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OA/ID Number: 2895
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IBWC [International Boundary and Water Commission]/United States-Mexico

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DRAFT PROVIDED
TO SAN DIEGO
CONGRESSIONAL
DELEGATION - 2

United States and Mexico Identify Interim Tijuana Sewage Handling Works

TIJUANA, BAJA CALIFORNIA (Oct. 22, 1993) -- The United States and Mexico today identified a five point program to adequately handle increasing Tijuana, Baja California sewage until the permanent international treatment plant solution is in place in less than five years. _____ made the announcement upon receiving the report from the United States Commissioner of the US/Mexico International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC).

In summary:

1. The United States will seek to accelerate the construction of the international treatment plant to have the plant on line at least one year before the scheduled 1998 date.
2. The United States and Mexico will develop immediate and intermediate works from components being designed for the International Treatment Plant to handle peak flows and future flows in excess of the Tijuana sanitation system capacity until the international plant is on line. These works will provide Mexico additional capacity after the treatment plant is on line.
3. Mexico will complete reconstruction of the Tecate, Baja California sewage treatment plant in one year to eliminate untreated sewage discharges from that city to Tecate Creek, which discharges to a tributary of the Tijuana River in Mexico.
4. Mexico will eliminate unauthorized Tijuana sewage discharges into the Tijuana River channel, which with the Tecate measures will remove these sources of pollution from the Tijuana River in both normal and high flow conditions.
5. Mexico will seek to reduce inflows into the Tijuana collection system with construction of small neighborhood type sewage treatment facilities to permit reuse of those flows in green areas.

-2-

The understandings were arrived at an emergency meeting of the IBWC in Tijuana, BC attended by delegations of both countries made up of technical representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Water Quality Resources Control Board, San Diego Regional Control Board, City of San Diego, County of San Diego and City of Imperial Beach for the United States, and the Secretariat of Social Development's (SEDESOL) Enforcement and Infrastructure SubSecretariats, the Secretariat of Foreign Relations (SRE), and National Water Commission (CNA) of Mexico.

The IBWC will now develop the international agreement for the specific components and cost distributions by the two countries in the form of an IBWC Minute.

-30-



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

NOV 17 1993

**OFFICE OF
WATER**

Honorable Susan Golding
Mayor, City of San Diego
202 C Street
San Diego, California 92101

Dear Mayor Golding:

Thank you for your letters of September 22 and October 21, 1993, to President Clinton regarding the Tijuana International Wastewater Treatment Facility currently being designed by the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC). The President has asked that I evaluate and respond to the issues which you raised in your letters.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is providing a portion of the funding for this project under Section 510 of the Water Quality Act of 1987. You have requested in your letter of September 22 that the President designate the City of San Diego and the State of California as eligible recipients for funding under Section 510, in the interest of expediting the project.

I understand that San Diego and California have already provided significant assistance to the planning and design of the international wastewater treatment project in working with the Policy and Technical committees for the project. We are interested in furthering a Federal/State/city partnership, and in expediting project completion, possibly including a greater city role, for example in construction management. However, we have several concerns that stem from your letter of October 21 to President Clinton, which asked that the City use Section 510 funds to construct an advanced primary treatment plant and discharge the effluent (including City wastewater flows) to the surf off Mexico, possibly on a permanent basis.

Mexico will likely be apprehensive about discharging U.S. flows off their beaches, and we are not interested in pursuing a technical solution (surf-zone discharge in Mexico) which would not be acceptable under U.S. or California environmental regulations if the discharge were in the U.S. Absent a waiver, the Clean Water Act requires full secondary treatment of



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-2-

effluent, and a permanent advanced primary facility would conflict with the Act's water quality goals. We believe that the project can be accelerated without compromising compliance to U.S. environmental laws. Furthermore, we are concerned that any major change to the plan already under design would lead to even further delay in the project's completion.

We share your concern for the contamination of the Tijuana River and your commitment to resolving the problem as expeditiously as possible. We would like to discuss our concerns about your proposal via the Tijuana Policy Committee. Please call Harry Saraydarian, the Water Management Division Director of EPA Region IX at (415) 744-2125, or Michael Cook, Director of Wastewater Enforcement and Compliance at (202) 260-5850, or call me at (202) 260-5700 if you would like to discuss these issues in greater detail.

Sincerely,



Robert Perciasepe
Assistant Administrator

Mayor:
I am sorry we
missed each other
in Washington last week.
I plan to visit San
Diego in early
December when we
can discuss further.
Bob P.

BOB FILNER
SOUTH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

504 CANNON BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TEL: (202) 225-8045
FAX: (202) 225-8073

333 F STREET, SUITE A
CHULA VISTA, CALIFORNIA 91910
TEL: (619) 422-5983
FAX: (619) 422-7390



PUBLIC WORKS AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

VETERANS' AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: STEPHEN ALTOBELLI
(202) 225-8045
OCTOBER 22, 1993

**FILNER ANNOUNCES DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT IN MEXICAN
COMMITMENT TO CLEANUP BORDER SEWAGE**

San Diego Congressman Bob Filner today announced that the government of Mexico has agreed to undertake dramatic steps to begin cleaning up the Tijuana River Valley. Specifically, the Mexican government has committed to a three point plan to stop the flow of untreated raw sewage which has been polluting the Tijuana River for 30 years.

First, Mexico has agreed to unilaterally complete reconstruction of the sewage treatment plant in Tacate, Baja California. Untreated sewage currently discharges from that city into Tacate Creek, which empties into the Tijuana River. The project is expected to be completed in one year.

Second, Mexico has committed to undertaking intensive measures to stop the sewage flows that enter the Tijuana River between Rodriguez Dam and the U.S. border. This will be completed by hooking up more sewage connectors and stopping the currently illegal diversions.

Third, Mexico will seek to reduce inflows into the Tijuana collection system with construction of small neighborhood type sewage treatment facilities.

In addition, the United States has committed to accelerating construction of the International Wastewater Treatment Plant and to working with the Mexicans to develop immediate methods to handle the flows until the International Plant is finished.

In making this announcement, Filner said: "This is wonderful news for all residents in the South Bay! Our long efforts to focus attention on this problem have resulted in the Mexicans finally facing up to their responsibilities and beginning to take the corrective action which has been needed for so long."

In an effort to get the commitment of the U.S. and Mexican governments to clean up this mess, Filner has been in constant contact with the White House, the State Department, other high ranking Administration officials, and the President of Mexico.

Filner continued: "This is an excellent first step in the long process of cleaning up the border. I hope the actions announced today signal the beginning, and not the end, of Mexican efforts to stop their pollution of the Tijuana River."



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

Office of Mexican Affairs
Room 4258 Main State
FAX No. (202) 647-5752
or FTS 647-5752

URGENT
F A X T R A N S M I S S I O N S H E E T

DATE: 11/18/93

TO: AMEE CHRISTENSEN
OEP/WH
FAX No. 456-2710

FROM: Paul E. Storing
Special Assistant, International
Boundary and Water Commission

DESCRIPTION OF
DOCUMENT: BSWC DRAFT PRESS RELEASE - FILNER
10/22 PRESS RELEASE; EPA LTR TO MAYOR GOLDMAN
FOR: Clearance Information Per request Comment Action

REMARKS: YOU'LL ALSO BE INTERESTED IN THE EPA
LETTER ON BEHALF OF THE PRESIDENT, TO
SAN DIEGO MAYOR GOLDMAN

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS PAGE 7

IF THIS TRANSMISSION WAS NOT RECEIVED IN ITS ENTIRETY, PLEASE
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United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

Office of Mexican Affairs
Room 4258 Main StateFAX No. (202) 647-5752
or FTS 647-5752F A X T R A N S M I S S I O N S H E E TDATE: 10/20/93TO: AIMEE CHRISTENSENOEPFAX No. 456-2110FROM: Paul E. StoringSpecial Assistant, InternationalBoundary and Water CommissionDESCRIPTION OF
DOCUMENT:LETTERS TO PRESIDENTFOR: ☒ Clearance ☐ Information ☐ Per request ☐ Comment ☐ Action
✓ PER OUR CONVERSATIONREMARKS: I ALSO ATTACH A RESPONSE TO CONGRESSMAN
FILNER FROM COMMISSOER GUNAS. ANSWERING A
NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ON THE TLHUANA SITUATION.
QUESTION: IS SOMEONE WORKING ON THE GOLDING LETTER & IF
NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS PAGE 11 SO, COULD WE
PLUG. MANY THANKSIF THIS TRANSMISSION WAS NOT RECEIVED IN ITS ENTIRETY, PLEASE
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W275 PP.1.

SEP 27 '93 18:39Z ID: CLEAN WATER PROCESS TEL NO: 619-533-4267

cc: mbl
JPL
MSD**SUSAN GOLDING**
MAYOR

September 22, 1993.

The Honorable Bill Clinton
President of the United States of America
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

SUBJECT: Interim Treatment of Tijuana Sewage

Dear President Clinton:

Thank you for your assistance in providing funding for the City of San Diego's interim treatment of Tijuana sewage. As you know, this is only a temporary solution. The long-term solution continues to be the International Boundary and Water Commission's (IBWC) planned construction of the international treatment facilities. Unfortunately, construction of these facilities will not be completed until sometime in 1998. As each day passes, flows of raw sewage in the Tijuana River continue to increase. This flow is a serious threat to the region, creating critical health hazards for local residents, forcing the closure of popular beaches severely impacting local businesses, and causing unknown environmental harm to the groundwater, river bed and coastal areas. The City and County of San Diego, along with the State of California, recently declared a State of Emergency in the Tijuana River Valley, San Diego, due to these ever increasing flows of raw sewage.

