



February 2, 2026

Honorable Richard Cortez  
Hidalgo County Judge  
Hidalgo County Courthouse  
100E. Cano 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
Edinburg, Texas 78520

**Re: El Morillo Drain Maintenance Contribution Fiscal Years 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024**

Dear Judge Cortez,

Cameron County, along with Hidalgo County and Willacy County, has been providing for its pro-rata share of the local match funding for the operation and maintenance cost for the El Morillo Drain. The proration is based on a split of 45% for Cameron County, 45% for Hidalgo County and 10% for Willacy County.

The El Morillo Drain is a project that diverts inflow in the Rio Grande River at a point in Mexico northwest of Reynosa which is across the river from Anzaldua's Park. The drain runs through Reynosa and out to the Gulf of Mexico via a system of open ditches, canals and underground pipelines. The water that is diverted is of very poor quality, and essentially if allowed to drain into the river would make downstream water unusable for irrigation or other purposes.

The drain is operated by the International Boundary and Water Commission – United States and Mexico (USIBWC). The drain was completed in 1969. The portion of the U.S. section of the river was the responsibility of the Lower Rio Grande Water Committee (a non-profit with local citizens primarily from the agriculture community on the board). The law providing for the joint operation of the drain provided for a local match obligation for the O&M of the drain (PL89-584). The Committee sought the financial assistance of the three counties for the provision of the local match. The Commissioner's Court adopted a resolution in 1972 appointing the Committee as the County point of contact with the USIBWC and the Counties agreed to provide its pro-rata share of the local O&M match. The Rio Grande Regional Water Authority (RGRWA), a state-created entity, by agreement with the Committee took over the Committee's position relating to the drain in 2008. The Commissioner's Court recognized the transfer of the responsibility from the Committee to the RGRWA. The Commissioner's Court in such recognition agreed to continue to pay for ½ of the O&M costs for the U.S. section of the drain.

Based on the foregoing, RGRWA had invoiced the County's for its portion of the September 2020-2022 O&M funding on September 25, 2013. Such invoice has not been paid as of this date. I understand in

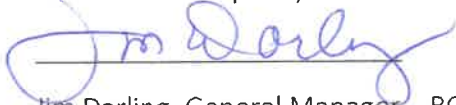


talking to your staff that the invoice was not received by the County. The RGRWA 2023 invoice payments are based on the attached letter from IBWC dated August 22, 2023. The County not having received such invoice had not made any payment on that invoice. I have included **August 22, 2013** Request for Payment letter from IBWC for reference. The total amount is \$324,458.86. This letter may be considered the invoice for such 2023 IBWC billing and is requesting such payment of **\$146,006.49** based on the 45% obligation of Cameron County.

I have also included the September 18, 2025 Request for Payment letter from IBWC reflecting the EL Morillo Drain M&O costs for October 1, 2021 (that weren't previously billed) to September 30, 2024. The Cameron County's share for such payment is \$76,280.37 being 45% of ½ of the U.S. costs of \$169,511.94.

The combined cost of both invoices is \$222,286.86

I appreciate your consideration and participation in providing this important safeguard to the environmental quality of our Rio Grande River.



Jim Darling, General Manager – RGRWA

Cell-956-648-5143

Cc: Anna Talbert, RGV Partnership

Cc: Isela Canava, IBWC





OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER  
UNITED STATES SECTION

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION  
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

September 18, 2025

Mr. James E. Darling, President  
Rio Grande Regional Water Authority  
322 S. Missouri Ave.  
Weslaco, Texas 78599

Dear Mr. Darling:

I refer to Contract No. IBM-09-A004, dated March 4, 2009, between the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC), and the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority (RGRWA), where the RGRWA is to pay one-half of the Morillo Drain Operation and Maintenance (O&M) cost allocated to the U.S. Section. The Morillo Drain conveyance channel was constructed in Mexico and is operated by Mexico for the discharge of saline water into the Gulf of Mexico. Regular operations, maintenance, and improvements costs of the conveyance system are incurred annually.

The U.S. Section's expenditures for the Morillo Drain during Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) (October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024) were \$91,417.39. Fiscal Year 2024 Minute 303 project costs will be invoiced partially as only operational emergencies have been addressed. The USIBWC is responsible for 50% of the shared costs to Mexico as per Minute No. 223 and Minute No. 303, dated November 30, 1965, and May 15, 2000, respectively. RGRWA is responsible for reimbursing half of the U.S. Section's costs for the Morillo Drain for FY24 or **\$45,708.69**.

The U.S. Section's expenditures for the Morillo Drain during Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) (October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023) were \$207,166.90. The USIBWC is responsible for 50% of the shared costs to Mexico as per Minute No. 223 and Minute No. 303, dated November 30, 1965, and May 15, 2000, respectively. RGRWA is responsible for reimbursing half of the U.S. Section's costs for the Morillo Drain for FY23 or **\$103,583.74**.

