

# FOIA MARKER

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**Collection/Record Group:** Clinton Presidential Records  
**Subgroup/Office of Origin:** Council on Environmental Quality  
**Series/Staff Member:** Kathleen (Katie) McGinty  
**Subseries:**

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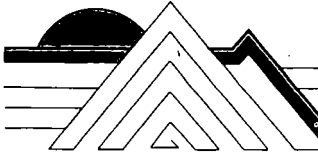
**OA/ID Number:** 2899  
**FolderID:**

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**Folder Title:**  
Southwest Center for Environmental Research and Policy Input and Information February 16, 1993

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**SOUTHWEST CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH & POLICY**

February 16, 1993

Ms. Kathleen McGinty, Director  
The White House Office on Environmental Policy  
286 Old Executive Office Building  
1700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20501

Dear Ms. McGinty:

As the current Chairman of the Management Committee of the Southwest Center for Environmental Research and Policy, I would like to thank you for meeting with representatives of our Center at your office on January 29. I recently heard of your appointment to your new White House position. I sincerely congratulate you and extend my best wishes for every success in your new role.

I have been advised that you expressed interest in receiving the Center's input on several topics, including:

- \* Estimates of the costs required for resolution of the environmental problems in the United States - Mexico border region.
- \* Recommendations as to an objective research organization which could conduct environmental studies for the White House.
- \* Specific environmental measures that might be requested of the Republic of Mexico as part of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

We are currently investigating each of these requests and will provide a detailed written reply on each point within the next few weeks. In the interim, however, my staff has prepared a more detailed letter for your staff with some preliminary information concerning your interests outlined above.

Again, thank you for taking the time to meet with Center representatives. Please feel free to call me directly at (505) 646-4091 or Jim Maes at (505) 646-5255 if you have any questions or comments on our support of the Clinton administration in this area.

Respectfully,

Curtis Graham, Chairman  
Management Committee

enclosure

*Pls file*

*Thank you  
for contacting our  
member of WTEP regarding  
border community state. We  
have been in the process of  
developing the info since  
the D.C. visit.  
CJ*



## **SOUTHWEST CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH & POLICY**

February 18, 1993

Ms. Kathleen McGinty  
Director  
The White House Office on Environmental Policy  
286 Old Executive Office Building  
1700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Ms. McGinty and Staff:

This letter is primarily for your staff and provides some preliminary information related to the three areas of interest identified in the cover letter.

As a follow up to the recent meeting held with you by several members of our environmental research and development team (Dr. Beckett, University of Utah; Dr. John Loveland and James Maes, New Mexico State University; and Dr. Paul Ganster and Cliff Metzner, San Diego State University), the Southwest Center for Environmental Research and Policy (SCERP), has develop a brief preliminary report concerning the issues in which you expressed interest. They are:

- \* The identification of an objective research organization which could conduct environmental studies for the White House.

- \* Specific environmental measures that might be requested of the Republic of Mexico as a part of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

- \* Estimates of the funds required for the resolution of the environmental problems in the U.S. - Mexico border region.

In regard to the Clinton Administration's need to identify an objective research organization to conduct environmental studies for the White House, SCERP stands ready to offer its service to coordinate this effort.

Founded in 1990, through Congressional legislation, the Center is now composed of five research universities in the U.S. and four in Mexico. Over the past two years, SCERP has implemented 58 environmental research projects in the border areas of the U.S. and Mexico. These projects are supported by a team of over 400 research investigators whose background and experience extends to over a 15-year period in the environmental areas of air quality, water quality, hazardous wastes/materials and environmental health, education, training, and policy.

SCERP issued a formal request for proposals (RFP) in July 1992. This RFP was issued in response to the \$10 million appropriation approved by Congress for FY 1993 in support of SCERP's environmental programs for applied research. The RFP was issued based on a recommendation by EPA to not only solicit new, innovative, and applied research proposals from the member institutions of SCERP, but also from other research universities and environmental organizations in the U.S. and Mexico. As a result of the RFP, a total of 146 proposals were submitted to SCERP for evaluation and funding consideration by 35 organizations, the names of which are listed in Schedule A.