Given the increased flows, we applaud the recent efforts of the IBWC to handle the increased flows with the construction of interim facilities. However, it is imperative that the international treatment facilities be completed as soon as possible to finally put an end to the decades of pollution that the citizens of San Diego have endured.

Under Section 510 of the Water Quality Act of 1987, there is a special provision which allows you to designate agencies to receive funding through the Environmental Protection Agency for the planning and construction of the international treatment facilities. In the interest of expediting construction of the international treatment facilities, I am requesting that the City of San Diego and the State of California be designated as eligible recipients of Section 510 funds.

27 93 10:26AM
23 93 THU 10:22 10-CLEAN WATER PROGRAM TEL NO: 619-533-4267

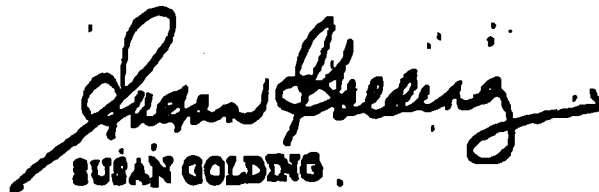
0275 PPS.2

The Honorable Bill Clinton
President of the United States of America
Interim Treatment of Tijuana Sewage
September 21, 1993
Page 3 of 3

For many years, the City of San Diego and the State Water Resources Control Board have been actively involved in advising the federal agencies on appropriate interim and long-term treatment measures for this sewage problem. In fact, the City is a partner with the federal government on a portion of the international facilities, the shared ocean outfall. The City has many years of experience in the design and construction of large treatment facilities and is currently undergoing the upgrade and expansion of our own treatment facilities. With this experience we can assist the federal government in expediting this project. The City and the State are already working closely with the federal agencies on this project; formalizing this partnership through this designation will provide the opportunity for us to work closer together. This will also provide the federal government with increased flexibility to implement solutions to this longstanding sanitation problem.

We would appreciate a favorable response to this request and we stand ready to assist the federal government in ensuring the speedy construction of the international treatment facilities.

Sincerely,



SUSAN GOLDING
Mayor

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 20, 1993

SEP 22 1993

Dear Lynn:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding raw sewage flows from Mexico into San Diego.

I certainly agree that the situation is unacceptable. It is very important to complete the international wastewater treatment facility which is currently under design. Our FY 1994 budget request included \$70 million to initiate construction of this facility. The House Appropriations bill for FY 1994 includes only \$35 million. I am seeking approval by the full Congress of my original request and I welcome your support in this regard.

Currently, Tijuana's wastewater collection and treatment needs are partially met by a major pumping station and wastewater treatment facility in Mexico that serves most of the west side of the city. Since 1984, the United States and Mexico have been planning for an international facility close to the border that will treat the remaining flows. The City of San Diego's Clean Water Program and the California State Water Resources Control Board have actively advised on the appropriate interim and long-term treatment measures. We need the continued strong commitment of the city and state to help reach our goals.

The International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) and the City of San Diego agreed to an interim system to intercept and treat raw sewage entering the Tijuana River from eastern Tijuana. A dam in the Tijuana river captures Eastern Tijuana wastewater flows that are not treated in Mexico and pumps them to the City of San Diego's wastewater treatment facility at Point Loma. Until the international facility is completed, IBWC will continue to send as much of the excess Tijuana wastewater as possible through this emergency connection to San Diego's Point Loma Plant. We are also working with Mexico to determine whether their system can treat additional wastewater on an interim basis.

Usually, the flow in the Tijuana River is almost entirely wastewater and during dry weather the interim system has just enough capacity to handle this untreated flow. Recent extended heavy rains in the Tijuana area caused a break in the pipe and added significant flows of stormwater and water from discharging reservoirs which the system was unable to handle. The connection pipe has been repaired and the system is again functioning. The

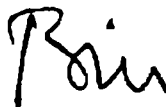
2

IBWC and local officials have committed to lowering the reservoirs to avoid more flooding in a manner that allows the interim system to capture most of the flow in the river.

I have advised both the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and IBWC that I expect every effort to be made in expediting construction of the international wastewater plant. I have asked Carol Browner, Administrator of the EPA and Dr. Narendra Gunaji, Commissioner of the IBWC, to keep me fully informed on the progress of this effort. Please do not hesitate to contact Administrator Browner or Commissioner Gunaji if you need further information on our efforts.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,



The Honorable Lynn Schenk
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

⑥

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 10, 1993

Dear Bob:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding raw sewage flows from Mexico into San Diego.

I certainly agree that the situation is unacceptable. It is very important to complete the international wastewater treatment facility which is currently under design. Our FY-1994 budget request included \$70 million to initiate construction of this facility. The House Appropriations bill for FY 1994 includes only \$35 million. I am seeking approval by the full Congress of my original request and I welcome your support in this regard.

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2

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With best wishes,

Sincerely,



The Honorable Bob Filner
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515



OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
UNITED STATES SECTION

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

SEP 24 1993

yellow
B. FELDER
RYI
P. Downing

The Honorable Bob Filner
Congressman, 50th District, California
House of Representatives
504 Cannon Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Filner:

Thank you for your letter dated September 16, 1993 in which you raise questions about Tijuana-San Diego sewage issues. I have restated your questions followed by my responses. I am pleased to inform you that I plan to discuss these and other questions of great importance with our constituency in the Tijuana River Valley at a public meeting October 6, 1993 in Imperial Beach.

1. Why has the Mexican Government failed to implement a comprehensive water conservation plan to reduce the flow of raw sewage?

The Mexican Government has informed us, through the Mexican IBWC, that Tijuana water use is very limited by virtue of scarce water supply sources, distributing service from 50 to 75 percent of the population and with a high water delivery cost. As a result, the average per capita consumption is 63 gallons per day, as compared to per capita consumption in San Diego of 145 gallons per day. The opportunity to reduce an already low per capita consumption is very limited. Mexico agreed in 1985 to limit its water supply expansion to a rate that does not exceed its sewage collection and treatment capacity. That treatment capacity has been reached and Mexico has indicated a willingness to join the United States in developing additional interim facilities to temporarily handle the excess sewage until the international treatment plant is on line. The international plant and Mexico's present treatment and collection facilities constitute Mexico's comprehensive plan, established in the international agreement in IBWC Minute 283, to handle the sewage that results from its drinking water supply and distribution expansion project presently underway.

2. Why are U. S. taxpayers paying to treat 13 million gallons per day of raw sewage from the Tijuana Municipal Sewage System?

The discharge of up to 13 MGD of Tijuana sewage into the emergency connection to the San Diego system is part of a US/Mexico arrangement to handle Tijuana sewage in excess of its treatment capacity. The arrangement was developed in consultation with the City of San Diego Council, which concurred that the United States Government would cover the cost of works in Mexico to remove dry weather sewage flow from the Tijuana River. In turn, the Mexican Government would cover the cost of intercepting and pumping the sewage from the Tijuana

-2-

River in Mexico so that any excess sewage that could not be handled at Pumping Plant No. 1 would be conveyed by the emergency connection into the San Diego Metro System for treatment. The City indicated it would cover the costs of handling the sewage, but the City Council then successfully urged the Congress to have the United States cover the treatment costs which, in the view of City Council members, is a federal responsibility.

3. Will the proposed holding ponds reduce the flow of sewage in the Tijuana River?

The system I am proposing is for dry weather sewage flow conditions. Under this scenario, the above described diversion works in the river will intercept all dry weather sewage flows. The flows will be transmitted to either (1) Pumping Station No. 1 and thence to the Mexican treatment plant at San Antonio de Los Buenos, (2) the emergency connection, or (3) to proposed return-to-sender ponds in the United States.

When there are large storm flows, or releases from storage facilities in the United States or Mexico, the diversion works will not operate and the river will carry a substantial amount of stormwater to dilute the sewage. The high flows from stormwater or storage releases will at least reduce the impact of pollution. Such is the present case wherein 40 million gallons per day (MGD) storage releases are occurring from Barrett Dam in San Diego and 11 MGD in flow from the Tecate, Mexico area and Rodriguez Dam in Tijuana.

4. Why is the IBWC willing to divert funds and resources away from the International Treatment Plant which only postpones the construction of that solution?

The U. S. Section is recommending a reprogramming of U. S. Section construction project funds, that can be deferred, for replenishment at another time. The majority of the federal funds of the construction of the international treatment plant in San Diego are authorized under the Section 510 of the Clean Water Act. Neither EPA nor the USIBWC has authority to divert these funds for the construction of the proposed interim measures. The request to replenish the reprogrammed funds will be made when needed and will not cause a further delay in completing the international plant.

5. Why build ponds in the United States? Why not build them in Mexico? Why not build a dam in Mexico and use the concrete river channel there as a reservoir?

I have considered several site alternatives. The distance from the Mexican pumping station to the pond must be relatively small and the pond should be at the lowest point to facilitate the sewage capture and return to Mexico. This permits ease in handling accidental surface flows. There are no such sites in Mexico. In my consideration of pond locations in Mexico, I looked at creating more ponding in the concrete channel of the Tijuana River to create a storage facility. As you know, the present Tijuana River diversion works create a small pond to enable this small amount of waters to be pumped to Pumping Plant

-3-

No. 1. A storage pond in this location or even further upstream in Mexico would not provide the ability to capture surface flows from the northward natural drains near Pumping Plant No. 1. In addition, facilities which may obstruct and comprise the flood carrying capacity of the Tijuana Flood Control Project, which is contrary to the U.S./Mexico agreement Minute No. 258. Therefore, I consider the best location for the proposed ponds to be in the United States across the international boundary from Pumping Station No. 1.

