



Border 2020 Quarterly Newsletter

Region 9

California, Baja California, Arizona and Sonora
Spring 2014

www.epa.gov/border2020



This newsletter provides a summary of activities that took place from January to April 2014.

General Updates

RA Announces Border 2020 Grants and Celebrates at Binational Border Field State Park

Regional Administrator (RA) Jared Blumenfeld visited the Border Field State Park (Imperial Beach) on January 14th to participate in the inaugural celebration of the binational park space improvements at both Border Field State Park and Los Sauces Park (Tijuana). The park improvements involving construction of park structures made with repurposed trash derived from local cleanups were made possible through the collaboration of EPA with a \$25,000 Border 2020 grant and a \$20,000 grant from The San Diego Foundation (SDF). The park improvements in Los Sauces Park also involved park cleanup supported by 100 people over 12 weeks and replacement of invasive vegetation with native plants made possible by leveraging Mexico's Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) Temporary Employment Program (PET, in Spanish).



Representatives of State Parks, the San Diego Foundation, EPA, SEMARNAT, BECC and 4Walls

At the event, RA Blumenfeld announced \$461,368 in grants supporting seven projects with matching funds in the amount of \$354,746. These funds will be used towards reducing trash in the Tijuana River, vehicle emission reduction strategies, recycling materials, and developing educational projects. The event also included participation and remarks from Alfonso Blancafort, Baja CA Delegate, SEMARNAT, Emily Young, Vice President, SDF, and Mario Sanchez, Deputy Director, Border Environmental Cooperation Commission (BECC).

Arizona-Sonora Regional Workgroup and Task Force Meetings in Nogales Sonora

The Arizona/Sonora Regional Workgroup (RWG) met in Nogales, Sonora on March 26th. The meeting included a plenary session lead by the State and Federal Regional Co-Chairs. The meeting was held to continue engaging with border stakeholders on the first year progress of the Border 2020 Program and to begin planning future activities and priorities of the program. The RWG meeting was hosted by the Emergency Preparedness Task Force, which also organized a panel discussion on the progress of Arizona/Sonora binational emergency preparedness collaborations. The Task Forces for goals 1-5 also met concurrently on March 26th to update existing



Arizona/Sonora Regional Workgroup Co-Chairs

to update existing

2-year action plans and begin developing the 2015-16 action plans. Two related meetings took place in Tucson, Arizona on the March 25th: (1) an environmental health session with Arizona Department of Health Services and (2) a meeting with EPA and Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) to discuss border waste management and enforcement issues and priorities. (Emily Pimentel, 415-972-3620)

Border 2020 Communication Update

The EPA and SEMARNAT Border 2020 websites are continuously updated with meetings and relevant issues pertaining to the U.S.-Mexico Border. Furthermore, Border 2020 newsletters sent through the provider *Constant Contact* continue to be the most commonly used direct communication tool for Border 2020. To receive updates, visit the Border 2020 website or contact one of the communication leads and please share any suggestions for improving written communication. The communication contacts include: [Patrick Huber, Huber.Patrick@epa.gov](mailto:Huber.Patrick@epa.gov) (EPA OITA-HQ), [Maria Sisneros, Sisneros.Maria@epa.gov](mailto:Sisneros.Maria@epa.gov) (EPA R6), [Alhelí Baños-Keener, Banos.Alheli@epa.gov](mailto:Banos.Alheli@epa.gov) (EPA R9), and [Tadzio Clavel, Tadzio.Clavel@semarnat.gob.mx](mailto:Tadzio.Clavel@semarnat.gob.mx) (SEMARNAT).

Goal Updates

Goal 1 – Reduce Air Pollution

Assistant Administrator visits San Diego Border

Janet McCabe, Acting Assistant Administrator (AA) for the Office of Air and Radiation (OAR), visited San Diego on February 25. The Air Division and the San Diego Border office planned and hosted a tour of the San Ysidro Port of Entry, the Otay Mesa Port of Entry and Barrio Logan (an EJ community in San Diego). The tours of the ports of entry focused on air quality at the ports due to the number of vehicles idling and crossing the border, while the tour of Barrio Logan focused on efforts by the San Diego Air Pollution Control District to reduce emissions at the marine ports and stationary sources in the community.



