



**Good Neighbor Environmental Board Public Meeting
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Headquarters, Washington, DC,
and Microsoft Teams Virtual Platform
November 13, 2024; 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. EST**

MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome and Member Roll Call

Eugene Green, Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB) Designated Federal Officer, Federal Advisory Committee Management and Oversight Division (FACMOD), Office of Inclusive Excellence (OIE), Office of Mission Support (OMS), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Robbie Young-Mackall, Director, FACMOD, OIE, OMS, EPA; Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB; Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB

Mr. Eugene Green welcomed participants to the meeting and asked Ms. Larissa Williams of FACMOD to conduct the roll call. A list of meeting participants is included as Appendix A. The meeting agenda is included as Appendix B. The official certification of the minutes by the Chair is included as Appendix C.

Mr. Green thanked the members for their dedication in developing Comment Letter #1 to the U.S. President and Congress in a relatively short amount of time. He noted that members of the press should direct all questions to press@epa.gov rather than FACMOD staff members.

Ms. Robbie Young-Mackall welcomed the GNEB members. The Board was last together in El Paso, Texas, for the September GNEB meeting, at which the Board heard presentations from the Comment Letter #1 Working Group. The September meeting attendees also had the opportunity to participate in several site visits. Ms. Young-Mackall commended the Board members for their unwavering dedication and sense of duty, and she thanked FACMOD staff for their efforts in supporting this meeting and other Agency-wide work.

Dr. Kimberly Collins welcomed the members. Dr. Irasema Coronado thanked the Board members for their efforts in developing Comment Letters #1 and #2.

Overview of Agenda and Meeting Goals/Objectives

Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB, and Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB

Dr. Collins provided an overview of the agenda and meeting goals, which are to approve Comment Letter #1 and discuss the content of Comment Letter #2. Once finalized, Comment Letter #1 will be sent to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), which will review it and distribute it to the appropriate members of the White House and Congress. Additionally, the Working Groups for Comment Letters #3 and #4 will be solidified during this call. Dr. Coronado emphasized the importance of meeting these goals.

Although it is not on the agenda, Dr. Collins also would like to discuss GNEB membership. Representatives from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the U.S. Department of State and a California state agency are needed. Mr. Green will determine how to fill the vacancy left by Mayor Paloma Aguirre, who did not seek re-election in Imperial Beach, California, and will be replaced on the Board. Mr. Green has been seeking a DHS replacement and has communicated with the State Department. Filling the federal vacancies may be placed on hold because of the recent change in administration.

Ms. Kathryn Becker explained that she and Mr. Joaquin Marruffo had met recently with a group comprising representatives from the four border states and learned that California Governor Gavin Newsome has appointed Nicole “Sabine” Talaugon as Deputy Secretary for Intergovernmental Relationships. She is Chumash, and her portfolio includes tribal, border and federal aspects. Also, she is interested in serving on GNEB, recognizing that she is new to her position. Ms. Jamie Huynh works for and with Ms. Talaugon and could complement her as an alternate. Mr. Green and Ms. Becker discussed the GNEB membership process, and Mr. Green will explore the possibility of Ms. Talaugon or Ms. Huynh serving on GNEB.

Dr. Collins noted that additional vacancies may occur with the transition of administrations and asked how the Board will address this possibility to ensure that GNEB continues to move forward with its comment letters. Mr. Green responded that during past transitions, GNEB membership has not been affected; FACMOD has begun to prepare for the new 2026–2028 Board membership cycle. GNEB will move forward with the current plan for four comment letters until CEQ tells the Board differently. Mr. Gilbert Anaya asked that Mr. Green keep him informed about GNEB’s activities because Dr. Maria Elena Giner holds a politically appointed position and may need to resign from the Board.

GNEB Working Group Report Out and Discussion on Charge Topics

Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB; Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB; and GNEB Working Group Members

Dr. Collins reviewed the 2024–2025 Work Plan Version 4 document, which describes the content of each letter and the plan for developing and finalizing them, and summarized the plan for the final report, which will package the four letters as one cohesive report with an introduction and concluding remarks.

Discuss and Approve Comment Letter #1

Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB; Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB; and GNEB Members

Dr. Collins provided an overview of the team that developed Comment Letter #1, as well as the components included in the letter. The letter was sent out for stakeholder review, and stakeholders responded with their support. Dr. Collins displayed the letter and provided a synopsis of the text in each section.