I also considered other sites in the United States, but these would not meet the proximity to Pumping Plant No. 1 and low point capture criteria. My proposal calls for the construction of interim measures close to the US/Mexico border on property owned by the United States and managed by the USIBWC.

6. What other options exist for improving the Mexican conveyance and treatment capacities?

I considered first among alternatives the conveyance and treatment by Mexico of all the Tijuana sewage and preventing all transboundary flows in natural drains. I was successful in urging Mexico to plug an overflow line at Stewart's Drain. I was successful in urging Mexico to complete and place into operation pumping stations to safely convey sewage generated in developments along the canyon areas west of Pumping Plant No. 1. I am urging Mexico to complete residential hook-ups in those areas to effectively control those flows. These are important improvements to the conveyance system but the problem is that the Mexican system is currently operating at its reliable pumping capacity of 30 MGD at Pumping Plant No. 1, at its reliable conveyance capacity of 35 MGD in the open channel along the western hillside by the Pacific Ocean, and in excess of the reliable 25 MGD treatment capacity of the San Antonio de los Buenos Treatment Plant. Overloading of Pumping Plant No. 1 may lead to failure of that system to create a more serious problem in the United States. The open channel and treatment plant are situated in treacherous terrain and generally unstable soils. Overloading of the conveyance channel may result in a failure of the Tijuana system, and threaten pollution in the coastal waters. Further, plant overloading will reduce the plant's efficiency even more. Other measures would require extensive new planning and consultation and would take years to complete during which time we will continue to be faced with the existing conditions.

7. Where is the Mexican Government's response to this growing crisis?

The United States and Mexico have responded to the Tijuana sanitation problem with a commitment by Mexico to treat its Tijuana sewage in excess of the San Antonio de los Buenos Treatment Plant capacity in the international treatment plant under IBWC Minute No. 283. This is the solution which cannot be in place until 1998 because the construction schedule in the United States is contingent on completion of environmental studies followed by design development, all consistent with U. S. federal laws. The IBWC's focus is on what to do between now and the completion date of the plant for the health and well being of inhabitants in that area.

-4-

The Mexican IBWC Commissioner considers that there is merit in pursuing technical interim cooperative actions to resolve this situation. It is in this same spirit of cooperation that the two governments were able to arrive at a response to pollution problems in the Tijuana River Valley through the signing of IBWC Minute No. 283. This Minute enables the United States to construct the international treatment plant which provides for a reliable handling of Tijuana sewage. For the preceding 60 years, such a reliable solution eluded the two nations and without the cooperation of Mexico, we would not have this important binational commitment.

I appreciate your questions, and the opportunity to provide additional information. I invite you or a member of your staff to attend the public meeting scheduled at 6:00 p.m., October 6, 1993, at Imperial Beach City Hall. At that meeting we will present our proposal and discuss other alternatives we considered, as well as any that may be proposed by local citizens.

If you have additional questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Narendra N. Gunaji
Commissioner

cc:

Senator Barbara Boxer ✓
Senator Diane Feinstein ✓
Congresswoman Lynn Schenk ✓
Congressman Randall (Duke) Cunningham ✓
Congressman Duncan Hunter ✓
Congressman Ronald C. Packard ✓
Congressman Alfred McCandless ✓
Ms. Felicia Marquez, EPA ✓
Assemblyman Stephen J. Peace ✓
California EPA (CEPA) ✓
Mr. James Stubhaer, State Wtr. Resources Cntrl Bd. ✓
Mr. James Mocalis, Chairman, CA Regional Wtr. Qlty. Control Bd. ✓
Mr. Arthur Coe, Executive Officer, CA Regional Wtr. Qlty. Control Bd. ✓
San Diego Mayor Susan Golding ✓
Imperial Beach Mayor Michael Bixler ✓
San Diego Councilman Juan Bargas ✓
Mr. Brian Bilbray, San Diego County Supvr. ✓
Mr. F. D. Schlesinger, Clean Water Prog. ✓
Mr. Roger Fraunfelder, SD Area Wastewater Mgmt. District ✓
Mr. Harry Seraydarian, EPA ✓
Mr. David Malcolm, CA Coastal Comm. ✓
Mr. Paul Storing, Dept. of State ✓

NNQ:SZ:MRY:PS:mp:ce:9/24/93



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

Office of Mexican Affairs
Room 4258 Main State
FAX No. (202) 647-5752
or FTS 647-5752

F A X T R A N S M I S S I O N S H E E TDATE: 10/22/93

TO: AIMEE CHRISTENSEN, OEP, WH 456-2710
SYLVA CORREA, EPA/OIA 260-4470
JACK LEAMAN, EPA/OW 260-1040
FAX NO.

FROM: Paul E. Storing
Special Assistant, International
Boundary and Water Commission

DESCRIPTION OF
DOCUMENT: ANNOUNCEMENT ON TIJUANA SEWAGE

FOR: Clearance Information Per request Comment Action

REMARKS: MEXICAN SECTION IS MAKING ANNOUNCEMENT
THIS AFTERNOON. WE PASSED ATTACHED DRAFT
PRESS RELEASE TO S.D. CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION
FOR INFO OR THEIR OWN RELEASES, ETC.

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS PAGE

ALSO ATTACHED IS A BRIEFING PAPER USED FOR
AMBASSADOR JONES OCT. 20 IN SAN DIEGO/TIJUANA.
IF THIS TRANSMISSION WAS NOT RECEIVED IN ITS ENTIRETY, PLEASE
NOTIFY US IMMEDIATELY AT (202) 647-8529 (FTS 647-8529)

FOR UNCLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS ONLY

P R E S S R E L E A S E**United States and Mexico Identify
Interim Tijuana Sewage Handling Works**

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In summary:

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-2-

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The IBWC will now develop the international agreement for the specific components and cost distributions by the two countries in the form of an IBWC Minute.

-30-

THE TIJUANA SANITATION PROBLEM AND SOLUTION



NARENDRA N. GUNAGI

**United States Commissioner
International Boundary and Water Commission
United States and Mexico**

ACE-310

4171 North Trow

El Paso, Texas 79902

(915) 534-6677 - Office

(505) 524 1693 - Home

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION UNITED STATES SECTION

International Tijuana Sanitation Project DISTRIBUTION OF COSTS

A. The international solution involves:

- 1) First Stage collection and treatment for old and west Tijuana up to 25 million gallons per day. All in Mexico at Mexico's expense.
- 2) Second Stage international plant treatment in the U.S. to handle east Tijuana sewage. First module of 25 mgd with ocean disposal to meet higher U.S. standards and protect the salt water Tijuana River estuary. Mexico covers the cost that Mexico would have paid for a plant originally proposed in Mexico.
- 3) Third Stage International Plant expansion potential for additional Mexican sewage at Mexico's expense.

B. Cost of International Solution in 1989 U.S. Dollars:

Component	Mexico 1989 est	United States 1989 est	1993 est
1) Stage I			
Mexico Works	\$30		
2) Stage II			
Flow Reversal	\$21	\$ 4	\$ 4
Outfalls		\$37	\$108 a
Intl Plant	\$16	\$79	\$131 b
Total	\$67	\$120	\$243 c

3) Stage III Cost to Mexico

- =====
- a. 1993 Outfalls costs covers segment & mitigation costs, and three-fold increase in ocean outfall length.
 - b. 1993 plant costs are based on design data now available.
 - c. San Diego & California have an additional \$76 million cost share for part use of the outfalls & Tijuana sewage protection benefits.

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION UNITED STATES SECTION

International Tijuana Sanitation Project OVERFLOWS PROBLEM AND SOLUTION

The United States and Mexico are developing immediate and intermediate works near the border to handle potential uncontrolled sewage into the United States from an overloaded Tijuana sanitation system until the permanent international plant solution in 1998. IBWC expects to announce agreement in principle at an October 22 meeting in Tijuana for immediate return to sender works and second phase treatment works at the boundary at a cost shared by the U.S. and Mexico.

Background

Uncontrolled sewage entered the United States from an overflow opening in Mexico's 72" conveyance line near the border in August 1993. The opening was plugged by Mexico and the excess sewage is being handled by overloading Tijuana's principal pumping plant and the conveyance canal to the oceanside treatment plant. This presents a risk of breakdowns in the plant, unless these peak period excess flows are handled in the U.S. at the boundary and return to Mexico overnight when there is less sewage in the Mexican system.

The return to sender arrangement would control the problem for about one year. At that time excess flows in Tijuana will not be totally handled by the Tijuana system. A second phase U.S./Mexico arrangement will be necessary. The IBWC is considering construction of an advanced primary treatment plant adjacent to the border. The plant would eventually match other modules of the international treatment plant which is now in design, and become part of the permanent solution.

AVERAGE DAILY FLOWS
(In Million Gallons Per Day - MGD)

Year	Total Flows	Plant #1 Capacity	Westside Inflows	Canal Capacity	Excess Flows
1993	44	25	9	31	13
1 94	47	25	7	32	15
1995	50	25	8	33	17
1 96	53	25	9	34	19
1 97	56	25	9	34	25

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION UNITED STATES SECTION

International Tijuana Sanitation Project INTERNATIONAL SOLUTION

- 1. Mexico, at Mexican expense, completes collection and treatment works to handle up to 25 mgd of sewage from old and west Tijuana.**

**Treatment Plant
Collection works**

**Completed
90 % complete**

- 2. U.S. Constructs, at U.S. and Mexico expense, international plant in U.S. at boundary to handle 25 mgd of sewage from east Tijuana.**

**Land Outfall Part 1
Land Outfall Part 2
Ocean Outfall
International Plant**

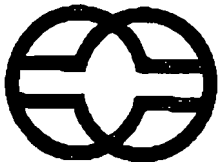
**Completed
In design
In design
In design**

- 3. Mexico constructs & pays for 84% of improved and new collectors needed to reverse sewage flows to the international plant from original flow to a plant originally proposed in Mexico.**

**Improved works
New works**

**Completed
In design**

- 4. Mexico may seek additional capacity at that country's expense**
- 5. Mexico undertakes source controls in Tijuana at that country's expense.**


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Sunday 10.17.93
 Amy Christensen
 White House OEP

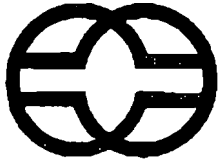
Amy—

Sorry this took a while. I couldn't get off
 the phone long enough to write it last
 week. One of the people I spoke to, I
 think Thursday, was Twig Johnson of
 US AID Environment & Nat. Resources.
 He knows Imperial Beach Mayor Bixler
 and had just come back from lunch with
 Dan Blank and Alan Hecht of EPA.