The total funding requested by researchers in support of 146 project proposals was \$19.5 million, including \$3.2 in new environmental program initiatives and development.

In essence, the SCERP management committee feels that with the affiliation and assistance of the universities noted in Schedule A, and other regional research institutions noted in Schedule B, the Center could serve as an effective and objective research and development resource to the White House, not only in conducting environmental studies, but also as a catalyst in bringing together specialized research teams and experts of other institutions to help resolve the growing environmental problems in the U.S. and Mexico.

The Center has a close working relationship with national business groups, the Border Trade Alliance (BTA), and the Mexican government's Secretariat of Social Development (SEDESOL). It has held meetings with BTA representatives in the border states and officials of SEDESOL in Mexico City and the Mexican Embassy in Washington, D.C. It has also worked closely with the EPA Office of Research and Development, the Office of International Activities, and the EPA regional offices in Dallas and San Francisco. This collaboration includes developing new environmental program initiatives and evaluation of the 146 project proposals submitted to SCERP for funding consideration. The Center has also worked with the state environmental agencies in the border region.

During October and November 1992, the Center held 11 public forums in a number of cities along the entire length of the U.S. and Mexico border. The purpose of these meetings was to not only identify pressing environmental problems which are not being addressed in the U.S. and Mexico, but also to learn from community leaders, business representatives, and the public at large, the actions that SCERP should take during the next several years in helping the border communities resolve pressing environmental problems. Some of the issues concerned include the following:

- (1) the need for funds to adequately balance environmental protection and economic development;
- (2) NAFTA growth and infrastructure improvements;
- (3) need for better bi-national cooperation between the U.S. and Mexico;
- (4) infrastructure needs of the colonias along the border;
- (5) border environmental regulations are often not in line with a community's ability to pay for them;
- (7) residents and city officials expressed fears that the border region will be used as the nation's dumping ground for nuclear and other hazardous wastes;
- (8) wetlands studies are critically needed in South Texas and Mexico;
- (9) environmental education programs need to be implemented in public schools, universities, and in business/industry;
- (10) more recycling programs are needed for both homeowners and industry; and
- (11) proposed solutions to environmental problems in the border region need to be region-specific.

The environment reports that were presented at each of these forums, including recommendations for resolving environmental problems in the border region, is being finalized. A copy of this report will be mailed to you as soon as it is available.

As the Center's programs have developed, applied research directly tied to specific environmental problems and solutions has received increased emphasis. The Center has also begun to develop a training institute to coordinate the design of training initiatives that are critical to not only environmental compliance in the border areas, but also to assisting industry in overcoming many of the environmental challenges that exist in the workplace. One of the primary efforts of this training thrust will be to involve Mexican collaborators, in effect, "training the trainers." In this regard, we have worked very hard to develop partnerships with Mexican border universities as noted in Schedule C. The focus of the training activities of the Center will be on specific environmental problems and solutions. In essence, the synergism developed by such bi-national partnerships represent the key elements in amplifying the impact and results of such activities.

Further, the Center has been contacted by the U.S. National Park Service seeking assistance in conducting environmental research and helping to resolve environmental problems in five of its parks in the Southwest. The U.S. Customs Bureau has also approached SCERP seeking high tech assistance in the identification/inspection of volatile hazardous wastes and materials (and possibly narcotics) in sealed containers that are transported through U.S. Customs checking stations along the U.S. - Mexico border.

A number of studies have been completed in regard to the funds required to resolve the environmental problems in the U.S. and Mexico border region. One particular 1992 study on the water and wastewater needs of the colonias in Texas noted that \$695 million would be needed to provide water and wastewater service to 1,193 identified colonias (\$148 million for water service, \$467 million for wastewater service, and \$80 million for connection fees and indoor plumbing improvements).