Sarah Sowell (EPA OAR), Debbie Jordan (EPA R9), Assistant Administrator Janet McCabe (EPA OAR), Amy Zimpfer (EPA R9), Tim Cashman (GSA), Tomas Torres, (EPA R9/U.S. Consulate, Tijuana)

At the San Ysidro Port of Entry (the busiest land port in the world with almost 30 million people crossing northbound annually), General Services Administration (GSA) briefed the AA on the ongoing Port expansion which is expected to reduce vehicle emissions due to shorter wait times; however, GSA has only received partial funding for the expansion, and the completion of the expansion depends on future appropriations. GSA allowed the group access to the roof of the Port building, affording an excellent view of backed-up traffic in Tijuana, literally as far as the eye could see.



Vehicles backed up in Tijuana at the San Ysidro Port of Entry

At the tour of the Otay Mesa Port of Entry, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) staff explained the inspection process for northbound trucks and also provided a view of trucks backed up in Mexico waiting to cross. California Air Resources Board (CARB), which has an inspection facility adjacent to the CBP's, briefed the AA on State's enforcement of heavy duty diesel rules of drayage trucks and long-haul trucks. The San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) also provided a driving tour of Barrio Logan, visiting the Naval Station San Diego, National

Steel and Shipbuilding Company, and the Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal.

Accompanying the AA were Richard Corey, Executive Director of CARB; Robert Kard, Air Pollution Control Officer (APCO) for the SDAPCD; other CARB and SDAPCD staff, as well as Debbie Jordan, Amy Zimpfer, Dave Fege, and Tomas Torres from Region 9 EPA and Sarah Sowell from EPA-OAR. (Contact: Dave Fege 619-235-4769)

Highlights of Air Task Force Meeting in Nogales Sonora

The Arizona/Sonora Air Task Force was convened on March 26th and during this meeting presentations were made on the recently awarded Border 2020 projects “Criteria Air Pollutant Emissions Inventory for Nogales, Sonora” and “Prioritizing Emissions Mitigation Strategies” at the Mariposa Point of Entry”. Tijuana Calidad de Vida A.C., a non-governmental organization, will lead the effort to develop an emissions inventory for Nogales, Sonora and Arizona State University (ASU) researchers Mikhail Chester and Yingyan Lou will lead the second Mariposa project.

Peter Hyde from Arizona State University gave a presentation on the newly developed “Archive of Border Air Quality Studies”, which currently has 238 air quality related studies conducted along the U.S.-Mexico border since the mid-1970s by state and federal governments, academics, and non-government organizations.

As part of Objective 2 (i.e. “By 2020, reduce pollutant emissions in order to approach attainment of respective national ambient air quality standards in the following air sheds: Ambos Nogales”), Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) has completed a non-attainment area plan for PM10, which was approved by EPA last year. EPA granted 179b status (special provisions for nonattainment areas affected by emissions from outside the United States). ADEQ completed a nonattainment area plan for PM2.5, which is currently under review by EPA. Also as part Objective 2, SEMARNAT reported they are planning on developing Pro-Aire Plans (similar to State/Federal Implementation Plans) for the different Sonora border cities. SEMARNAT is aware of the air quality monitoring issues facing the State of Sonora and they must resolve funding issues. The air emissions inventory for Nogales, Sonora will serve as input for a Pro-Aire Plan for the city.

For Objective 3 (i.e. “By 2018, maintain effective air monitoring networks and provide real-time access to air quality data in Arizona-Sonora”), ADEQ installed continuous air quality monitors for PM10 and PM2.5 in Douglas, as well as, a PM2.5 continuous air quality monitor in Yuma. These monitors replaced the Partisol samplers, previously used to collect air samples every sixth day. Additionally, key issues regarding the air monitoring network in Sonora were discussed.