Mayor Bixler is prepared to ask his City
 Council for 50K to get our proposed pre-
 design + evaluation going (see Memo p. 6-7).
 & Twig Johnson is very supportive & wants
 to help. I really think this has the makings
 of a big success that will surely help
 NAFTA — now & later.

All best, Michael

Si-ko-so lei'kōō v [from Nisenan Native American] 1. to work (to get to work)


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MEMORANDUM

DETERMINED TO BE AN ADMINISTRATIVE

 MARKING INITIALS MAH DATE 3/2/2003

DATE: October 15, 1993

TO: Amy Christensen, White House Office of Environmental Policy

RE: IBWC Meetings, San Diego, Oct. 5-6 & Tijuana River Valley Solution

FROM: Michael Killigrew, Nevada City, CA

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

INTRODUCTION

This memorandum is in follow-up to my memo dated Oct. 4. It provides a report on the Oct. 5 meeting and dinner, and the Oct. 6 private and public meetings in San Diego and Imperial Beach respectively with IBWC Commissioner Dr. N. Gunaji and staff. Attached please find a copy of the attendance list of the Oct. 6 private meeting.

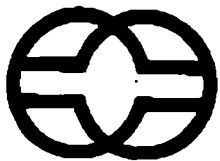
The real breakthrough resulting from this two-day intensive review of the Tijuana River Valley pollution crisis is Dr. Gunaji's public declaration that he is open to active consideration of alternative, more environmentally friendly technologies, specifically advanced biological treatment systems. Alternative systems could serve both emergency response and permanent solution needs, and can be constructed and in operation in a year or less at probably half the cost of conventional systems.

Mexican Consul General Gustavo Iruegas, who attended all meetings except the evening public meeting in Imperial Beach Oct. 6, conveyed this concept and some supportive written material personally at the end of last week to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Urban Development and the Environment. The material was also forwarded to Mexican IBWC Commissioner Arturo Herrera. The Consul General believes his government will be open to immediate consideration of advanced biological treatment systems on the Mexican side of the border, as reflected in the final paragraph of the Oct. 13 Mexican Foreign Ministry press release (attached). There are positive implications here for the Border Cleanup Initiative, and of course for NAFTA.

The Consul General suggested that after you have had a chance to fully review the situation, it would be most appropriate for Katie McGinty to compare notes with Mr. Santiago Onate, formerly with OAS in Washington, now National Attorney for the Environment in Mexico City. Direct contact with Mr. Onate can be readily established through Mr. Mario Aguilar at the Mexican Embassy.

The Consul General of course has no jurisdiction in this matter as such and will withdraw from major involvement after the Mexican IBWC meeting proposed in the Oct. 13 press release. However, since the Consulate has been the recipient of over 100 telegrams from US citizens protesting what is publicly perceived as Mexican inaction, he has seen it as his duty to advise his government of any and all possible roads to a responsible and timely solution. At the same time, he and we ourselves are fully aware of IBWC sensitivities and

SIKOSO is 'kōōō vi (from Nisēnār: Native American) 1. to work (together)

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prerogatives, and the IBWC (and other key players) are being kept fully informed as to current NGO initiatives.

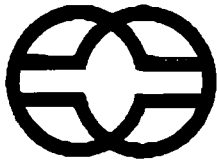
OCT. 5 MEETING & DINNER: THE IBWC PROPOSAL & ALTERNATIVES

The Mexican Consul General received Imperial Beach Mayor Michael Bixler, IBWC Commissioner Dr. N. Gunaji and IBWC staff Joe Valdez, Bob Ybarra and Rene Valenzuela, and Tom Wolfe, Jack Laughlin and myself representing Sikoso, at the Consulate at 3 PM. IBWC's concern is obvious. Sikoso was asked by Mayor Bixler to help transform the Oct. 6 morning meeting from an occasion for Tijuana River Valley residents to express their concerns privately to the Commissioner to a "brainstorming" event for all key decision makers and the Commissioner and staff. The Consul General's main mission was to express to us his government's and his own personal concern at being singled out publicly as the party at fault. He showed us a thick sheaf of telegrams and messages from American local residents protesting the continuing pollution, and wanted us to be aware the Mexican government was prepared to take action--unilateral if necessary--to correct the situation.

The dinner that evening, hosted by Mayor Bixler and Imperial Beach Councilman Steve Haskins, provided an occasion for Dr. Gunaji to informally present the proposed IBWC interim solution. In addition to all individuals above, the dinner was attended by US Consul General in Tijuana Edwin P. Cubbison, Dr. Clifton G. Metzner, Jr. of the Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias (formerly US State Department), Dave Schlesinger, Director of the San Diego Clean Water Program (CWP) and Gary Watts, representing District Director Ed Navarro of California State Parks.

The IBWC interim solution as presented by Dr. Gunaji is substantially as sketched out on p. 3 of my Oct. 4 memo. However, the retention pond will accommodate 10 MGD, not 25. Extra capacity can be added through one or more modular package units @ 2 MGD each. Sewage would be returned to Pumping Station #1 in Tijuana during off-peak hours at night. An alternative or added option would be to use the 12,600' completed section of the 12' diameter "South Bay Land and Ocean Outfall" pipe to store sewage during the day and pump it back at night via a surge tower on Spooners Mesa to the Punta Bandera plant in Tijuana. The capacity of the 12' pipe for this purpose would be 10 million gallons. A pumping facility would need to be constructed at the present Goat Canyon terminus of the pipe.

Dave Schlesinger of CWP then presented his version of the IBWC plan. It is the same in most essentials, except that he proposes to immediately begin construction of a temporary extension of the Ocean Outfall, i.e. from the Goat Canyon terminus across the estuary to the beach, then south into Mexico for 4-5 miles, then a short distance into the ocean. The Outfall pipe would be buried 3 feet deep and would have to traverse either California State Parks or federal (US Fish & Wildlife) land. Mr. Schlesinger expressed little if any concern for environmental problems associated with his proposal, did not take into account the strong likelihood that ocean currents would send the effluent right back onto American beaches, and repeated several times that it all hinged on

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Mexico's willingness to allow effluent release in ocean waters off the Tijuana coast. Mr. Iruegas indicated to me privately this might present a serious problem. It would be difficult to ask Mexico to accept a temporary solution that would be absolutely unacceptable to our EPA.

On behalf of Sikoso, environmental NGOs, and the expressed interests of some key local decisionmakers, including Chairman of the Board of Supervisors Brian Bilbray, I presented a potential alternative solution in terms of advanced biological treatment ponds linked to constructed wetlands. This option is described in greater detail in my Oct. 4 memo. As it now appears, this is the only system presently contemplated capable of delivering tertiary treatment and, as indicated in the Introduction above, it could be functional in about a year's time. The most logical approach would be to construct a 15 MGD system out of the flood plain at Goat Canyon, and two or three decentralized systems totalling a further 25 MGD on the Mexican side, possibly in Tecate and at the confluence of the Rio El Alamar and Tijuana.

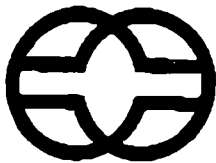
In other words, it is entirely possible that by late 1994, early 1995, 40 MGD would be treated to a tertiary level. Emergency needs are addressed in this way, and you would have as well an invaluable addition to any permanent solution, no matter what happens to the present International Wastewater Treatment Plant proposal. Effluent from this system should be reclaimed water meeting California Title 22 standards, i.e. suitable for agricultural use, aquafir augmentation, live stream discharge (nevermind ocean outfall) and wetlands. Constructed wetlands added to this option would provide further tertiary polishing, major wildlife benefits and in general form an important part of already planned San Diego County Parks, California State Parks, California Coastal Conservancy, NOAA and US Fish and Wildlife environmental restoration efforts in the Tijuana River Valley and Estuary.

Dr. Gunaji graciously conceded this concept had intrinsic merit and could substantially add to any other measures carried out by IBWC, interim or permanent, and he expressed his support for a fast-track engineering, environmental and fiscal analysis and evaluation.

NOTE: Given the NAFTA calendar, every effort will be bent toward having this evaluation completed--either separately or as part of a preliminary design proposal--for your consideration and that of the State Department, IBWC, EPA, etc. before Thanksgiving, in order to allow this solution to a "success story" part of a possible joint US-Mexican presidential announcement in the context of the Border Cleanup Initiative.

THE OCT. 6 MORNING MEETING

All participants in the Oct. 5 dinner attended the private meeting at 9:30 AM, Oct. 6, chaired by Mayor Mike Bixler in the board room of the San Diego Association of Governments. Federal, state, county and city agencies were fully represented, as well as elected San Diego and Imperial Beach City, San Diego County, State Assembly and Congressional and Senate public officials, the academic community and Tijuana River Valley residents. An attendance

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list is attached, taken after the break, with several individuals missing as a result, including San Diego Assemblywoman Dede Alpert.

