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Managing Total Dissolved Solids in Agricultural Water Supplies Along the Texas/Mexico Border

Charles Dvorsky and Carlos Rubinstein

Abstract Text:

The State of Texas uses continuous water quality monitoring data to manage the concentration of salts (total dissolved solids) in irrigation waters from Anzalduas Reservoir on the lower Rio Grande River to avoid crop damages due to salt content.

Impact Statement:

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality continuously monitors water quality on Anzalduas Reservoir. Mexico diverts agricultural irrigation water from the Rio Grande and San Juan Rivers downstream of Falcon Reservoir. Saline agricultural return flows would re-enter the river upstream of Anzalduas. El Morillo Drain, when properly operated, diverts salty irrigation return flows downstream of Anzalduas. When high salt concentrations which threaten the use of the water for irrigation in Texas are detected by the continuous monitor, the Rio Grande Watermaster requests release of freshwater from upstream storage to dilute the salts and requests verification of proper operation of the Drain.