



Border Liaison Office San Diego

The Border XXI Program was established to address the complex environmental problems facing communities along the U.S.-Mexico border. The program also sponsors community grants, emphasizes public participation, and promotes sustainable development efforts. The San Diego Border Liaison Office was established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to support these efforts and coordinate ongoing EPA activities with other organizations associated with the Border XXI Program.

The principal goal of the San Diego Border Liaison Office is to provide accurate representation of EPA programs to communities located within the U.S.-Mexico border region of California and Arizona. To accomplish that goal, the border office is working with all nine of the Border XXI workgroups to ensure effective communication and information sharing, as well as to expand public access to environmental and human health information related to the U.S.-Mexico border. For example, the border office regularly communicates with many of the entities located within the U.S.-Mexico border region, including nongovernmental agencies; elected officials; state, local, and federal governments; business associations; academic institutions; school districts; tribes; interested citizen groups; the general public as a whole; and museums. For each geographic area of the U.S.-Mexico border, the office identifies needs and initiates communication to determine how the border office can best serve the various organizations involved. The border office also solicits feedback from the organizations to determine the need for environmental information and the preferred methods for distributing the information.

The border



San Diego Border Liaison Office

In October 1994, the EPA established the San Diego Border Liaison Office in San Diego, California, to enhance local communications and public outreach efforts for issues related to the U.S.-Mexico border region of Arizona and California. The border office serves as the leading outreach agency for communities located within the U.S.-Mexico border region of California and Arizona. This fact sheet provides background information about the San Diego Border Liaison Office, tools used to inform the public about U.S.-Mexico border environmental activities, and resources the public may use to access information about the environment in the U.S.-Mexico border region.

Public Outreach Mechanisms

The San Diego Border Liaison Office continues to develop mechanisms that provide information to the public and encourages feedback from communities for projects and activities related to the U.S.-Mexico border. Some of these mechanisms are discussed below.

Staff of the San Diego Border Liaison Office are working with the Environmental Information Resources Workgroup to make outreach materials related to the U.S.-Mexico border environment available on the Border XXI homepage. These efforts are intended to ensure that the homepage meets the information needs of the public. The homepage contains regional and agency-specific information, such as fact sheets, Border XXI documents, and other informational outreach materials. The homepage can be accessed on the Internet at the following address:

<http://www.epa.gov/usmexicoborder>.

Fact Sheets

The San Diego Border Liaison Office develops fact sheets about various topics related to the Border XXI Program. Topics include the organization and activities of the nine Border XXI workgroups, an overview of the Border XXI Program, environmental justice initiatives, a geographical information system, the Border Environment Cooperation Commission, and the North American Development Bank. The fact sheets are available in English and Spanish.

Quarterly Visits to the Border Region

Once each quarter, staff of the San Diego Border Liaison Office visit the regions of Calexico, California, and Yuma, Nogales, and Douglas, Arizona. During the quarterly visits, staff meet with the public and other interested parties, provide updates on environmental programs and activities, and solicit feedback from the border communities on issues related to the U.S.-Mexico border. The visits can take the form of a public presentation, an open house, meetings with local officials, or focus groups.

Grant Program

EPA initiated the Border XXIa grant program to address environmental issues related to the U.S.-Mexico border, emphasizing efforts that will strengthen and promote community involvement at the local level. The grant program provides opportunities for border communities to prioritize and address issues related to environmental justice, pollution prevention, sustainable development, environmental education, and the Border XXI Program. The San Diego Border Liaison Office distributes fact sheets to the public that provide the name, location, recipients, points of contact, and summary for each grant project. The border office also coordinates grant workshops that teach border communities the basic techniques of grant writing and application.

Information Repositories

The San Diego Border Liaison Office maintains information repositories that house materials related to the Border XXI Program and other information related to the U.S.-Mexico border environment. Seventeen repositories have been established in communities located along the U.S.-Mexico border region of California and Arizona.