Goal 2 – Improve Access to Clean and Safe Water

Training on Handling of Wastewater Containing Metals in Ambos Nogales

High levels of metals and cyanide in the wastewater sent to the Nogales International Wastewater Treatment Plant have resulted in water quality impairments in the Santa Cruz River. These metals, which primarily come from metal-platers in Nogales, Sonora, also contaminate the biosolids, which result in high disposal costs. The Nogales non-governmental organization (NGO) The Association of Protection and Safety (APSA) was selected to receive a Border 2020 grant to provide training to industry workers on the appropriate handling and disposal of metals and cyanide in wastewater. Experts from Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Arizona State University, Alcoa Fastening Systems, and Institute of Technology in Nogales, Sonora will develop and hold two 16-hour seminars that will be available to workers on both sides of the border. The training is planned for February or March, 2015. (Doug Liden, 619-235-4763)

Restoration of the Tijuana River

Most of the Tijuana River has been channelized. Tijuana's second major rivers, the Alamar, as well as most urban creeks in Tijuana, are being transformed into cement conduits. One of Mexico's largest environmental NGOs, Pronatura, applied for a Border 2020 grant to restore and preserve the only section of the Tijuana River that is not lined with concrete. Garbage and invasive plants will be removed from the 1.4 mile stretch of river and reclaimed wastewater will be used to establish native vegetation. The area will also be made more available for recreation and environmental education. (Doug Liden, 619-235-4763)



Tijuana River below Rodriguez Dam

Mexico Border Water Infrastructure

The wastewater collection system expansion project in Sierra Vista, AZ, that will serve a subdivision with failing on-site systems is expected to be completed this summer. The \$2 million project will benefit 374 residents and eliminate discharges of inadequately treated sewage by connecting approximately 122 households to the wastewater treatment plant. (Roger Kohn, 415-972-3416)

Highlights of Water Task Force Meeting in Nogales Sonora

EPA, ADEQ's Office of Border Environmental Protection, and the State of Sonora Water Commission convened the Arizona/Sonora Water Task Force meeting in Nogales, Sonora on March 26, 2014. The meeting was well attended with representation by the International Boundary and Water Commission, Mexican and U.S. Sections (CILA, IBWC); the Nogales, Sonora Chapter of the Association of Maquiladoras of Sonora (AMS); the Nogales, Sonora Chapter of Environmental Safety Professionals (APSA); Nogales, Sonora Drinking Water and Wastewater Utility (OOMAPAS-NS); Borderlands Habitat Restoration Initiative (BRHI); and representatives from a technical college out of Puerto Peñasco. ADEQ presented on ongoing wastewater-quality challenges associated with binational influent at the Nogales International Wastewater Treatment Plant (NIWWTP) in Rio Rico, Arizona, and also summarized modifications to the plant's new Arizona Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permit. APSA followed with a presentation on the recently approved Border 2020 project to provide training workshops (Nov. or Dec. in 2014) focused on pretreatment for metals and cyanide. Finally, EPA reviewed the Border 2020 action plan for Goal 2 focused on improving access to safe potable water. Progress on existing items in the plan was shared and new action items (already funded by a government agency) were solicited. New action items included the donation of metals monitoring equipment to Sonora in order to facilitate low cost wastewater analysis by industries and installing a bypass so that industrial discharges can be treated in Nogales, Sonora to reduce industrial influent sent to NIWWTP. The Borderlands Habitat Restoration Initiative suggested extending the river restoration work that was funded with a \$1 million from the Walton Family Foundation beyond Arizona and into Sonora. (Doug Liden, 619-235-4763)

