



IBWC MINUTES

- ◆ Decisions of the Commission are recorded in the form of Minutes
- ◆ Minutes are binding agreements of the IBWC intended to implement treaty
- ◆ They take effect once approved by both nations' foreign affairs ministries
- ◆ 323 Minutes to date



IBWC Commissioners and Secretaries sign Min. 319



COLORADO RIVER JOINT COOPERATIVE PROCESS



1999



2006

Lake Mead

COLORADO RIVER JOINT COOPERATIVE PROCESS

- 7 U.S. Basin States & 2 federal governments asked IBWC to convene stakeholders.
- ◆ 4 Work Groups established in 2008
- ◆ Minute No. 317 (2010) formalized work groups and framework for US-Mx Cooperation.
- ◆ Minute No. 318 (2010) allowed Mx to store water in the US until it could fix earthquake damage

Damaged canal in Mexicali



MINUTE 319 (2012)

- ◆ Signed Nov. 20, 2012
- ◆ 5-year agreement thru 2017
- ◆ 7 Sections
 - ▶ Extension of Minute 318
 - ▶ High reservoir water sharing
 - ▶ Low reservoir shortage sharing
 - ▶ Intentionally Created Mexican Allocation (ICMA)
 - ▶ Salinity Management
 - ▶ Water for Environment and ICMA/ICS exchange pilot
 - ▶ Projects



Minute 319 signing in San Diego, CA



MINUTE 323



**Minute Negotiating Group
Meeting in Mexico City**

- ◆ Minute 319 ends 12/31/17
- ◆ Work began in 2015 on a new agreement based on Minute 319
- ◆ New Minute informed by Minute 319 and evolving basin conditions



MINUTE 323



MNG Members in Santa Fe

- ◆ Minute Negotiating Group (MNG) met monthly
- ◆ Meetings held in US and Mx
- ◆ Domestic consultations between binational meetings



MINUTE 323



NIB Gaging Station

- ◆ Work Groups formed to assist MNG
 - ▶ Salinity Work Group
 - ▶ Projects Work Group
 - ▶ Environmental Work Group
 - ▶ Hydrology Work Group
- ◆ Minute 319 Work Groups also helped



MINUTE 323

- ◆ Signed 9/21/17 in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico
- ◆ DOS and SRE approval on 9/27/17
- ◆ Entry into Force Ceremony held 9/27/17 in Santa Fe, NM at Colorado River Symposium
- ◆ Ceremony attended by Deputy Secretary of Interior, Dept. of State



Min. 323 ceremony



MINUTE 323



Under previous Minutes, Mexico deferred deliveries after an earthquake damaged canals.

◆ Mexico's Water Reserve

- ▶ Allows Mexico to defer water delivery due to earthquakes, emergencies, or conservation
- ▶ Water available for subsequent delivery to Mexico
- ▶ Gives Mexico flexibility in water management
- ▶ Boosts Lake Mead elevation to benefit all users



WATER SHARING



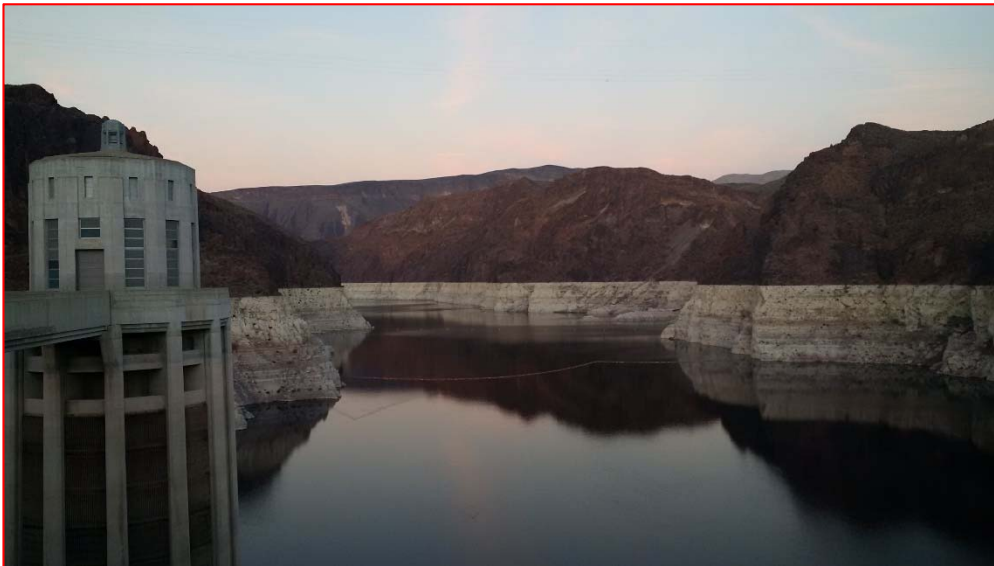
Hoover Dam

- ◆ Mexico interested in receiving additional water when surplus is available to U.S. users.
- ◆ Provides additional volumes to Mexico of 40 - 200 kaf based on 4 high elevation tiers at Lake Mead.



