

(English text of Minute 218 dated March 22, 1965)

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION  
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua,  
March 22, 1965.

Minute No. 218

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE COLORADO RIVER SALINITY PROBLEM

The Commission met in the offices of the Mexican Section in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, at 12:00 m. on March 22, 1965, to comply with instructions it has received from the two Governments, to consider measures "to reach a permanent and effective solution" of the problem of the salinity of the waters of the Colorado River which reach Mexico, as contemplated in the Presidential Communiqués of March 16 and June 30, 1962 and February 22, 1964.

The Commission reviewed the measures which the two Governments have taken to date to alleviate temporarily the problem of salinity of waters of the lower Colorado River, and noted the reduction which has occurred in the salinity of drainage waters from the Wellton-Mohawk Irrigation and Drainage District and that continued improvement is anticipated.

The Commission, with the scientific and engineering studies made by both Governments as a basis, thereupon adopted the following Resolution, subject to the approval of the two Governments, embodying the following

Recommendations:

1. That the United States construct at its expense an extension to the present Wellton-Mohawk District's drainage conveyance channel, with capacity of 353 cubic feet (10 cubic meters) per second, along the left bank of the Colorado River to a point below Morelos Dam and a control structure in that extension of the channel in the reach between Morelos Dam and the mouth of the Araz Drain, which structure would permit the discharge of the Wellton-Mohawk District's drainage waters to the bed of the river at a point either above or below Morelos Dam.
2. That the Commission permit execution of the works which may be required for the extension channel to pass through Morelos Dam.
3. That the extension channel and control structure proposed in Recommendation 1 be operated and maintained by the United States at its expense to discharge all of the Wellton-Mohawk District's drainage waters below Morelos Dam, except those which are discharged above the Dam on the days and at such rates as Mexico may request in writing.

4. That during the life of the present Minute and subject to the reservations of Recommendation 11; the Commission account for Wellton-Mohawk District's drainage waters as a part of those described in the provisions of Article 10 of the Water Treaty of February 3, 1944, with the understanding: a) that on the days for which Mexico requests water at the minimum winter rate of deliveries of 900 cubic feet (25.5 cubic meters) per second, the United States control waters reaching the limitrophe section of the Colorado River so that without including Wellton-Mohawk District's drainage waters, their flows be not less than 300 cubic feet (22.7 cubic meters) per second, their average flow be not less than 900 cubic feet (25.5 cubic meters) per second for the total of such days during each winter period for which the minimum rate is requested, and that the computation of that average flow not take into account flows in excess of 1000 cubic feet (28.3 cubic meters) per second; and b) that the winter periods in reference extend from October 1 of each year through February of the next following year.
5. That throughout the life of this Minute, Mexico schedule water at the minimum rate of deliveries of 900 cubic feet (25.5 cubic meters) per second, for the maximum practical number of days during each winter period, and for not less than 90 days.
6. That the pumping of Wellton-Mohawk District's drainage waters which are to be delivered to Mexico above Morelos Dam be coordinated, insofar as practicable, with Mexico's scheduled deliveries of water at the northerly boundary in order to minimize the salinity of these deliveries; with the understanding that during the period October 1 to February 10 the United States pump at the maximum rate but not to exceed 353 cubic feet (10 cubic meters) per second and, insofar as practicable from the more saline wells in the District, and also during other periods when the total quantity of the Wellton-Mohawk District's drainage waters is discharged below Morelos Dam.
7. That the United States endeavor to conclude arrangements to permit discontinuance of discharge of waters from the canal wasteways of the Yuma County Water Users' Association to the bed of the Colorado River below Morelos Dam, and if necessary for this purpose, construct and operate, at the expense of the United States, works needed so that such waters be delivered near San Luis, Arizona, and San Luis, Sonora; that Mexico pay for the increased cost of pumping which may be required to discharge these waters to Mexico at the delivery point near San Luis, Arizona, and San Luis, Sonora.

8. That this Minute be in effect during a period of five years, beginning on the date on which the extension to the Wellton-Mohawk District's drainage conveyance channel is placed in operation; and that during this period the Commission review conditions which gave rise to the problem and in due time recommend whether, in keeping with the purpose expressed by both Governments of achieving a permanent and effective solution, a new Minute should be adopted to become effective upon termination of this period.
9. That construction by the United States of works contemplated in this Minute be completed and the works be placed in operation by October 1, 1965, subject to the appropriation of funds by the United States Congress to implement this Minute.
10. That this Minute be specifically approved by both Governments.
11. That the provisions of this Minute not constitute any precedent, recognition, or acceptance affecting the rights of either country, with respect to the Water Treaty of February 3, 1944, and the general principles of law.

The meeting then adjourned.

(Signed) J. F. Friedkin  
Commissioner of the United States

(Signed) D. Herrera J.  
Commissioner of Mexico

(Signed) Louis F. Blanchard  
Secretary of the United States Section

(Signed) Fernando Rivas S.  
Secretary of the Mexican Section