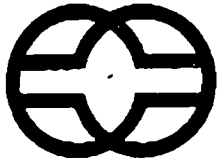
The IBWC, CWP and advanced biological treatment proposals were presented as outlined above.

Fairly intense questioning of Dr. Gunaji ensued, led by Supervisor Brian Bilbray and San Diego City Councilman Juan Vargas. The former expressed concern regarding likely further delays, lack of Mexican participation, the substance of the IBWC proposal and potential environmental objections. Dr. Martin Kenney of US Fish and Wildlife expressed similar concern about the IBWC/CWP proposals and indicated strong support for consideration of advanced biological ponds combined with constructed wetlands. District Director Francisco Estrada on behalf of Rep. Filner expressed determined opposition to the IBWC/CWP proposals and questioned the need for any emergency response given MGD figures cited by IBWC. Councilman Vargas believes Mexico has fallen down on the job, that nothing should be constructed on the US side, and that Mexico should take full responsibility for its own waste and immediately construct treatment facilities south of the border. Consul General Iruegas and Dep. Consul General Martha Ortiz de Rosas listened stoically.

I personally believe Filner's questions need to be answered, but that IBWC figures re current raw sewage flow and Mexican capacity may be soft and thus misleading. Really all you need to do to understand the concerns of local residents and assess emergency response needs is see untreated sewage flow into Goat Canyon, for instance, as it is doing right now. It would seem to be clear that doing something under these circumstances is better than doing nothing.

While there was general support for the alternative option, a concern expressed by Sup. Bilbray and others focuses on potential major delays in evaluation and permitting process of advanced biological treatment ponds/constructed wetlands. Anne Rast, Chief of Special Operations for SD Parks and Recreation, pointed out that this option would have almost undoubted full support from environmental regulatory agencies plus NGOs, and, given fast-track evaluation, permitting should be no problem. Rast, a sharp and sympathetic woman working closely with County Parks Director Bob Copper, will pursue this issue further personally with Sup. Bilbray in order to satisfy his concerns. Bob Copper's wife Elizabeth, incidentally, is a biologist and environmental advocate working closely with noted national wetlands authority Dr. Joy Zedler of San Diego State University. Dr. Zedler's support is essential in this process, and we were able to contact her via e-mail in Australia and receive her imprimatur in principle. She will be back in early November and we will consult her at that time.

Important from the public support aspect: The Tijuana River Valley representatives, including Dave Gomez of CRAP (this marvellous acronym signifies "Citizens Revolting Against Pollution") asked pointed and good questions, ending up fully in support of the Sikoso alternative proposal.


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At the conclusion of the morning meeting I was able to consult in detail with US Fish and Wildlife staff Dr. Martin Kenney, Chief of Environmental Support, and Tom Alexander, Refuge Manager, Southern California Coastal Refuge Complex. They pointed out a site for a potential 15 MGD advanced biological pond treatment system immediately adjoining Goat Canyon to the northeast. It is currently badly eroded, but leased for dry farming to Reuben "Danny" Marschall and owned by the local gravel company who also own an adjoining part of the Dairy Mart Road IWTP site. (I spoke with Danny Marschall at the evening public meeting and he is entirely in support of the alternative option.) The site is out of the floodplain and could be linked to constructed wetlands below, on State Parks/City of San Diego "General Management" land. Kenney and Alexander would fully support such a proposal.

Finally, at this meeting, Dr. Gunaji upon my questioning once again publicly committed himself to support of immediate consideration of the alternative proposal, declaring himself willing to back a short-term approach to EPA and/or other appropriate federal agencies for funding of a fast-track engineering etc. analysis and evaluation.

THE OCT. 6 EVENING IMPERIAL BEACH CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The 6 PM Imperial Beach City Council Meeting was packed. Many of the public official representatives from the morning meeting were in attendance, including Sup. Bilbray, Ralph Inzunza representing Councilman Vargas, Francisco Estrada for Rep. Filner, Mike Richmond representing Rep. Schenk, Mat Hale for Sen. Boxer, etc.

The best way to characterize this event is to say that IBWC got blasted by major public anger and frustration. Dr. Gunaji did not speak until the very end, and then only to ask for input on the resolution adopted by the City Council. The IBWC proposal was presented by staff. Given the mood of the public, I have to say IBWC did well under fire.

NOTE: "No NAFTA without cleanup!" got a big hand. These are the same people who were on network news during the January '93 Tijuana River flood. They make up in volume what they lack in numbers. You definitely don't want them screaming bloody murder while Congress considers NAFTA. Better to have them vocally on your side, and that means immediate adoption of emergency cleanup measures.

After much public testimony, IBWC said they were open to new ideas and did not insist on their open pond ("stinky pond" as characterized by Sen. Boxer's staff) solution. They were willing to go to a "vaulted" i.e. closed-off system. CWP's Dave Schlesinger presented his version of the interim solution, involving the temporary ocean outfall in Mexico, and I spoke about advanced biological treatment ponds and the need to involve Mexico fully, followed by a presentation from Swanson Oswald Associates, who played an important role in the development of this technology in the '60's and '70's.



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Several public speakers had earlier indicated their knowledge and approval of advanced biological treatment alternatives, including Ron Mullis, a Tijuana River Valley resident and rancher, Paul Slayton, president of SWIA (Southwest Wetland Interpretive Center, founded by leading Imperial Beach environmentalists Mike and Pat McCoy), and young geography Ph.d candidate Serge Dedina, a longtime San Diego lifeguard out of work part of this summer due to beach closures, and San Diego chair of "Save our Surf." Councilwoman Diane Rose--who spoke convincingly in favor of immediate consideration of these alternatives--told me later she was watching the faces of Valley residents while I spoke and the SOA representative showed photos of the Arcata constructed wetlands, and saw them "clearing up." Valley residents have been hard-core, vocal opponents of any ponds; I spoke to many of them during and after the hearing and got a great response, so this is an important turnaround.

Sikoso, with the invaluable help of Imperial Beach City Councilman Steve Haskins, prepared a one-page statement (attached) outlining the alternative proposal: a middle-aged black speaker, maybe an ex-shipyard worker, in any case a respected local, who was particularly scathing about IBWC, took a stack of our one-pagers spontaneously and went around the room handing them out.

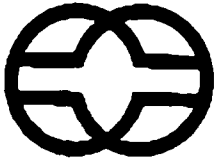
Mayor Bixler proposed a City Council resolution supporting immediate consideration of advanced biological treatment, along with a fast-track review of the IBWC and CWP emergency options. The other Council members were unanimous in their support and the resolution will be formally adopted at the next Council meeting, Oct. 20.

CONCLUSION: NEXT STEPS

The vision is that an immediate, environmentally sensitive interim solution to the Tijuana River Valley problem is announced by President Clinton and President Salinas as part of a joint Border Cleanup Initiative statement before Thanksgiving in order to give the maximum boost possible to NAFTA.

Sikoso has begun to put together a US-Mexican team of experts; already signed on: Dr. Robert Gearheart of Arcata Marsh [constructed wetlands] fame--who will approach Dr. William Oswald, senior member of the original Swanson Oswald design team--Camp Dresser McKee, a leading engineering firm involved in the State Department's WASH group (international wastewater emergency response) and designers for IBWC of a 31 MGD facility in Nuevo Laredo and, on the Mexican side, Aulatec SA de CV and Dicotec, subsidiaries of Cydsa Corporation, who are building the Nuevo Laredo plant.

An evaluation of the different advanced biological treatment options, and various linkage possibilities to constructed wetlands, needs to be part of an accelerated, site-specific pre-design report for systems in the Tijuana River Valley--probably Goat Canyon--and south of the border--probably Tecate and Rio El Alamar/Tijuana. The evaluation and pre-design report should be in your hands by Nov. 15, so the appropriate recommendations can be made to the President as regards the Tijuana River Valley aspect of the Border Cleanup Initiative.

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Design and construction of an advanced biological emergency response system in 1994 should be a joint US-Mexican effort, under the aegis of IBWC. Due to Dr. Gunaji's change of heart as a result of the meetings described above, this is now a practical possibility. But what is important right away is that the alternative technology evaluation and pre-design report, in conjunction with a thorough consensus management campaign to obtain buy-in from all key stakeholders, be funded and go forward on an emergency basis, in order to meet the NAFTA political deadline, and then proceed at once to conceptual and preliminary design stages.

We have had real success in moving people to common ground so far. The next 4-6 weeks will be critical in coming to the desired conclusion.