The U.S. Section's expenditures for the Morillo Drain during Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) (October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022) were \$142,688.58. The USIBWC is responsible for 50% of the shared costs to Mexico as per Minute No. 223 and Minute No. 303, dated November 30, 1965, and May 15, 2000, respectively. Half of the U.S. Section's costs for the Morillo Drain for FY22 total \$71,344.29.

4191 N. Mesa Street • El Paso, Texas 79902-1423  
915.832.4100 • 1-800-262-8857 • <https://www.ibwc.gov>



In our previous letter from August 22, 2023, USIBWC invoiced RGRWA \$51,124.49 for part of the FY22 expenses which total \$71,344.29. The remaining balance of \$20,219.80 corresponds to the outstanding expenses for FY22 Minute 303 projects as detailed in Table 1 of Attachment 1. RGRWA is responsible for reimbursing the U.S. Section the remaining balance of **\$20,219.80**.

As stipulated in Contract No. IBM-09-A004, I am requesting a total payment in the amount of **\$169,511.94** for the Morillo Drain O&M costs from October 1, 2021, to September 30, 2024. In accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations, please make payment by check or money order to the United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission.

In addition, I wish to inform you that the previous payment request sent on August 22, 2023 in the amount of \$324,458.86 still has not been received as of the writing of this letter. That letter and its attachments have been added to this communication in the form of Attachments 2 and 3 respectively. If you have any questions, please contact Engineer Mario Gomez, Acting Chief of Operations and Maintenance Division at 956-754-0565 or [mario.gomez@ibwc.gov](mailto:mario.gomez@ibwc.gov).

Sincerely,

**I SELA CANAVA**

Digitally signed by I SELA  
CANAVA  
Date: 2025.09.18 12:15:03 -06'00'

Isela Canava  
Principal Engineer

Attachment: As stated



Attachment 1  
Morillo Drain O&M and Major Maintenance and Repairs

**Table 1. Summary of Costs Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023**

Expenditure	FY22		FY23	
	US Share	RGRWA	US Share	RGRWA
O&M	\$ 67,334.18	*	\$ 58,009.61	\$29,004.81
Electricity	\$ 34,914.80	*	\$ 41,638.02	\$20,819.01
Min 303 Projects	\$ 40,439.60	\$20,219.80	\$ 107,519.27	\$53,759.64
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 142,688.58</b>	<b>\$20,219.80</b>	<b>\$207,166.90</b>	<b>\$103,583.45</b>

\*Indicates items that were billed in the previous letter to RGRWA

**Table 2. FY 2022 Minute 303 Projects**

Contract	Description	US Share	RGRWA
CILA-REY-AD-3-2023	Pump Station Preventative maintenance on pump No. 4 at the Pump Station	\$ 14,882.14	\$ 7,441.07
CILA-REY-INV-14-2023	Pump Station Replace grates on the wet wells	\$25,557.46	\$12,778.73
	Pump Station Remove sediment from the 4 wet wells		
	Pump Station Construction of security fence on the west side of the pump station		
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 20,219.80</b>	

**Table 3. FY 2023 Minute 303 Projects**

Contract	Description	US Share	RGRWA
CILA-REY-INV-14-2023	Pump Station Repair of concrete walkways around wet wells, radial gate area, and in the pumping discharge area	\$ 5,925.05	\$ 2,962.53
CILA-REY-INV-36-2023	Bypass canal Sediment removal in the reaches from km 27+600 to km 39+400	\$ 62,964.37	\$ 31,482.19
CILA-REY-AD-35-2023	Bypass canal Repair of damaged slabs from Km 3+800 to Km 13+800	\$ 15,457.28	\$ 7,728.64
CILA-REY-AD-12-2024	Emergency maintenance of the electrical substation, energy transformer, electrical control panels, and start-up of pumping equipment No. 3	\$ 7,956.77	\$ 3,978.39
CILA-REY-AD-17-2024	Emergency replacement of damaged transformer substation	\$ 15,215.80	\$ 7,607.90
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 53,759.64</b>	



**Table 4. Summary of Costs for Fiscal Year 2024**

Expenditure	FY24	
	US Share	RGRWA
Operations & Maintenance	\$ 58,055.90	\$29,027.95
Electricity	\$ 25,155.58	\$12,577.79
Minute 303 Projects*	\$ 8,205.91*	\$4,102.95*
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$91,417.39</b>	<b>\$45,708.69</b>

\*Indicates items where only emergencies were billed

**Table 5. FY 2024 Minute 303 Projects – Emergencies Only**

Contract	Description	US Share	RGRWA
CILA-REY-AD-26-2024	Pump #2 Electric Motor short circuit and maintenance	\$2,425.79	\$1,212.89
CILA-REY-AD-18-2025	Overflow erosion damage at the siphons located at km 19+400, 21+500, and 30+400 due to heavy rains on March 27 and 28 of 2025 in Reynosa, Tamaulipas. Overflow erosion repairs to levee at km 20+200 due to the same heavy rainfall event.	\$5,780.12	\$2,890.06
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$ 4,102.95</b>





OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER  
UNITED STATES SECTION

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION  
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

August 22, 2023

Mr. James E. Darling, President  
Rio Grande Regional Water Authority  
322 S. Missouri Ave.  
Weslaco, Texas 78599

Dear Mr. Darling:

I refer to Contract No. IBM-09-A004, dated March 4, 2009, between the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC), and the Rio Grande Regional Water Authority (RGRWA), where the RGRWA is to pay one-half of the Morillo Drain Operation and Maintenance (O&M) cost allocated to the U.S. Section. The Morillo Drain conveyance channel was constructed in Mexico and is operated by Mexico for the discharge of saline water into Morillo and other drains in Mexico. Regular operations, maintenance, and improvements costs of the conveyance system are incurred annually.