SHORTAGE SHARING

- ◆ Principle that when one country is in shortage, the other country should be in shortage
- ◆ Annual reductions to Mexico of 50-125 kaf based on 3 low elevation tiers at Lake Mead
- ◆ Mexico may use its stored water to offset shortage, subject to limitations.



Lake Mead at Hoover Dam
Dec. 2015



SHORTAGE SHARING

- ◆ Mexican storage under Minutes 318 and 319 boosted Lake Mead elevation by 2-3 feet, helping to prevent mandatory cuts in the Lower Basin
- ◆ Hydrology Work Group
 - ▶ Technical experts from both countries
 - ▶ Data exchange, modeling, and analysis
 - ▶ Analyze the impact on reservoir levels from meeting system demands, drought, increased temperatures, etc.



Colorado River at Southerly International Boundary

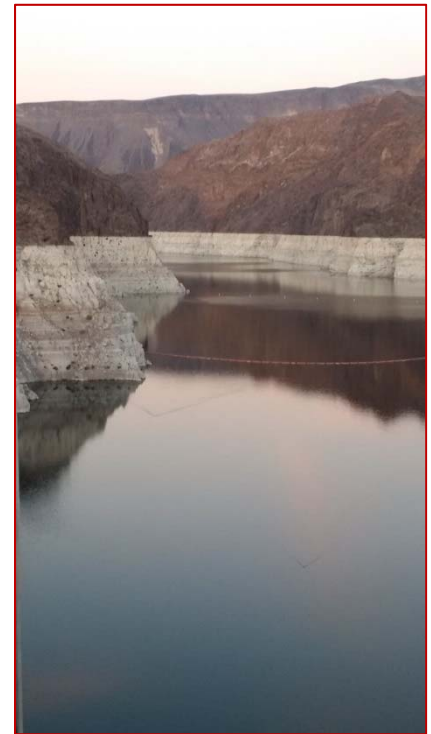


CONTINGENCY PLAN

◆ Binational Water Scarcity Contingency Plan

- ▶ Requires water savings earlier to shore up drought-affected reservoirs
- ▶ Commitment to reduce water orders at certain reservoir elevations
- ▶ Water savings could be delivered in the future when reservoirs refill
- ▶ Based on proposed elements of U.S. Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan

Lake Mead at
Hoover Dam
Dec. 2015



SALINITY



**Morelos Dam where Mexico
diverts most of its water**

- ◆ Minute 242 (1973) requires salinity of deliveries to Mexico to be similar to water quality at Imperial Dam
- ◆ Applies a salinity formula that is fair to both countries
- ◆ US and Mexico will operate system to minimize salinity impacts of Min. 319 actions
- ◆ Improved salinity monitoring



FLOW VARIABILITY



**Colorado River near Northern
International Boundary**

- ◆ Treaty provides for a monthly delivery schedule to Mx
- ◆ Mx users concerned about daily flow variability of deliveries
- ◆ Min. 323 considers potential regulating reservoirs
- ◆ Establishes water order and delivery targets to minimize daily variability