In response to the letter’s discussion of addressing challenges that small-scale systems face, Mr. Rob Roy commented that many tribal and nontribal (e.g., rural) small-scale systems have limited staffing and access to funding.

Dr. Joaquin Murrieta-Saldivar agreed with the letter’s discussion that innovative technologies can work in tandem with currently operating water treatment plants.

Ms. Pam Giblin commented on the American College of Environmental Lawyers (ACOEL) project to provide *colonias* with *pro bono* legal services; ACOEL may partially fund acquisition of innovative water technologies. During a recent ACOEL meeting that Ms. Giblin attended with Mr. Jonathan Niermann, the project was greeted with robust enthusiasm, and volunteers from across the United States expressed their interest in working on the project. A number of new technologies capture emissions from the atmosphere, which is the world’s largest aquifer. ACOEL is working with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to evaluate some of these technologies, which could be revolutionary for turning air into potable water. GNEB can work with ACOEL and other stakeholders that are interested in improving the border area.

Dr. Collins asked Mr. Anaya whether any updates needed to be made about the water debt to the United States. Mr. Anaya thought that it would be beneficial to include information about the new Minute, [Minute No. 331](#), which was signed by both International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) commissioners. He will develop a brief summary of the Minute and add it directly to the comment letter. Dr. Coronado stated that it is important to note that the Minute was well received in Mexico.

Dr. Christopher Brown added that the Minute had received attention in the U.S. press. Ms. Becker suggested including a discussion of Minute No. 331 in Comment Letter #3, which discusses the La Paz Agreement, because it shows the architecture of how the two countries agree to implement treaties and Minutes; such a discussion demonstrates the treaty aspects of Comment Letter #3. Dr. Collins agreed that this information could be included in an overview of treaties other than the La Paz Agreement.

Ms. Ivonne Cruz asked whether non-GNEB members could receive a copy of the Comment Letter #1 draft. Dr. Collins was unsure and offered to discuss this matter with her during the break.

Ms. Becker commented that the four letters should be succinct and that including case studies is helpful. Comment Letter #1 discusses proposed projects, but information on the project implemented by the San Carlos Apache Tribe is not included but would be particularly helpful in discussing the length of time spent in the incubation phase. Ms. Christy Sangster-Begay responded that she has not yet obtained tribal permission to share this information. Dr. Collins added that the final report can include this information if permission is not received in time for inclusion in Comment Letter #1.

Ms. Becker reported that she had sent the draft to the New Mexico Department of Health's Office of Border Health; staff were grateful to be included and did not have additional comments. Ms. Becker circulated the letter within the New Mexico Environment Department's Drinking Water Bureau, which may have comments. If she receives comments, Ms. Becker will submit them by November 15.

Mr. Marruffo recognized the Working Group's efforts in developing the letter and ensuring that all areas along the border were represented.

Mr. José Luis Palacios requested that Mr. Anaya add a sentence regarding the addition of San Juan River deliveries in fulfillment of the treaty—a recent development not related to Minute 331—which may be more impactful than the Minute itself. Mr. Anaya will look into adding this; he acknowledged that a relationship between this development and the Minute is being contemplated. Ms. Melisa Gonzalez-Roses commented that the IBWC commissioners held a meeting with water utilities and irrigation districts regarding the San Juan River deliveries. She reported that Commissioner Giner has asked the groups to provide her with an action plan to accept this water because many issues exist around delivery, cost and agriculture. The situation may change, so it may not be worth addressing in the letter. Mr. Anaya will ensure that Commissioner Giner approves any language that he adds.

Ms. Becker asked for confirmation that GNEB will transmit Comment Letter #1 in calendar year 2024 and will develop the final report to transmit before the end of calendar year 2025 so that GNEB has the benefit of addressing the outgoing and incoming administrations. Dr. Collins confirmed this, noting that Comment Letter #1 will be addressed to President Joseph Biden, and Letters #2–4 will be addressed to President Donald Trump. CEQ will forward Comment Letter #1 in December to President Biden and the U.S. Congress. Mr. Green confirmed that if Comment Letter #1 is sent to the contractor by November 18, the final letter can be transmitted to CEQ by December 13.