Goal 3 –Promoting Materials and Waste Management and Clean Sites

Border 2020 Webinar on Electronics Recycling Certification Programs

Over 150 electronic recyclers and stakeholders, in predominantly border communities, participated in a webinar training on January 15th on electronic best management practices. Sarah Westervelt and Mandy Knudtson of the Basal Action Network (BAN) presented the webinar on the e-Stewards Certification on behalf of the Basal Action Network. The webinar drew 74 participants from government, business, academic, and non-profit organizations representing major border communities, as well as, others from Mexico City, Honduras, and El Salvador; thirty-three of these participated in the Spanish webinar. A complimentary presentation was given November 5th, 2013, Kelly Keogh, an auditor



for the Responsible Recycling (R2) gave a presentation on the R2 Standard. It drew 83 similarly diverse participants; 35 of these participated in the Spanish webinar. Emily Pimentel co-hosted the webinar with Renee Bellew of EPA Region 6 and BECC provided webinar support and simultaneous translation.

The R2 and e-Stewards certifications are both internationally recognized certifications. Links to the English and Spanish recordings of the R2 and e-Stewards webinars are posted on EPA's Border 2020 website: R2 <http://www2.epa.gov/border2020/webinar-sustainable-materials-waste-management-and-clean-sites-2013>; e-Stewards <http://www2.epa.gov/border2020/webinar-e-stewards-certification-program>). Additional border outreach and pilot collections programs designed to continue promoting best management practices are planned in 2014.

Forum and Webinar on Compost Applications and Markets in Tijuana

On November 29th, Tijuana Calidad de Vida (TCV) in partnership with public and private sector sponsors hosted the "Compost: Uses and Markets at the World Trade Center in Tijuana, a LEED certified building. The forum advanced knowledge on zero waste practices associated with landscape, food scraps, and other urban organics. The forum was covered by several newspaper, television, and social-media networks, including interviews with Doug Liden and Carmen Romo (TCV, grantee) on the importance of recycling paper and plastic and composting. Doug Liden further emphasized the binational importance of adequate trash collection so it does not end up in the Tijuana River and eventually in San Diego (see link -

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lwh3MAWQZdk>).



Forum Program - Compost: Uses and Markets



Tijuana Urban Compost Center piles

On December 17th, 2013 Carmen Romo, Executive Director of NGO Tijuana Calidad de Vida (TCV) and several other professionals gave a comprehensive webinar presentation on composting organics including landscape, food scraps, and other organics and the diverse benefits. The webinar, given in Spanish, had 46 participants, 29 of these from Mexico, view a recording at this location:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUUBQf8jzhg>

Tijuana Urban Compost Center Final Report

Tijuana Calidad de Vida (TCV) submitted the final report in December 2013 documenting their accomplishments under the Border 2020 for \$94,000 for the period June 2012 to December 2014. Highlights of the work included:

- Hosted an inaugural event January 2013 with over 200 people and attended by EPA's RA;
- Generated 153 tons of compost used to plant 140 trees and 300 shrubs, greening Tijuana;
- Educated over 800 people on compost practices and thousands through press and social media;



- Held two professional forums, presented in two Biocycle conferences, hosted a webinar; and
- Completed a composting operation manual.

Signage at entrance to Tijuana Urban Compost Center

These accomplishments were not possible without the extensive partnerships, including those from Miramar Greenery, a San Diego based landscape composting operation. The compost center is serving as a catalyst for new urban initiatives and education on zero waste:

<https://www.facebook.com/CentroDeComposteoUrbanoTijuana>

Highlights of Materials and Clean Sites Task Force Meetings in Nogales Sonora

EPA, ADEQ, SEMARNAT and Mexico’s environmental enforcement agency, PROFEPA; CEDES, and the State of Sonora’s environmental enforcement agency, PROAES convened the Waste and Enforcement Task Force on March 26th. This Task Force represents goal 3 and 5 of the Border 2020 Program.

