

# State Water Resources Control Board

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 31, 2005  
SWRCB 05-016

Contacts: Sandra Salazar-Thompson  
(916) 341-5849  
Beth Jines (916) 502-3615

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE NEW RIVER ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PILOT PROJECT TO CONVENE

CALEXICO- The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) will host the first public meeting of the Regional Advisory Committee on the New River Environmental Justice Pilot Project (Pilot Project) on September 1, 2005 in Calexico. Sharing hosting duties will be the Calexico New River Committee and the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board.

The goal of the Pilot Project is to develop and implement a children's environmental risk reduction plan using recommendations provided by the Regional Advisory Committee.

Established in 2005, The Regional Advisory Committee is comprised of business, community, government and Tribal members and others impacted by decisions or activities along the New River.

According to Celeste Cantu, Executive Director of the State Water Board, "Convening this Regional Advisory Committee is a milestone for the Water's Board water quality protection efforts. This Committee is a cross-section of people with different viewpoints, levels of information, and personal histories related to the New River and the bioregion. We intend to provide the RAC with the best data available to position it to provide us with the highest level of recommendations possible. Active involvement of the RAC is essential to this Pilot Project's success."

Through review of health and pollution data, the RAC will develop a plan to increase awareness among parents and children of the health hazards posed by the New River, and target the reduction of specific contaminants found in the New River. Among other things, the pilot project will evaluate existing efforts and as necessary, establish new long-term strategies to reduce river contaminants; as well as strategies to work with the country of Mexico to reduce contaminants. The Pilot Project will focus on a collaborative approach for health risk reduction and will seek to become a model that can be duplicated in other communities.

The RAC meeting will be held on Thursday, September 1, 2005, from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at San Diego State University, Imperial Valley Campus Gallery, 720 Heber Avenue in Calexico. Oral translation provided of proceedings will be provided as needed. For more information about the Pilot Project, please visit the Cal/EPA website at [www.calepa.ca.gov](http://www.calepa.ca.gov), environmental justice. Learn more about the work of the California Water Boards at [www.waterboards.ca.gov](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov).

###