The GNEB members reached consensus on the contents of Comment Letter #1.

Update on Comment Letter #2

Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB; Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB; and GNEB Members

Because the Board finished its discussion on Comment Letter #1 early, Dr. Collins deviated from the agenda and began the discussion on Comment Letter #2. She explained that this letter focuses on severe weather events, trade infrastructure and transportation corridors in the border region, including how severe weather affects the many bridges in the region.

The draft comprises three main sections: (1) U.S.–Mexico border trade; (2) impacts of severe weather events on infrastructure; and (3) challenges and opportunities for transportation fleet, corridors and energy sources in the border. Dr. Collins displayed the draft, which needs to be edited and have missing content added. She provided a synopsis of the current text in each section.

Dr. Rebecca Beavers noted that this letter is evolving. A great deal of information exists, so the Board must define its focus to keep the letter about 10 pages long. Infrastructure has received a tremendous amount of investment, but e-vehicles' effects on the electric grid also must be considered. The focus should be on the environmental elements and hazard-related information. The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) can provide additional material to fit the focus. Dr. Collins agreed that the topic is broad; GNEB must determine what it would like to say and focus on communicating the urgent need to address challenges in a region stressed by the volume of trade. The Board must develop a plan so that the letter discusses the transition to zero-emission vehicles and the impacts of severe weather (e.g., extreme heat), as well as how the confluence of these two factors affects the vital local, state, federal and international connections that are highly reliant on border transportation infrastructure and must be maintained to avoid a border closure. National security, emergency response and economic consequences also must be considered.

Dr. Beavers asked how the Board will obtain review by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in the absence of a DHS representative. Mr. Green explained that agency staff have served as internal alternates in the past, and he can follow up to determine whether DHS staff can provide additional context. Dr. Collins agreed that it would be helpful to receive DHS input. Dr. Beavers reported that she also would like her USDOT colleagues to contribute to the letter.

Public Comment Period

Mr. Green did not receive any requests to provide spoken comments and received one request to provide written comments, which are included in Appendix D. Mr. Green reported that he had received four requests for the meeting information and then called for spoken public comments; none were offered. Dr. Coronado appreciates those who provide written comments.

Update on Comment Letter #2 Continued

Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB; Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB; and GNEB Members

Dr. Coronado will reach out to Mr. Alejandro Barcenas to contribute information about the annual flooding in the Ambos Nogales binational region.

Dr. Josiah Heyman commented that a discussion of cross-border emergency institutions in the Border 2025 Program should be added to the letter to highlight that this important framework must be funded and its collaborative activities supported. Dr. Collins agreed that the Region 6 and 9 border offices should be consulted to provide context about Border 2025.

Ms. Becker noted that early discussions about this letter focused on the effects of extreme heat on people and infrastructure. A recent article describes that one-quarter of America's bridges could collapse within the next 26 years. South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem, who has been selected to serve as Secretary of Homeland Security, boasts that she is the only governor to refuse money related to climate, resiliency and human contribution to climate change. The letter could focus on the economic impact of not maintaining the U.S. infrastructure, as well as the human impact of transport and trade as a feature of population and workforce. Current temperatures mean that everyday heat is an extreme event; heat alone can cause infrastructure failure over time, which in turn negatively affects the economy and trade. GNEB could explore existing networks of economic development (e.g., Texas trade fairs), and the letter could focus on why trade matters.

Dr. Heyman agreed that an economic focus will appeal to a wider audience and not just those living in border communities. His sense was that this letter was supposed to focus on cross-border infrastructure; noncommercial crossings at ports of entry could be examined through USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics data, as long as double-counting is minimized. Human suffering will occur as a result of border infrastructure failure, and these data support this argument. He is not aware of data regarding the broader effects of heat on local border communities.

Ms. Becker noted that some agencies may have specific definitions for certain terms (e.g., climate change, severe weather, extreme heat, extreme precipitation), so it is necessary to be mindful of the language that the Board uses. Mr. Brent Range strongly agreed. He also noted that GNEB must be careful to avoid scope creep. Bridges are the common denominator within the discussion and can serve as the focal point of the letter. Dr. Collins reiterated that the Board must determine the specific focus of the letter. Dr. Beavers agreed that the focus on trade needs to be strengthened and that a focus on bridges would be appropriate. She explained her rationale for developing the section of the letter devoted to e-vehicles.