Monthly Open House

The San Diego Border Liaison Office hosts an informal open house once a month. The open house is generally held at EPA's border office in San Diego and is open to the public. The open house allows attendees to share information about environmental issues related to the U.S.-Mexico border.

In early 1998, the San Diego Border Liaison Office



hosted a National Coordinators meeting in San Diego, California. During the meeting, the nine Border XXI workgroups met to plan binational activities for the upcoming year. Approximately 300 people attended, including representatives of federal, local, state, and nongovernmental agencies; industry; academia; and the public. During the public comment period, attendees of the meeting provided feedback on issues related to the U.S.-Mexico border environment.

Quarterly Newsletter

The San Diego Border Liaison Office is developing a newsletter to provide updates on the Border XXI Program. The newsletter will be distributed quarterly to the public and other interested parties at conferences and meetings about the U.S.-Mexico border. The newsletter will be available in English and Spanish.

Workshop on Sustainable Development

The San Diego Border Liaison Office participated in the planning of a workshop on sustainable development in the U.S.-Mexico border region. The workshop provided members of border communities with information on long-term, environmentally sound development, and provided a forum for border communities to identify strategies for sustainability.



Border Information Resources

several sources of information about the U.S.-Mexico border that are available to the public and other interested parties. Some of these resources are discussed below.

Border EcoWeb

The Border EcoWeb project is intended to address the growing need for public access to environmental information. The Border EcoWeb has two main components: (1) a comprehensive inventory of existing and accessible environmental data and information and (2) a directory with descriptions of projects and points of contact for federal, state, local, and international agencies, as well as other organizations involved in environmental activities in the border region. The Border EcoWeb is linked to the Border XXI homepage in English and soon will be available in Spanish. The EcoWeb can be accessed on the Internet at the following address: <http://www.borderecoweb.sdsu.edu/>.

U.S.-Mexico Toll-Free Information Line

The U.S.-Mexico Toll-Free Information Line is a bilingual toll-free telephone line, available to the public and other interested parties during normal business hours. The hotline allows callers to listen to announcements about the Border XXI Program, order documents, or talk directly to staff of the San Diego Border Liaison Office. The hotline number can be accessed by dialing 800-334-0741.

Public Access Information Workstation

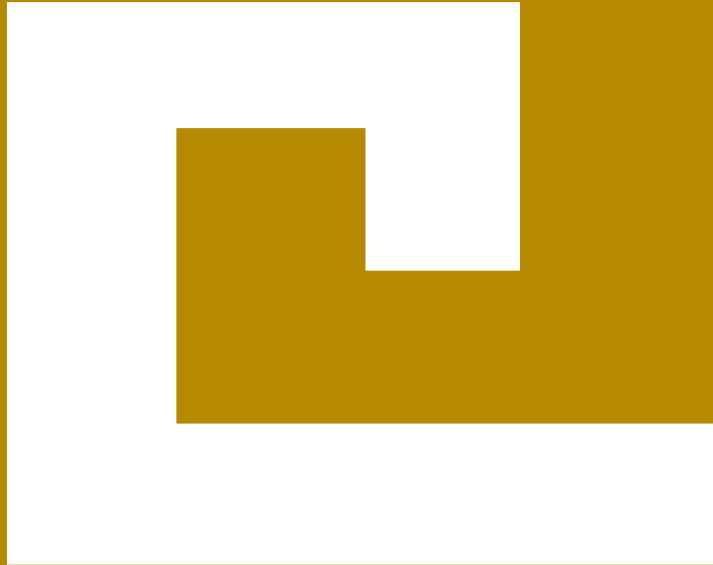
The San Diego Border Liaison Office has installed a public access information workstation computer to be used by staff, the public, and other interested parties. The workstation is equipped with a CD-ROM drive to view reference materials, and it allows users to access the Internet to obtain information from various environmental homepages.

Binational Environmental Education Conferences

The border office will be sponsoring five binational environmental education forums to be held in each of the U.S.-Mexico border states. The goal of each conference is to identify the environmental education needs of a border community and develop an action plan to address those needs.



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