Attendance List

Oct 6, 1993

NAME	AGENCY	TELEPHONE
Dion McMichaux	IBWC	(619) 428-7401
Mike Richmond	Cong. Lynn Seaman	" 291-1430
Matt Hale	Sen. Barbara Boxer	" 239-3884
Ralph Inzunza	Councilman Vargas	" 236-6688
VINCENT HALL	REP. BOB FILNER	422-5963
Bob Cooper	SAN DIEGO COUNTY PARKS	694-3031
ANNE RAST	"	"
PETE FLORES	Sup Brian Billy	531-5511
CAROL LAMON	TJR Task Force	424-3684
Caroli Hicks	Tijuana River Valley Equestrian Assoc	575-8960
Don O'Connell	RESIDENT/RANCHER	423-3858
DON O'CONNEL	ASSEMBLYMAN PATA	426-1617
SHEREMANN	US Rep. Cunningham	737-8438
TOM Cleary	State Coastal Conservancy	(510) 286 4089
Elena Eger	I.B. Chamber of Commerce	424-3151
Barbara Chasin	CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS	237-6766
GARY WATTS	MAYOR SUSAN GOLDING	236-6330
MITCHELL BERNER	Congressman Bob Filner	422-5963
Francisco Estrada	CITIZENS RAUORTING ^{AGAINST} Pollution	423-7201
DAVID GONZALEZ	Imperial Beach City Council	236-1323
Steve Haskins	San Diego Area Wastewater District	533-5460
Roger Frauenfelder	Sikoso Corp	716432-9561
Thomas D White	SEN. DIANNE FEINSTEIN	231-9712
Joan Dean + David Pugh	REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTR. BD	467-2888
MICHAEL MCCANN	Deputy Consul General of Mexico	231 8414
Martha Ortiz de Rosas	Tijuana River Estuary Reserve Mgt Auth.	463-7099
Charles Cooper	Secretary, Int'l Boundary Water Comm.	(915) 534-6698
Bob Ybarra	P.R.B. APP. OFFICER, US IBWC	(915) 534-6681
D. L. A. Valdez		

Attendance List

Oct 6, 1993

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>TELEPHONE</u>
Jack Laughlin	SIKOSO Corp.	619-767-3002
MARTIN J. KENNEY	U.S. FISH + WILDLIFE SERVICE	(619) 431-9440
Tom Alexander	"	(619) 575-1290
Shere Mann	Assemblyman Peace	(619) 426-1617
Don Orel	RESIDENT RANCHER	-
Jimmie Jackson	Assemblyman Oge Alper	(619) 234-7878
Ron Mullis	Resident	(619) 428-6867
GUSTAVO RUEGAS	CONSUL OF MEXICO	(619) 231-84-14
Michael Bish	Mayor, Imperial Beach	423-8220
Dave Schlesinger	Director, Clean Water Program	533-4201
Cliff Metzner	San Diego State University	594 5423
LIM MOCALIS	SAN DIEGO REG. WATER Q.C.B.M.	(909) 677-7667
FLOYD WATKINS	TA TASK FORCE	(619) 428-6122
MICHAEL KILLIGREW	SIKOSO	916-282-9130
N. N. GUNAJI	IBWC	905-534-6677
Joe Valdez	IBWC	915-534-6693



CONSULADO GENERAL DE MEXICO

COMUNICADO

PRESS RELEASE
COMUNICADO DE PRENSA
October 13, 1993

As the public knows, in recent years the governments of Mexico and the United States, through the International Commission on Limits and Waters (ICLW), have dedicated themselves to the search for a solution to the problems of treatment of residual waters in the border area between Tijuana and San Diego. In 1990, an agreement was signed for the construction of a large bi-national plant which will receive waters from both cities for treatment and disposition, according to the highest environmental standards. The construction of this plant should have started in 1992, but budget reductions ordered by the Congress of the United States have delayed this project, which now can not be fully working on the planned date.

The Government of Mexico has a commitment to finance its part of the project and the resources have been available since the resolution was adopted.

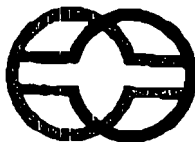
As periodically happens, heavy rains fell on the region during the present year, so that the channels of overflowing dams in charge have surpassed the capacity of water control of the hydraulic system of the basin of the Tijuana River, causing involuntary back-ups of untreated waters from the City of Tijuana, at the mouth of the river, especially affecting the city of Imperial Beach, California.

In light of this situation and sharing the concern of the river area communities which are directly affected, the Ministry of Foreign Relations has decided to instruct the Mexican Commissioner of Limits and Water with the United States to convoke an emergency meeting of the ICLW in the city of Tijuana.

In this meeting, in which Mexican officials and experts from the Ministry of Social Development and the National Water Commission and their American counterparts, as well as representatives of the affected communities will participate, the best way to confront this situation immediately will be sought, until the construction and inauguration of the bi-national plant can be concluded, taking into account all the viable options which have been proposed so that the environmental situation in the border region be re-established as soon as possible.

1549 INDIA STREET, SAN DIEGO, CA 92101, (619)231-8414, FAX (619)231-4802

Bill Pistor

**SIKOSO**

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 4, 1993
TO: Amy Christensen
White House Office of Environmental Policy
RE: Tijuana River Valley Pollution Control Alternatives
FROM: Michael Killigrew, Nevada City, CA

Page 1 of 12
(202) 456-2710

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ DETERMINED TO BE AN ADMINISTRATIVE

MARKING INITIALS: May DATE: 7/21/2017

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide perspective on local public as well as informed opinion on the Tijuana River Valley sewage pollution crisis, briefly discuss program and treatment alternatives to the present IBWC emergency approach, and report on objectives for a private meeting of most key players with IBWC Commissioner Dr. Narendra Gunaji and staff, to be chaired by Imperial Beach Mayor Mike Bixler at 10 a.m. October 6, 1993 in San Diego

THE SITUATION AT PRESENT

As you are well aware, it has been another summer of closed beaches in the San Diego area, with the Tijuana River little better than an open sewer, allowing up to 15 MGD (million gallons per day) of raw sewage and industrial waste--the latter alleged to come from US plants on the Mexican side--to enter the US from Tijuana. This flow was recently increased but diluted by large releases from the Barrett Dam in the US and the Rodriguez Dam in Mexico. Alongside resolutions by Imperial Beach, Chula Vista and the City of San Diego, Governor Wilson declared a State of Emergency September 10. The President has been on the phone with such vocal public servants as San Diego City Councilman Juan Vargas and corresponded with Congresswoman Lynn Schenk and Mayor Bixler among others. In the meantime, the public mood can be best described as one of indignation, outright anger, extreme frustration, and confusion as regards proposed action by EPA and IBWC.

For local residents this a never ending rerun, and they are sick of it.

Siiko-so la'kzoō' (from Nisidhan Native American) 1. to work (together)

16200 Glick Road, P.O. Box 190
Rough & Ready, CA 95971
Tel 916 432-9561, Fax 916 432-9562

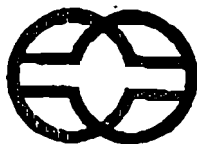
17960 Tyler Foote Crossing, Nevada City, CA 95959
Tel 916 292-9150, Fax 916 292-9155
E-mail (internet): direct@igc.org

625 Riata Drive, P.O. Box 626
Barrington Springs, CA 92004
Tel 619 767-3002, Fax 619 767-3258

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- Volatile (but smart and well-informed) 1st District Supervisor, Brian Bilbray, Chairman of the Board and also former Imperial Beach Mayor and San Diego County Wilson campaign manager, refers to his own children in this context as "second generation shit kids." (He is key to a workable solution.)
- Tijuana River Valley residents have lined the roads with angry, sarcastic signs despairing of action and blaming "environmentalists" for its absence.
- The IBWC and EPA are seen as ineffective and, whatever his virtues, IBWC Commissioner Gunaji is perceived by many as having been in the past inflexible, arrogant, and unwilling to evaluate technologies other than hard civil engineering for potential short and/or long term solutions. The IBWC US Section is seen as patronizing of the Mexicans, while the Mexican government routinely ignores responsible recommendations from its own technical and academic professionals. A frequent suggestion from the environmental community is to replace Gunaji with an open minded activist, who understands natural systems and is not a civil engineer.
- The combination of raw sewage and as many as 4,000 illegals (according to local sources) crossing the border from Mexico every night has created an emotional and potentially explosive anti-Mexican atmosphere further jeopardizing NAFTA: "No NAFTA without cleanup," appears to be a fairly widely-shared sentiment.
- Civil disobedience and drastic illegal action to embarrass Mexico are quietly spoken of in some quarters, such as tossing garbage collected after the January Tijuana River flood over the border fence onto the adjacent Tijuana freeway, or blocking renegade sewage streams in the Valley to create an immediate crisis on the Mexican side.
- Partisan rumors abound claiming the Republican Central Committee plans to exploit the crisis to unseat freshmen Reps. Schenk and Filner.
- In spite of several joint agency groups meeting regularly, communication has been poor and little effective cooperation is in evidence on either side of the border.
- All agree action must come at once, but there is no consensus on what kind of action. Rep. Filner and Sen. Boxer are on record firmly opposing IBWC's interim holding pond and "return-to-sender" proposal; Supervisor Bilbray is against it; local and national environmental NGOs, US Fish and Wildlife, California State Parks, City of San Diego Mayor's office environmental and planning staff, the Mayor and City Council of Imperial Beach and San Diego County Parks & Recreation seriously question the proposal, and in general there is great public concern that the IBWC


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temporary pond will be smelly and pose yet another danger to the public health.