Ms. Becker commented that the border is not homogenous, and California's mandates are very different from those of New Mexico and other border states. Trade and transport are necessary and beneficial. The focus of the letter could be on bridges that serve as ports of entry and how to improve those bridges to protect and preserve U.S. trade and transport. Protecting trade and transport aligns with the United States' historical and current identity. Dr. Coronado advised that not all ports of entries have bridges.

Dr. Yamilett Carrillo Guerrero suggested that some of the information on California currently in Comment Letter #2 could be moved to Comment Letter #4, which will focus on infrastructure in the California region. She provided a link to a quality [data source](#) if liquefied natural gas trade between the United States and Mexico is included in Comment Letter #2.

Dr. Collins sees the confluences of two issues—(1) new technologies and the collision of different standards being set by border states and (2) extreme weather—and how these come together to affect the transportation corridors, infrastructure and trade between both countries. The letter could focus on commercial traffic rather than passenger and pedestrian traffic, particularly considering that commercial traffic (e.g., trucks) has increased over the years as noncommercial traffic has decreased. Dr. Beavers commented that rail and pipeline data could be included. Dr. Trent Biggs suggested a focus on infrastructure for border control and enforcement, which relies heavily on such infrastructure. This focus could bring the new administration's attention to the interaction of weather and infrastructure.

Dr. Beavers thought that GNEB could more fully develop Comment Letters #3 and #4 to help determine the ultimate focus of Comment Letter #2 before finalizing it. Dr. Collins agreed.

Mr. Range commented that railways need to be considered when discussing economics in the U.S.–Mexico border region. CBP's role related to trains crossing the border should be considered when discussing ports of entry bridges and roads.

Dr. Collins reiterated the need for Comment Letter #2 to highlight issues important to the incoming administration. Project 2025 includes a chapter on transportation and how innovative transportation can be funded. The letter could discuss that developing trade corridors and transportation infrastructure for the U.S.–Mexico border is important to the private sector, which also plays a significant role in infrastructure development. This aspect will be essential to make the letter relevant to its audience.

Brief Introduction to Comment Letters #3 and #4 and Comprehensive Report GNEB Working Group Members

Dr. Collins introduced the topic for Comment Letter #3, which will focus on the 40th anniversary of the La Paz Agreement and how it can help future collaborations between the United States and Mexico.

Mr. Anaya, Ms. Becker, Mr. Marruffo and Dr. Murrieta-Saldivar volunteered to be added to the current team. Dr. Collins added Mr. Barcenas to the team. Dr. Collins will reach out to the Working Group to begin the development and writing process.

Comment Letter #4 focuses on the capacity of tribal nations and border cities to manage environmental infrastructure challenges, with a focus on the California border region. Dr. Beavers and Mr. Carlos Suarez volunteered to be added to the current team. Ms. Becker noted that Ms. Gonzalez-Roses would serve well on this Working Group given her perspective. Dr. Collins will reach out to the Working Group to begin the development and writing process.

Mr. Roy explained that he had contacted EPA about the Agency's infrastructure needs survey that focused on the drinking water needs of tribes in the border region; he will send the survey data to Dr. Collins. Dr. Collins also would like Mr. Roy's input on which environmental media tribal and local governments would consider important for GNEB to discuss in Comment Letter #4.

Ms. Becker recommended reframing the section on challenges in Comment Letter #3 away from energy access and toward the environmental impacts of heat and weather on border transport routes, principally ports of entry. This approach will meet the original goal of conveying the urgency for a renewed commitment to increased investment in the border region and allow the federal government to focus on infrastructure and trade rather than directly dealing with climate change.

Assignments and Process/Timing for Completing GNEB Comment Letters #2 and #3

Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB, and Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB

Dr. Collins explained that she had received written input about Comment Letter #2. She read information received from Dr. Jeffrey Payne about flooding and the need for infrastructure investment to address current and future flood events. His comments included information about the [Federal Flood Standard Support Tool](#), which helps determine whether a federally funded project will be located in a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard floodplain; the tool helps reduce costs and lessen the effects of extreme weather events. Dr. Collins will add this information to Comment Letter #2.