The Task Force summarized two new Border 2020 grants. The first grant, “Tools for Arizona Border to Reclaim Resources” was awarded to ADEQ to develop a toolkit for cities seeking to conduct electronic recycling and will include a certified e-waste recycler contact list, e-waste outreach materials, a web-based interactive area, educational resources and best practices. The Arizona border communities participating in the project are San Luis, Sahuarita, Nogales and Douglas. One main goal is to divert 100,000 lbs. of electronics from the landfills. The project is scheduled to finish by July, 2015. The second grant, “Used Oil Recycling in Nogales, Sonora” was awarded to the Municipality of Nogales to develop a used oil collection program targeted at small to medium size business. Nogales will subcontract the firm, Eagle Oil, to collect used oil for recycling. There will be 16 gas stations in Nogales, Sonora participating as collection centers. Also, the municipal fire department will have collection centers. About 200 small workshops will benefit from training and access to collection centers.

The Task Force reviewed accomplishments made in 2012-2013 including the webinar training on R2 and e-Stewards Standards for best practices to manage and recycle used electronics. The Task Force also shared information about a new grant funding for an electronics recycling project in Sonora that would complement the work in Arizona. These projects will be part of the updated Action Plans for goal 3.



ADEQ and EPA with Nogales Sonora Fire Dept.

Goal 4 – Emergency Preparedness and Response

California/Baja California Task Force: The Task Force worked the City of Tijuana to test emergency personnel for N1H1 using a flu test kit for emergency personnel. The test kits available in Tijuana had a 3 week laboratory wait time, so partners in Tijuana contacted partners at the San Diego County Health Department who delivered a tests which yields results with 24 hours, to partners in Baja California’s Civil Protection.

Highlights of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Task Force Meeting, Nogales, Sonora, March 26, 2014.

The Task Force worked on updating the two-year Action Plans. Under objective 1, exercises will include: Training on cyanide management (Santa Ana); Web EOC training (provided by Arizona); and two Table Top Exercises in 2015 (Yuma/Mexicali, earthquake; Flooding, location is still under consideration. Under objective 2: Update Sister City Plans, the updates will include updating the Nogales/Nogales Plan (in 2015) and the following: training on cyanide management (Santa Ana); Fire Quadrants by Frank Granados of San Cruz County Emergency Management, and other activities being led by Nogales, Sonora Fire Department. Under objective 3, the Task Force proposes to provide Spanish Emergency Pocket Guides (EPA and AZ). The Task

Force also listed proposed meeting dates in 2014: March 26th in Nogales, Sonora; May 22nd in San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora; September 9 in Rocky Point, Sonora; and December (date to be determined) in Agua Prieta. EPA reported that they would work with US Department of Defense, Northern Command to identify funding priorities and update 2016-2020 five year plan.

Goal 5 – Enhance Compliance Assurance and Environmental Stewardship

Highlights of Enforcement Task Force Meeting, Nogales, Sonora, March 26, 2014

The Enforcement Task Force met as part of the goal 3 Task Force in Nogales, Sonora on March 26th. Under the topic of goal 5, ADEQ provided a summary of hazardous waste inspections in the Arizona border area. ADEQ also commented on an enforcement case in Yuma, AZ involving a company that was collecting cathode ray tubes (CRTs) but left them abandoned. In Sonora, PROFEPA is performing environmental audits related to the Mexico's National Environmental Audits Program). They reported having an inventory of 1,200 industries in Sonora and of these 101 industries have a "Clean Industry" certification under the National Environmental Audit Program. The agencies discussed interest in holding quarterly conference calls to enhance communication about regulatory matters. (Emily Pimentel, 415-972-3326)

Environmental Health

Environmental Health Session in Arizona

A meeting took place March 25th, in partnership with the Arizona Department of Public Health, to re-engage environmental health partners in border health. Approximately 18 people participated in the session, shared information on their work, future focus areas, and possible partnership opportunities. A survey is being prepared by EPA's Border Team to determine possible areas for future collaboration.

Border Office Supports the EJ and Enforcement Task Force in Imperial Valley

Border office staff continue to participate in monthly Environmental Justice (EJ) and Enforcement Task Force meetings. The Environmental Director for National Beef participated for the first time and was welcomed by the task force participants. The farm worker protection standard was discussed and a presentation was requested by participants. Border Office coordinated with the Pesticides Office and a presentation was given during the April 17th meeting.