THE IBWC INTERIM SOLUTION

The details of the IBWC proposal must be familiar to you. Commissioner Gunaji and IBWC staff will formally present their ideas regarding an interim solution at a regular public meeting of the Imperial Beach City Council at 6 p.m., October 6. This evening meeting will have been preceded by the morning private gathering mentioned in the introduction above. The morning meeting's purpose is further explained below. In answering our questions regarding the IBWC proposal, State Department, IBWC and EPA staff have been uniformly courteous and helpful. With their assistance and that of Congressional and Senate staff and well-informed local public officials, the picture that emerges is as follows:

- IBWC has formally proposed a 25 MGD retention pond at Dairy Mart Road (close to the proposed site of the International Wastewater Treatment Plant - IWTP) with limited aeration and chemical "cover" for odor control. Sewage would be held during the day and then conveyed back to Pumping Station #1 right across the border in Tijuana during off peak hours at night. This is the famous "return-to-sender" option. It is not clear where the sewage will be coming from. Does it involve currently untreated river flows--whether concentrated or dilute--or come from existing diversions on the Mexican side, thus expanding Tijuana's sewage treatment system at the expense of the US taxpayer as Sen. Boxer assumes in her letter to Sec. Warren Christopher dated September 24, 1993? It is also not clear how this proposal relates to or incorporates the present 13 MGD emergency diversion from Tijuana Pumping Station #1 to San Diego's Point Loma Treatment Plant.
- Informally so far, the IBWC proposal also appears to include one or more modular, "off-the-shelf" chemical/mechanical package units of 2 MGD or 5 MGD each to further expand emergency response capability. These units would send secondary treated effluent through the presently existing portion of the South Bay Land and Ocean Outfall. This 12' diameter concrete pipe runs West underground from Dairy Mart Road to Goat Canyon. ~~Dave Schlesinger~~, Director of the San Diego Clean Water Program, has just written the President proposing an executive order allowing CWP to take over from IBWC completion of the Outfall to the Pacific--by tunneling under or trenching through the Tijuana River estuary--and improving by a year and a half on IBWC's 1998 projected completion date. In the meantime, IBWC is apparently proposing a temporary fiberglass pipe above ground from Goat Canyon across the estuary to the beach, then South in Mexico about 4 miles, then out to sea a minimal distance.

• Mayor Golding sent the letter

shoot shit to Mexico

Amy Christensen

-3-

4 October 1993

very open, listening
IBWC was there -
Mexicans didn't go to dinner.
Consul General was there.

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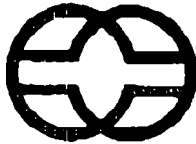
➤ Principal objections to the IBWC interim solution include the following:

- (1) The chemical cover won't work and odors will be highly noticeable.
- (2) The temporary above-ground ocean outfall will meet strong opposition from environmental organizations and state and federal agencies (ocean currents will send the effluent right back on southern San Diego beaches); environmental permitting may well turn out to be impossible.
- (3) The "return-to-sender" option will fail as a result of breakdowns at the already overburdened Pumping Station #1 or further down the line in the dilapidated Tijuana system.
- (4) Through breakdowns in Mexico, the US temporary pond will be overburdened in its turn, resulting in system leaks and a consequent public health hazard.
- (5) There appears to be no substantial Mexican initiative as part of the emergency response, and especially no commitment to effective point source control on their side before sewage enters the Tijuana River.
- (6) Significant short term increases in Mexican uses of Colorado River water, with concomitant increases in unplanned for wastewater flows.

➤ Another public perception is the concern that "temporary solutions", even if unsatisfactory, tend to become permanent in order to save money. In this case, the worry is that the holding pond, the "return-to-sender" mechanism and the modular units will simply be incorporated into the permanent IWTP in order to expand its capacity.

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

In light of the above objections, most strongly expressed by Sen. Boxer and Rep. Filner, advanced biological treatment alternatives should be considered a potential integral part of any emergency solution. The need for an alternative or "emergency" solution, of course, stems from the fact that the present IBWC schedule for completing the first phase of the IWTP and the ocean outfall is 1998 and may suffer further delays because of design decisions and funding limitations. In addition, the present projections of population and industrial growth in Tijuana, combined with weather variations, suggest that the 25 MGD capacity proposed for the first phase of the IWTP may be quickly overwhelmed and that a cooperative program for the construction of wastewater treatment capacity in

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Mexico as well as in the U.S. may be essential to practical control of Tijuana River water quality.

Considering these factors, the ideal emergency solution would be one that:

- (1) Reduces untreated wastewater flows into the Tijuana River Valley as quickly as possible.
- (2) Integrates the environmental and planning objectives of the agencies involved in the management of public lands in the valley and estuary.
- (3) Incorporates the emergency system as a component of IBWC's long-term solution for wastewater treatment.
- (4) Demonstrates wastewater treatment technology which would be applicable to the construction of new plant capacity and the upgrading of existing plants in Mexico.

To meet these objectives a bi-national technical team and advisory group could be formed to evaluate cost-effective and technically proven pond-based biological treatment processes which could be installed on fast-track but permanent basis above the 100 year flood plain in the valley and linked to constructed wetlands, restored wetlands or recreational lakes consistent with the interests of Tijuana River Valley residents, the San Diego County Department of Parks & Recreation, California State Parks, the City of San Diego, U.S. Fish & Wildlife, NOAA, the California Coastal Conservancy and other agencies involved in the management of the Tijuana River estuary.

The teams could function under the existing project organizational structure established by EPA and IBWC, share agency and contractor resources where practical, and provide specific expertise in biological treatment processes as required to transcend traditional civil engineering approaches to wastewater treatment.

The U.S. Program

Based on Sikoso's preliminary analysis it appears that a pond-based wastewater treatment system, with a capacity of 10 to 15 MGD, could be installed in Goat Canyon or an acceptable alternate site in the valley. Constructed or restored wetlands could be designed for integration into the San Diego County Department of Parks & Recreation program plan for the Tijuana River Valley with options available for wastewater reclamation and/or live stream discharge.

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San Diego County Parks and Recreation feels that up to 15 MGD of reclaimed water can be used for near-term agricultural and wetlands projects on their lands. With either reclamation or discharge of tertiary quality effluent, a substantial improvement of river water quality in the valley and in the ocean discharge would result.

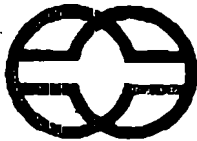
The alternative system incorporating advanced ponding technology and constructed wetlands would offer the following advantages:

- Advanced ponding technologies, which have numerous operating examples, have demonstrated that pond area can be minimized, odor and mosquitos can be controlled and that sludge production can be greatly reduced over conventional activated sludge processes such as the proposed "package plants" would likely incorporate.
- Ponding systems can be designed for a high degree of flexibility in handling variations in flow and waste water quality and are particularly adaptable to the combinations of sewage and industrial wastes which are anticipated from the Tijuana River.
- Constructed wetlands provide an economical and environmentally compatible means of tertiary treatment, enhancement of wildlife habitat and, most importantly, elimination of a major component of river pollution through reclamation, recharge or controlled live stream discharge.
- According to qualified consultants, pond-based systems in the range of 10 to 15 MGD can be constructed in less than a year on a fast-track basis.
- The capital and operating costs of advanced ponding systems are generally less than half that of conventional mechanical systems, where land value is moderate.

The bi-national technical and advisory teams would develop a conceptual design and cost estimate including technology selection, site selection and a recommended fast-track program for environmental permitting, detailed design and construction. The program would involve active participation of community, agency and political representatives with a strong focus on "consensus management." Given the current crisis, the "NAFTA window" and the commonality of interests we have seen, it is very likely that a consensus solution can be reached, if the representative parties can be effectively integrated into the bi-national teams described above.

The Mexico Program

In the mid-1980's Mexico embarked on their own program for increasing wastewater

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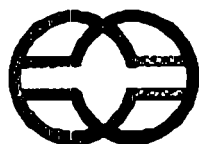
capacity in Tijuana as an alternative to investing in an international wastewater treatment plant in the U.S. Under this plan 25 MGD of treatment capacity using aerated facultative lagoons was constructed at Punta Bandera about four miles south of Tijuana. Further expansions of treatment capacity in Mexico were abandoned in the late 1980's when the U.S. concluded that it was preferable for Mexico to invest in the International plant rather than counting on Mexico's ability to design and operate additional plants which would discharge to the Tijuana River.

While the decision to process Tijuana wastewater discharges in the U.S. may have made sense based on Mexico's poor track record of financial commitments and operating success, the present forecast of residential and industrial growth in Tijuana, along with recent periods of heavy rainfall runoff and the coming of NAFTA, strongly indicates that the ultimate control of water quality in the Tijuana River cannot be achieved without an active program in Mexico to increase wastewater capacity, control sources of contamination before they enter the river and to separate natural rainfall runoff from sewage and industrial waste sources.

A cooperative involvement of Mexican participants in the Tijuana River Valley emergency wastewater treatment program provides a logical starting point for looking at technology and funding options for upgrading the Tijuana wastewater collection and treatment systems. Affordable biological wastewater treatment technology could be identified with the following potential applications in mind:

- Doubling the capacity of the existing Punta Bandera plant with effluent treated to a level suitable for agricultural irrigation.
- Installing new capacity for Tecate which would include both sewage treatment and industrial waste treatment of streams presently entering the Rio El Alamar drainage.
- Installing a new collection system and wastewater treatment plant at the Rio El Alamar site with effluent treated to a level suitable for irrigation in the Rio El Alamar Valley or conveyed to farms located east of Rosarito.
- Collecting wastewater at the confluence of the Rio El Alamar and Tijuana Rivers and conveying the wastewater south to a wastewater treatment and reclamation plant located east of Rosarito.

The viability of Mexican programs will be heavily dependent on a dedicated international commitment to funding, to scheduling priorities and operating and maintenance skills. While history suggests that these may be difficult to come by, the window of opportunity offered by NAFTA incentives may be the only reasonable chance of tackling the problem on

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a renewed basis.

THE 10/6/93 PRIVATE MEETING WITH IBWC

During the last three weeks the "consensus management" approach and alternative technologies as described above have been introduced as part of a feasible emergency response alternative to key decision makers in a series of meetings and telephone conversations. The response has been uniformly favorable, and great interest has been elicited in a serious examination.