The expenditures for the Morillo Drain during the 2020, 2021 and 2022 Fiscal Years (October 1, 2019, to September 30, 2022) is \$648,917.71. The USIBWC is responsible for 50% of the share cost to Mexico as per Minute No. 223 and Minute No. 303, dated November 30, 1965, and May 15, 2000, respectively. The breakdown of the said amount is given in Attachment I. RGRWA is responsible for reimbursing the U.S. Section for 50% of the U.S. costs or \$324,458.86.

As stipulated in Contract No. IBM-09-A004, I'm requesting a total payment in the amount of **\$324,458.86** for the Morillo Drain O&M costs from October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2022. In accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulations, please make payment by check or money order to the United States Section, International Boundary and Water Commission on or before November 1, 2023.

If you have any questions please contact Engineer Xochitl Aranda, Chief of Operations and Maintenance Division at 915-832-4133 or [xochitl.aranda@ibwc.gov](mailto:xochitl.aranda@ibwc.gov).

Sincerely,

**I SELA CANAVA** Digitally signed by I SELA CANAVA  
Date: 2023.08.22 08:43:48 -06'00'

Isela Canava  
Principal Engineer

Attachment:  
As stated

Attachment 1

Morillo Drain O&M and Major Maintenance and Repairs

**Table 1. Summary of Costs Fiscal Years 2020, 2021 and 2022**

Expenditure	FY20		FY21		FY22	
	US Share	RGRWA	US Share	RGRWA	US Share	RGRWA
O&M	\$75,518.17	\$37,759.09	\$ 55,573.72	\$27,786.86	\$ 67,334.18	\$33,667.09
Electricity	\$31,332.17	\$15,666.09	\$ 32,686.46	\$16,343.23	\$ 34,914.80	\$17,457.40
Min 303 Projects	\$ 89,965.64	\$44,982.82	\$261,592.57	\$130,796.29	*	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$196,815.98</b>	<b>\$98,407.99</b>	<b>\$349,852.75</b>	<b>\$174,926.38</b>	<b>\$102,248.98</b>	<b>\$51,124.49</b>

\*Projects for FY22 are in progress and funded with FY22/23 funds, cost will be included in FY23 bill

**Table 2. FY 2021 Minute 303 Projects**

Contract #	Description	US Share	RGRWA
CILA-REY-AD-21-2021	Preventative maintenance on pump No. 2	\$ 10,237.61	\$ 5,118.81
CILA-REY-AD-20-2021	Maintenance of the diversion structure radial gate	\$ 2,593.86	\$ 1,296.93
CILA-REY-INV-22-2021	Modification of the transition at the entrance and exit of the section of fiberglass pipeline between Km 6+515.75 and Km 7+737.33, includes the construction of a bypass.	\$ 17,388.00	\$ 8,694.00
CILA-REY-INV-25-2021	Modernization of the traveling crane in the pumphouse	\$ 31,483.36	\$ 15,741.68
CILA-REY-INV-23-2021	Sediment removal from km 17+600 to km 27+600	\$119,490.01	\$ 59,745.01
	Clearing and vegetation removal from the slopes and ROW from 00+130 to Km 6+607, Km 7+263 to Km 13+800, and Km 17+600 to Km 39+800.		
	Improvements to the access roads from Km 00+130 to Km 03+807, Km 5+200 to Km 6+307, Km 7+263 to Km 10+000, Km 19+100 to Km 25+100, and Km 30+200 to 32+400		
CILA-REY-INV-28-2021	Supply and install 500 KVA Backup Generator and enclosure	\$ 80,399.73	\$ 40,199.87
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$130,796.29</b>

**Table 3. FY 2020 Minute 303 Projects**

Contract #	Description	US Share	RGRWA
CILA-REY-AD-13-2020	Emergency repair to Pump No. 3	\$ 6,273.06	\$ 3,136.53
CILA-REY-INV-21-2020	Clearing and vegetation removal from the slopes and ROW	\$ 43,779.95	\$ 21,889.98
	Repair of damaged slabs in the reach from 3+800 to 13+800 of		
	Maintenance work on the access roads		
	Removal of sediment and debris from crossing siphons		
CILA-REY-INV-24-2020	Modernization of the electrical substation	\$ 39,912.62	\$ 19,956.31
	Modernization of control panel for the sliding gates		
	Supply and installation of the rotating hoist		
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$44,982.82</b>