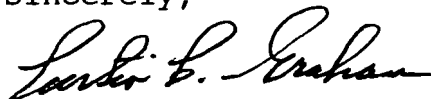
The Mexican Government has committed about \$460 million on a three-year plan to clean up the most pressing environmental problems and strengthen border infrastructure. The focus of this program is the expansion of basic urban services and includes the dredging of sewer systems, intensive clean up of hazardous waste and construction of sanitary landfills. In addition, the government has also established a \$4 million permanent, reimbursable fund to respond to any environmental emergency along the U.S. and Mexico border.

Dr. Donald Michie and Erin Ross, University of Texas--El Paso, have been given the assignment to coordinate the development of a report on the environmental program needs and the funds that will be required on the part of the U.S. and Mexico to effectively address and resolve the environmental problems which exist in the border areas of the two countries. This document will include data and recommendations from research reports developed by the Center and other environmental agencies in the public and private sector. A formal report responding to these issues of concern will be sent to you within the next two to three weeks.

We thank you for taking the time to meet with the members of our management team, and we look forward to developing a close working relationship with you and your staff. We are available to meet with you at your convenience to discuss this brief overview of U.S. - Mexico border environmental issues and to provide you with further information on this issue of grave impact to the border region of the Southwestern U.S. and Northern Mexico.

Please feel free to contact Dr. Ray Beckett, University of Utah at (801) 581-3795, or Jim Maes, New Mexico State University at (505) 646-5255, if you have any further questions or comments.

Sincerely,



Curtis C. Graham  
Chair, SCERP Management Committee

enclosures

cc: SCERP Management Committee



**APPENDIX A**

**Research Universities and Environmental Organizations  
Submitting FY1993 Project Proposals  
for Evaluation and Funding Consideration**

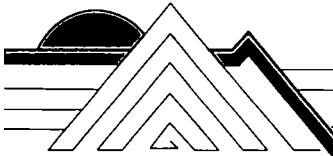
Arizona State University  
Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de  
Monterrey  
Instituto Tecnológico de Ciudad Juárez  
New Mexico State University  
San Diego State University  
University of Texas at El Paso  
University of Utah  
University of Arizona  
University of New Mexico  
University of Texas at Austin  
Texas A & M  
Colorado State University  
Notre Dame University  
Laredo State University  
Carnegie Mellon University  
New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology  
World Environment Center  
NM South Central Council of Governments  
Habitat Integral  
Enviro Search International  
Center for Environmental Technology  
Universidad Pedagógica Nacional  
Latin American Institute, University of New Mexico  
Regional Museo  
Universidad Autónoma de Baja California  
Southwest Institute for Environmental Health Science  
Pima County Community College  
Utah Valley Community College  
Utah State University  
Barrera Associates  
Round River Conservation Studies  
Houston Advanced Research Center  
Enviro Recovery Consultants  
Intelligent Reasoning Systems, Inc.  
Southwest Texas State University  
Techniscan, Inc.  
Enviro Search International



**APPENDIX B**

**Partial List of Other Regional Collaborative Research  
Universities and Environmental Organizations**

Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Harvard University  
Johns Hopkins University  
University of Virginia  
University of North Carolina  
University of Florida  
University of Illinois  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
University of Oklahoma  
University of Alabama  
Auburn University  
University of Arkansas  
Duke University  
University of Oregon  
University of Washington  
University of California at Berkeley  
Stanford University  
California Institute of Technology  
University of California at Los Angeles  
Long Beach State College  
University of Southern California  
Sandia Laboratories  
Los Alamos National Laboratory  
Jet Propulsion Laboratory



**APPENDIX C**

**SCERP Member Institutions**

Arizona State University  
Instituto Tecnológico de Ciudad Juárez  
Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de  
Monterrey  
New Mexico State University  
San Diego State University  
Universidad Autónoma de Baja California  
Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez  
University of Texas at El Paso  
University of Utah