California Resources Secretary Doug Wheeler was briefed personally, with a request to inform Governor Wilson. Other discussion participants have included staff of Sen. Doxer, Sen. Feinstein, Rep. Filner, Rep. Schenk, Rep. Hunter, San Diego Mayor Golding, personally Imperial Beach Mayor Bixler and members of the City Council, Assemblywoman Alpert, Supervisor Bilbray, San Diego City Council member Vargas, Dr. Clifford Metzner of the Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias, and senior management staff of US Fish and Wildlife, NOAA, the US Army corps of Engineers, California State Parks, the California Coastal Conservancy, the San Diego County Department of Parks and Recreation, the San Diego Area Wastewater Management District and the City of San Diego Clean Water Program, as well as the Sierra Club and National Audubon Society and leading local environmental public advocates, and key residents of the Tijuana River Valley.

In addition, we have fully briefed Counsellor Tim Wirth at State Department OES and members of his staff, as well as State Department IBWC liaison officer Paul Storing, and staff of the EPA Office of International Affairs.

As a result, Mayor Mike Bixler of Imperial Beach, who had already made arrangements with Commissioner Gunaji to attend the City Council meeting on the evening of October 6, asked the Commissioner and his staff to attend a private informational meeting in the board room of the San Diego Association of Governments that morning. The Mayor and City Council, who have had their differences on other issues, are working as a team on this project; the Commissioner has accepted, as have all of the discussion participants in the San Diego area.

In addition, Mayor Bixler has spoken at length with Mexican Consul General Gustavo Iruegas. The Consul General will attend the meeting as well, and has personally invited IBWC Mexican Commissioner Arturo Herrera, and the Director of the Office of Border Affairs of the Mexican Foreign Ministry. The meeting will be preceded by a private dinner October 5 with Commissioners Gunaji and Herrera as guests of honor, hosted by the City


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of Imperial Beach

It is the hope of the Mayor and City Council and all participants that the private meeting will lead to a frank and constructive exchange of views, and will produce a consensus as to how to proceed to a timely, cost-effective, technically feasible, environmentally sound, publicly acceptable and politically doable solution to this environmental and public health crisis, a solution that, in the words of the Mayor's invitation, will "serve the people of the communities affected in the United States and Mexico, and protect, restore and enhance the ecosystem of the Tijuana River Valley"

NEXT STEPS AND NAFTA CONSIDERATIONS

While certain elected public representatives may choose to challenge the IBWC interim solution proposals, it is not the purpose of the organizers of the October 6 private meeting to oppose Dr. Gunaji or the IBWC. On the contrary, we hope to elicit his full cooperation in seriously examining proposed alternatives. IBWC staff have in fact assured us the Commissioner is entirely open to such a process. At the very least, implementation of alternative technologies could considerably expand IBWC's emergency response capacity. Obviously, such alternatives would have to be subjected to a fast-track, rigorous engineering, economic and environmental analysis and review. The review could be completed as early as February, 1994.

Aside from the issue of local public opposition to NAFTA if this crisis is not dealt with effectively, responsibly and expeditiously, it is our hope that the Mexican Government at the highest level will respond quickly and favorably to these proposals. They are affordable, environmentally responsible, and will result in invaluable augmentation of the overall reclaimed water reserve. While NAFTA remains undecided it would certainly appear to be in Mexico's interest to move quickly and positively to help resolve this crisis for citizens and the environment on both sides of the border.

I will inform you immediately of our perspective on results of the October 5 and 6 meetings.

*Roger Frauenfelder - works w/ Dave Schlessinger
former dir SD clean H₂O Program
now: SD Waste H₂O mgmt Dist. (acting Dir) Civil Engineer*

Amy Christensen

9

4 October 1993

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An International Environment and Industry Consulting Corporation

October 4, 1993

Amy Christensen
Office of Environmental Policy
The White House
FAX 202-456-2710

Dear Amy:

The promised memo on Tijuana River pollution control alternatives went off to you separately. Sorry it took a few days, but the Mexican component kept changing. It is now pretty well certain the informal dinner in San Diego tomorrow night, as well as the private meeting the next morning, will be attended not only by Dr. Gunaji and staff, but also Mexican IBWC Commissioner Herrera, the Director of Border Affairs of the Mexican Foreign Ministry, the Mexican Consul General in San Diego, and, just confirmed, the US Consul General in Tijuana. This issue is not the normal concern of the Consuls General of course, but they want to be informed in case there is some useful contribution they can make to the process.

Our environmental consulting firm's involvement arises from the participation of partner Jack Laughlin in IBWC meetings in his capacity as Project Manager of the San Diego Water Authority's desalination project in South San Diego Bay. What he observed was a very dysfunctional situation with real potential for a cost-effective, timely and environmentally sensitive solution--if one could get all the parties to communicate effectively. Our efforts have been directed to this goal, it would appear with some success.

Logistics might be difficult, but, given the President's commitment again last night in Sacramento to keep on it, a brief personal message from him to Mayor Bixler to encourage the consensus-building process now underway, might be just the right move.

I'll call you tomorrow from San Diego.

With thanks and best wishes.

Sincerely,

Michael Killigrew
Director

Si-ko-so lei kōeōi wī [from Nisene Native American] : to work (together)

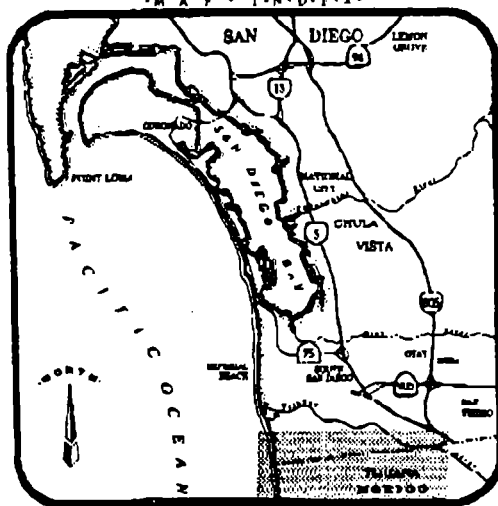
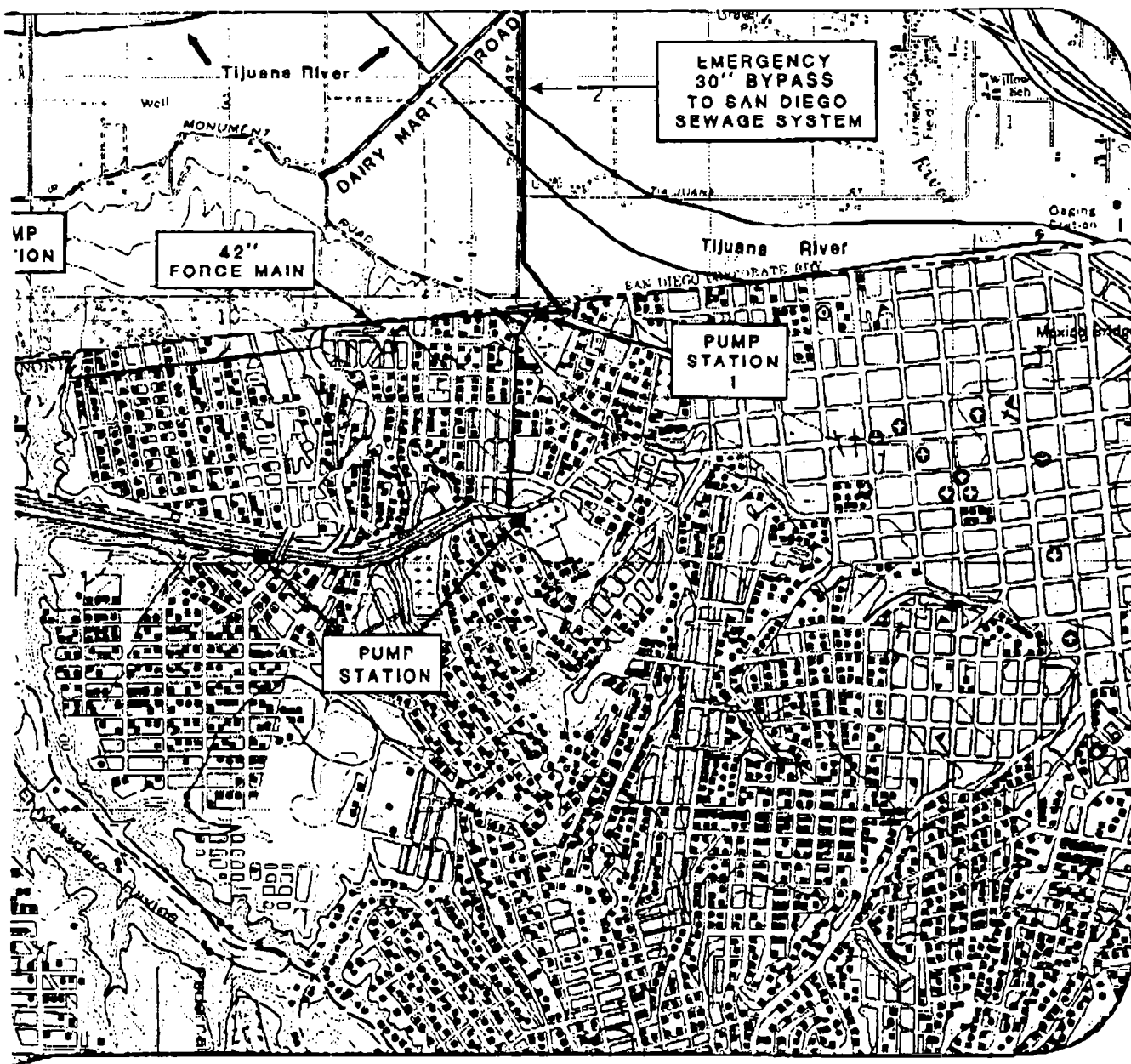


FIGURE 1-2.

EXISTING MEXICAN SEWERAGE FACILITIES

INTERNATIONAL
WASTEWATER
TREATMENT
PLANT EIS