ENVIRONMENT

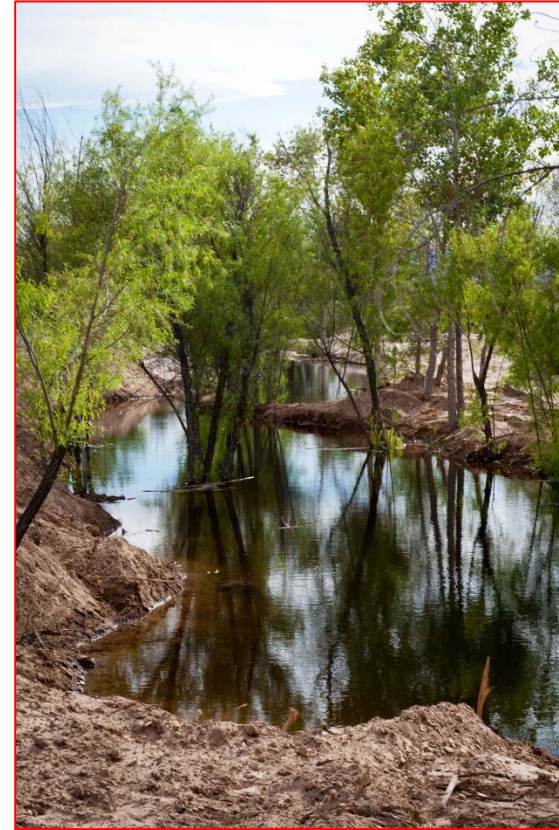
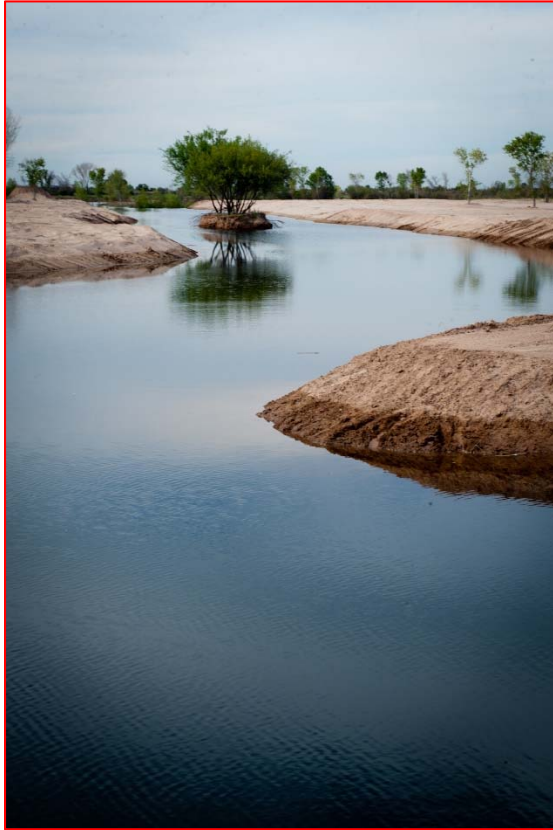


Laguna Grande Restoration Site

- ◆ Generates water for the environment
- ◆ 210 kaf+ of water for environment
 - ▶ U.S. investment in Mexico to cover 1/3 of this volume
 - ▶ Mexico and NGOs cover the rest
 - ▶ Focus on water for habitat restoration sites



ENVIRONMENT



2014 pulse flow at Laguna Grande Restoration Site



PROJECTS

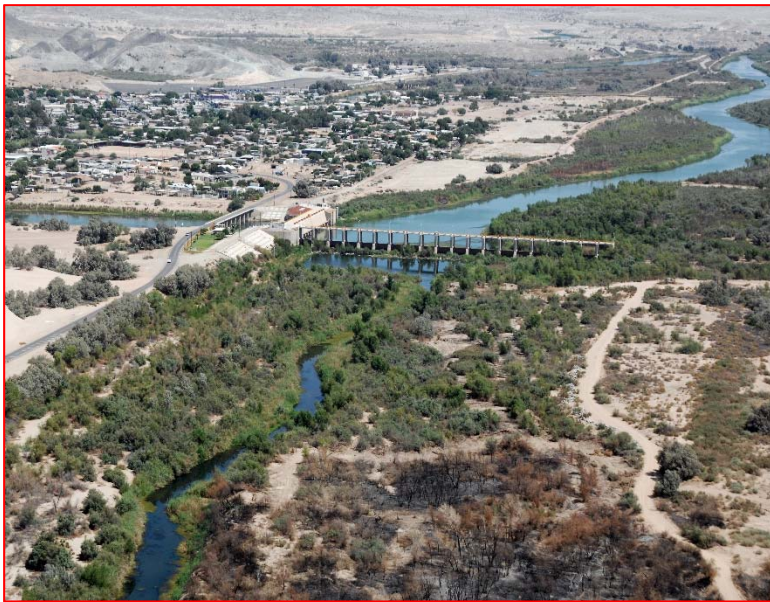
- ◆ \$31.5 M from US for projects in Mexico
- ◆ Mexico derives long-term benefits from waters conserved from U.S. investment
- ◆ 109 kaf for water agencies, 70 kaf for environment, and 50 kaf for system storage
- ◆ Work Group to explore binational connection for All-American Canal



U.S. entities to fund projects like canal lining.



BENEFITS TO US OF MINUTES 319 AND 323



Colorado River at Morelos Dam

- ◆ Provides certainty for water planning, esp. in shortage
- ◆ Water to US in exchange for investment in Mexico
- ◆ Environmental benefits of shared ecosystem
- ◆ Storing Mexico's water in US boosts Lake Mead elevation
- ◆ Cooperation benefits all parties



MINUTE 323

2018-2026



Binational Work Group Meeting

- ◆ Work Groups to continue to meet to:
 - ▶ Analyze basin conditions and refine joint forecasting
 - ▶ Identify means to better control salinity or flow variability
 - ▶ Work on habitat restoration
 - ▶ Consider new projects
- ◆ Work on the next agreement for 2027+



INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION

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