

**CALEXICO NEW RIVER  
COMMITTEE**

*Improving Our Way of Life*

**\*\*\*\*\* Looking Ahead to 2011 \*\*\*\*\***

The CNRC enjoyed a great 2010 with momentum growing at all government levels for the New River Improvement Project. The CNRC has identified 10 important objectives that will be imperative to achieve in order to continue to harness support:

- Work with the environmental and engineering firm selected by the City of Calexico to manage Phase 1 of the NRIP, which is comprised of two parts:
  - *Phase 1A* – development of the NRIP Strategic Plan in accordance with AB 1079 for the entire 66-mile reach of the New River;
  - *Phase 1B* – development and implementation of the City’s plans for transforming parts of the three-mile reach of the New River that flows through the City from the international border to State Rte 98 into a publically accessible parkway comprised of recreational areas and bicycle and pedestrian paths.
- Continue to secure operational dollars for the CNRC.
- Comply with the goals of the California Wellness Foundation and the approved objectives under the Rabobank grant.
- Seek the support of Congressman Bob Filner to create an appropriation that grants the Army Corps of Engineers the right to implement the authorization they possess to be part of any remedial project for the New River as established in law passed in the 1940’s.
- Continue to advocate at the regional, state, and federal level for partnership support.
- Continue to seek funds to fund community health education activities.
- Continue advocacy for environmental/social justice.
- Continue to seek funding for mitigation of the New River.
- Community Outreach: Continue community awareness and empowerment.
- Assist the City of Calexico in follow up work pertaining to the recent City of Calexico appropriation approval by the U.S. Senate for New River water infrastructure in the amount of \$600,000.

**November  
December  
2010**

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**Rabobank presents award to the Calexico New River**

Dave Takata, Rabobank Regional President, presented a \$15,000 check to the CNRC at the November 19, 2010 CNRC board of directors meeting in Calexico, CA. Dave Takata acknowledged the ongoing efforts of the CNRC to remediate the current state of the New River and on behalf of Rabobank thanked the CNRC for continuing to strive to find a solution to this issue in Imperial County. CNRC Chairman Jose Carrillo thanked Rabobank for continuing to put their trust in the CNRC and continuing to support all efforts related to the improvement of the New River.

**Support our project with a tax deductible donation**

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## The California Department of Public Health hosts community meeting in Calexico

On December 13, 2010 the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) hosted a community meeting in Calexico to communicate the conclusions of their New River odor health consultation performed in Calexico, CA. The CDPH staff headed by Dr. Marilyn Underwood concluded that Hydrogen Sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S) monitoring provides limited information on ambient air levels of H<sub>2</sub>S along the banks of the New River, in the Westside Neighborhood, and in other areas of Calexico. Audience members were informed that the findings reflect that H<sub>2</sub>S levels in Calexico are higher than levels typically found in urban environments, and are likely the result of the emissions from multiple sources, both locally and in Mexico.

Dr. Underwood and her staff learned about the potential odor problem in the Westside of Calexico in 2008. Numerous residents were concerned that the noxious odors in the vicinity of the New River caused severe public health concerns in the community as a whole. Dr. Underwood explained that a number of chemicals commonly associated with sewage that can become airborne are known as malodorous (having a bad smell) compounds. H<sub>2</sub>S is the most common sulfur-containing malodorous compound associated with sewage.

The CNRC accompanied Dr. Underwood and staff during the cold winters and warm summers of 2008 and 2009 to conduct H<sub>2</sub>S monitoring along the New River and urban areas of Calexico conducted limited air monitoring for H<sub>2</sub>S. The CNRC also assisted CDPH in preparing two public availability sessions where residents from the Westside of Calexico were interviewed and surveyed by CDPH staff.

The CNRC publicly thanked Dr. Underwood and her staff for conducting a health consultation project in Calexico and acknowledged their commitment to continue to work in the future on other New River related projects.




Top: CDPH staff conduct their presentation at Hector Mario Esquer Building



Top: County officials and community residents listen closely to the presenters

### New CNRC Postcard

Starting in 2011, the CNRC will be distributing an informational postcard that will enable our friends, partners and allies to learn about our efforts and express their support by returning this postcard via our website or by standard mail.



**Name/Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_


(By returning this postcard you support the efforts and work of the Calexico New River Committee)

**ABOUT THE NEW RIVER**

The New River flows north from the city of Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico into the United States through the city of Calexico, California. The river has been referred to as the most severely polluted river of its size within the United States. The river flows north 15 miles through Baja California and another 46 miles through California into the Salton Sea, the largest lake in California. Since the 1940s, the New River has been recognized as a significant pollution and human health problem. Despite recent measurable water quality improvements, the residual and projected pollution in the New River coming from Mexico remains a significant threat to public health and the environment. The New River bacterial levels are above state standards. The river is listed as an impaired river by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and is a major contributor of pollution to the Salton Sea. The New River is also an aesthetic nuisance for the residents of City of Calexico, California, and has historically inhibited the city's socioeconomic well-being and growth.

**CNRC Next Steps**

- ▶ Continue to advocate at the regional, state, and federal level for partnership support.
- ▶ Continue to seek funds to fund community health education activities.
- ▶ Advocate for Economic Development in the Westside of Calexico.
- ▶ Continue advocacy for environmental/social justice.
- ▶ Continue to seek funding for mitigation of the New River.
- ▶ Community Outreach: Continue community awareness and empowerment.



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*Support Our Project*

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