Dr. Larisa Ann Ford had provided potential sources of information for outstanding questions in Comment Letter #2, as well as written input about the relationship between natural gas pipelines and electricity grids in the border region and information about Border 2025 and emergency response. Dr. Collins will add this information to Comment Letter #2.

Dr. Collins asked GNEB members to consider the order of the messaging in Comment Letter #2. She provided an overview of the current order, noting that the Board can make substantial revisions. During this meeting, GNEB discussed trade corridors and transportation and their importance to the economic health of the border region, as well as bridges, pipelines, rail and other infrastructure. She thought that the importance of trade corridors and transportation should be the first section of the letter. She suggested that the current Section 3 could be moved forward in the letter; much of the information about California could be moved to Comment Letter #4.

Mr. Richard Kirschner commented that a focus on transportation as related to trade and the movement of goods across the border should highlight transportation corridors. The discussions of the California Low Carbon Fuel Standard and clean car agreements could be shortened or removed. He believes that it is important to include a discussion of industry's interest in facilitating the transition to cleaner transportation and states' efforts to install heavy- and light-duty charging infrastructure along Interstate 10 in the border region.

Ms. Becker is comfortable with the current order of Comment Letter #2. She thought that the challenge in Section 3 needed to be reframed because the current message says, "Problem solved." She would like this section to address how to encourage reinvestment in ports of entry and border bridges and roads in a way that aligns with other state and federal actions. She would like to move away from the energy aspect and address the assessment of roads and bridges and their linkage into the corridor concept. Currently, the letter highlights opportunities of existing programs under the current administration, but to be successful, the letter must describe the challenges related to trade and environmental impacts that must be solved. Ultimately, Comment Letter #2 is an environmental impact comment letter that should state that if the environmental effects on ports of entry are not addressed, the resulting failed infrastructure will negatively affect trade. Mr. Range agreed and reiterated the earlier point that to be relevant to the incoming administration, border security must be considered; CBP needs to be involved and provide input in drafting Comment Letter #2.

Dr. Collins would like to see Section 1 strengthened to include the benefits of trade and transport, information about different types of transportation, and a description of federal government interests (e.g., support of cross-border trade, needs of federal agencies that work at the border). The GNEB members did not object to this approach.

Dr. Collins commented that, as Sections 2 and 3 are brought together, the letter could reframe the extreme weather discussion and discuss how to improve current trade routes and infrastructure while considering the changes occurring within the transportation sector and ensuring that investments are productive, consider new technologies, and do not harm the economic and national security realities that exist between the United States and Mexico. Dr. Collins has not seen an assessment of roads and bridges and their linkage into the corridor concept. It is possible that the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) has assessed border infrastructure in relation to trade. In response, Dr. Ford provided a link to [a GAO article](#).

Mr. Palacios explained that Texas has a state transportation plan and three regional transportation plans. Each regional transportation plan includes specific details about needed investments. Ms. Gonzalez-Roses added that the Council for South Texas Economic Progress (COSTEP), a nongovernmental organization, has been working on a similar assessment; she will reach out to the organization for more information. Local Councils of Governments' Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies include transportation.

Dr. Collins wondered whether the focus should be on Texas or applications across the border region. Dr. Heyman responded that the most important issues that GNEB would like to discuss occur across the border. For example, heat will be a particularly significant hazard in Calexico, California, because of the city's low altitude. Many of the locations to best illustrate this issue are not in Texas. Ms. Gonzalez-Roses thought that the letter should be broad and include a directive to check local economic development strategies for transportation because each will be different. GNEB can make a broad statement while encouraging readers to review their local scenarios.

Ms. Becker commented that the Federal Reserve Economic Data database suggests that the United States' percentage of public investment in infrastructure has [decreased 40 percent since the 1960s](#). Revamping U.S. roads, bridges and public transportation is long overdue and is particularly urgent with the added complication of extreme heat and flooding. She also provided links to articles in [PLOS ONE](#), in [The New York Times](#), and by the [Arizona Trucking Association](#). Dr. Beavers added a link to a [GAO article](#).

Ms. Becker commented that these articles highlight the cost if ports of entries close. A private partnership with the trucking industry could be beneficial. GNEB could focus on the very real, very significant threat that these ports of entry could close completely. The best approach to keep the border open is investment in infrastructure, especially if the infrastructure is clean and green.

Mr. Range noted that the length can help the Board refine the focus of Comment Letter #2; Dr. Collins agreed, noting that the letter needs to be shortened.

Action Items/Next Steps and Wrap-Up

Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB, and Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB

Dr. Collins provided an overview of the timeline from the 2024–2025 Work Plan Version 4 document, noting that the Board should hold its next virtual meeting in March 2025 to consider and work on Comment Letters #3 and #4 rather than Comment Letter #3 only. Although working on the letters simultaneously will increase the workload, doing so will allow the Board to focus on the final report in the summer and fall of 2025. The GNEB members did not have any objections to this plan.

Adjournment

Dr. Collins and Mr. Green thanked the Board members for their contributions. Dr. Collins adjourned the meeting at 2:46 p.m. EST.

Action Items

- Mr. Anaya will—
 - Develop a brief summary of Minute No. 331 and add it directly to Comment Letter #1.
 - Look into adding a sentence about San Juan River deliveries into the text about Minute 331, ensuring that Commissioner Giner approves the language.
- Ms. Becker will submit any comments from the New Mexico Environment Department's Drinking Water Bureau by November 15.
- Dr. Collins and Mr. Green will work together to determine how to obtain DHS input on Comment Letter #2.
- Dr. Collins will—
 - Incorporate the comments from Drs. Payne and Ford into Comment Letter #2.
 - Reach out to the Comment Letter #3 and #4 Working Groups to begin the development and writing process.
- Dr. Coronado will reach out to Mr. Barcenas to contribute information to Comment Letter #2 about the annual flooding in the Ambos Nogales binational region.
- Mr. Green will—
 - Work with Ms. Becker to explore the possibility of Ms. Talaugon or Ms. Huynh serving on GNEB.
 - Keep Mr. Anaya informed about GNEB's activities.
 - Seek DHS input about Comment Letter #2.
- Ms. Gonzalez-Roses will reach out to COSTEP regarding its transportation assessment.
- Mr. Roy will—
 - Send to Dr. Collins data from EPA's infrastructure needs survey that focused on the drinking water needs of tribes in border region.
 - Provide input on which environmental media tribal and local governments would consider important for GNEB to discuss in Comment Letter #4.
- The Comment Letter #2 Working Group will consult the Region 6 and 9 border offices to provide context about Border 2025.
- The following GNEB members will be added to the Comment Letter #3 Working Group: Mr. Anaya, Mr. Barcenas, Ms. Becker, Mr. Marruffo and Dr. Murrieta-Saldivar.
- The following GNEB members will be added to the Comment Letter #4 Working Group: Dr. Beavers, Ms. Gonzalez-Roses and Mr. Suarez.

Appendix A: Meeting Participants

GNEB Chair

Kimberly Collins, Ph.D.

Executive Director, William and Barbara
Leonard Transportation Center
Professor, Department of Public Administration
California State University, San Bernardino
San Bernardino, CA

GNEB Nonfederal, State, Local and Tribal Members

Kathryn Becker, J.D.

Assistant General Counsel and Tribal Liaison
Office of General Counsel
New Mexico Environment Department
Santa Fe, NM

Trent W. Biggs, Ph.D.

Professor of Geography
San Diego State University
San Diego, CA

Christopher Brown, Ph.D.

Professor
Department of Geography
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, NM

Yamilett K. Carrillo Guerrero, Ph.D.

Senior Program Manager
Binational Resilience Initiative
Environmental Initiatives
San Diego Foundation
San Diego, CA

Evaristo Cruz

Director of Community Development
Ysleta del Sur Pueblo
El Paso, TX

Larisa Ann Ford, Ph.D.

Deputy Program Manager
Sundance Consultants, LLC
Corpus Christi, TX

Pamela M. Giblin, Esq.

Board Member
B Carbon
Austin, TX

GNEB Vice Chair

Irasema Coronado, Ph.D.

Director and Professor
School of Transborder Studies
Arizona State University
Tempe, AZ

Melisa E. Gonzalez-Roses

Assistant Director of Community and Economic
Development
Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
Weslaco, TX

Josiah Heyman, Ph.D.

Director
Center for Interamerican and Border Studies
The University of Texas at El Paso
El Paso, TX

Mignonne D. Hollis

Executive Director
Arizona Regional Economic Development
Foundation
Sierra Vista, AZ

Richard Kirschner

Youth Representative (Advocate)
Placitas, NM

Joaquin Marruffo

Border Programs Coordinator
Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
Tucson, AZ

Joaquin Murrieta-Saldivar, Ph.D. (Pending)

Cultural Ecologist Director
Watershed Management Group
Tucson, AZ

Rob Roy

Director
Environmental Protection Office
La Jolla Band of Luiseño Indians
Pauma Valley, CA

Christy Sangster-Begay

Director
Department of Environmental Protection
San Carlos Apache Tribe
San Carlos, CA

GNEB Federal Members

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Carlos Suarez

State Conservationist (State Director)
Natural Resource Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Davis, CA

U.S. Department of Transportation

Rebecca Beavers, Ph.D.

Climate Policy Specialist
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
Denver, CO

U.S. Department of the Interior

Brent Range

Program Manager
Interagency Borderland Coordination and Field
Communications
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, DC

GNEB Designated Federal Officer

Eugene Green

Designated Federal Officer
Good Neighbor Environmental Board
Federal Advisory Committee Management and
Oversight Division
Office of Inclusive Excellence
Office of Mission Support
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Participants

P. David Alvaranga

Federal Advisory Committee Management and
Oversight Division
Office of Inclusive Excellence
Office of Mission Support
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

Monisha Harris

Deputy Director
Office of International Affairs
Office of International and Tribal Affairs
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

LaToya Brunson-Witherspoon

Federal Advisory Committee Management and
Oversight Division
Office of Inclusive Excellence
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

Marta Jordan

U.S.–Mexico Program Manager
Office of International Affairs
Office of International and Tribal Affairs
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

Raelle Dorsey

Federal Advisory Committee Management and
Oversight Division
Office of Inclusive Excellence
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

Gloria Lampkin

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

Tamara Mooney

Office of International Affairs
Office of International and Tribal Affairs
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

Gina Moore

Federal Advisory Committee Management and
Oversight Division
Office of Inclusive Excellence
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

Sahil Virani

Federal Advisory Committee Management and
Oversight Division
Office of Inclusive Excellence
Office of Mission Support
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

Robbie Young-Mackall

Director
Federal Advisory Committee Management and
Oversight Division
Office of Inclusive Excellence
Office of Mission Support
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

Larissa Williams

Federal Advisory Committee Management and
Oversight Division
Office of Inclusive Excellence
Office of Mission Support
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

Other Federal, State, Tribal and Local Participants**Gilbert Anaya**

Division Chief
Environmental Management Division
U.S. Section
International Boundary and Water Commission
El Paso, TX

Mayra Chavez, Ph.D.

Border Affairs Staff Member
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Austin, TX

Ivonne Cruz

Research Scholar
Center for the U.S. and Mexico
Baker Institute for Public Policy
Rice University
Houston, TX

Eddie Moderow

Border Affairs Manager
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Austin, TX

José Luis Palacios

Border Affairs Intern
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Austin, TX

Joseph Smith

BNP Media
Washington, DC

Contractor Support**Kristen LeBaron**

Senior Science Writer/Editor
The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc.
Gaithersburg, MD

Appendix B: Agenda



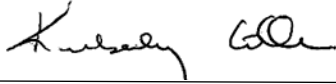
Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB)
Hybrid Meeting: EPA Headquarters and Microsoft Teams
November 13, 2024; 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. EST

AGENDA

- 11:00–11:20 a.m. Welcome and Member Roll Call**
- Eugene Green, GNEB Designated Federal Officer, Federal Advisory Committee Management and Oversight Division (FACMOD)
 - Robbie Young-Mackall, Director, FACMOD
 - Dr. Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB
 - Dr. Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB
- 11:20–11:30 a.m. Overview of Agenda and Meeting Goals/Objectives**
- Dr. Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB
 - Dr. Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB
- 11:30–11:50 a.m. GNEB Working Group Report Out and Discussion on Charge Topics**
- Dr. Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB
 - Dr. Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB
 - GNEB Working Group Members
- 11:50 a.m.–12:50 p.m. Discuss and Approve Comment Letter #1**
- Dr. Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB
 - Dr. Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB
 - GNEB Members
- 12:50–1:00 p.m. Break**
- 1:00–1:15 p.m. Public Comment Period**
- 1:15–1:45 p.m. Discuss and Approve Comment Letter #1 Continued**
- Dr. Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB
 - Dr. Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB
 - GNEB Members
- 1:45–2:30 p.m. Update on Comment Letter #2**
- Dr. Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB
 - Dr. Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB
 - GNEB Members
- 2:30–2:45 p.m. Brief Introduction to Comment Letters #3 and #4 and Comprehensive Report**
- GNEB Working Group members
- 2:45–2:55 p.m. Assignments and Process/Timing for Completing GNEB Comment Letters #2 and #3**
- Dr. Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB
 - Dr. Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB
- 2:55–3:00 p.m. Action Items/ Next Steps and Wrap-Up**
- Dr. Kimberly Collins, Chair, GNEB
 - Dr. Irasema Coronado, Vice Chair, GNEB
- 3:00 p.m. Adjournment**

Appendix C: Chair Certification of Minutes

I, Kimberly Collins, Chair of the Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB), certify that this is the final version of the complete minutes for the hybrid meeting held November 13, 2024, and that the minutes accurately reflect the discussions and decisions of the meeting.



Kimberly Collins, GNEB Chair

December 17, 2024

Date

Appendix D: Written Public Comment

Dear Members of the Good Neighbor Environmental Board:

Thank you for your work in providing advice to the President and the Congress on the need for environmental and infrastructure projects on the border, and for the opportunity to comment on the letters being developed by the Good Neighbor Environmental Board. This comment will focus on Letter 2, **Exploring the impacts of severe weather events on transportation infrastructure, with a special focus on border trade corridors and communities.**

Generally, there is an opportunity to highlight two elements of public impact regarding transportation infrastructure with regard to border trade corridors and communities.

One is public health. “Health” is mentioned three times, while “trade” is mentioned 37 times.

The second is the affect of heat on public health. “Heat” comes up 10 times, in the context of impact on infrastructure. Given the special focus on trade corridors and communities, it should at least be mentioned that heat has an impact on public health, and that the infrastructure itself is a source of heat.

There is a system of infrastructure – where do large facilities go? – and there is design. Frankly, the system decisions are made based on expediency for vehicular traffic and cost, pushing aside public health, environmental, or community quality of life considerations. The communities that suffer most are typically low-income and with a public investment deficit. While we can do better with our systems, there is immediate opportunity at least for mitigation in design, whether it is using techniques to capture water flow that allow for water use and groundwater recharge, more sound and pollution barriers, or planting location-appropriate trees and other vegetation not only next to major facilities but throughout adjacent neighborhoods.

Some places where these ideas can be added to the letter:

Page 2

- *Despite this extensive infrastructure, the growth of cross-border trade has put immense strain on border facilities, creating bottlenecks and delays, particularly for trucks and rail (Texas Department of Transportation, 2021).* - strain on border facilities – impact also could include public health.

Page 3

- *Increased truck and rail movements, along with heightened demand for passenger vehicle crossings, have led to longer wait times and congestion - – congestion leads to concentration of air pollution. This comes up again on Page 11 (trucks “spend approximately 45 percent of their miles driven on the U.S. side of the border but idle at the ports of entry for up to four hours every trip (Texas A&M, 2017 and 2019)”).*
- *Efforts to address these environmental concerns need to be incorporated into transportation planning to ensure that the economic benefits of trade do not come at the cost of environmental sustainability. – and public health*

Page 7

- *The transportation sector—which includes all modes of travel through land, air, and sea to move people and goods—accounts for a third of all domestic greenhouse gas emissions, negatively affecting the health and wellbeing of millions of Americans,* - first use of the word “health,” which comes up three times as compared to 37 times for “trade”

Page 11

- *Although the miles may not be driven in Texas, emissions linger in the local air basin all the same. In addition to being an isolated metropolis, surrounded by rural and natural conservation areas, the fact that a three state, binational air basin is dissected for funding eligibility, has translated into chronic underfunding. – great point!*

Thank you again for your important work, and for the opportunity to comment.

Submitted via email on November 19, 2024, by Luis “Sito” Negrón on behalf of Precinct 2 El Paso County Commissioner David Stout