



CHAIRMAN

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

April 10, 2019

Dr. Paul Ganster, Ph.D.
Chair, Good Neighbor Environmental Board
Associate Director, Office of International Programs
San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive, AL 377
San Diego, CA 92182-6039

Dear Dr. Ganster:

Thank you and the Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB) for the December 28, 2018 Advice Letter to the President on the opportunities and challenges of cross-border energy and infrastructure development and associated environmental interests. Given the possible benefits from successful development of energy and related infrastructure across the southern border, the years ahead hold enormous promise for both countries and for the border communities in particular.

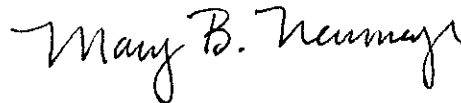
The Administration has placed a high priority on addressing regulatory barriers to the development of modern infrastructure while also protecting the environment. On August 15, 2017, President Trump signed Executive Order 13807, "Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure Projects." As the Executive Order makes clear, "[m]ore efficient and effective Federal infrastructure decisions can transform our economy, so the Federal Government, as a whole, must change the way it processes environmental reviews and authorization decisions."

To implement E.O. 13807, on March 20, 2018, the Council on Environmental Quality and Office of Management and Budget issued a Memorandum to Heads of Federal Departments and Agencies titled "One Federal Decision Framework for the Environmental Review and Authorization Process for Major Infrastructure Projects under Executive Order 13807." Pursuant to the March 20, 2018 Memorandum, Federal agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding on April 9, 2018, which outlines the roles and responsibilities for agencies in carrying out the "One Federal Decision" policy, and the process by which they should jointly and cooperatively process environmental reviews and make authorization decisions for major infrastructure projects. The goal of this policy is to provide a more efficient, timely review and permitting process for all types of infrastructure-related projects, including energy, water, transportation, environmental restoration, and other projects.

Your advice letter notes the socio-economic status of the border communities, and the *colonias* in particular, as well as the potential benefits of changes in energy policy in Mexico and related developments in trade negotiations. Understanding the opportunities and challenges of securing such potential economic and environmental benefits for the two countries and their border communities is critically important. We look forward to the GNEB's specific recommendations on policy and regulatory approaches to enhance such opportunities, including possible improvements to the current regulatory and permitting process to promote energy infrastructure development while assuring environmental protection.

Thank you and the GNEB for your advice and for the important work you do. We look forward to your forthcoming report and to continued engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary B. Neumayr". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary B. Neumayr
Chairman

cc: Ann-Marie Gantner, Designated Federal Officer, Good Neighbor Environmental Board, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency