



CHAIRMAN

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

February 27, 2020

Dr. Paul Ganster, Ph.D.
Chair, Good Neighbor Environmental Board
Director, Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias
Associate Director, Office of International Programs
San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive, AL 377
San Diego, CA 92182-6039

Dear Dr. Ganster:

Thank you and the Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB) for the December 27, 2019 19th Report, *Energy Production, Transportation and Demand in the Transborder Region: Opportunities and Impacts*. The Administration has prioritized reducing regulatory barriers to the development of modern infrastructure while continuing to protect the environment. The Administration appreciates the Board's examination of the potential opportunities and impacts of the dynamic energy sector in the United States-Mexico border region, including with regard to cross-border energy infrastructure.

In particular, the report analyzes the energy needs of the border region, with attention to the potential expansion and modernization of energy infrastructure, including cross-border infrastructure, to meet the needs of the region. The report also assesses policies to improve timeliness of Federal environmental review and permitting processes to facilitate important energy investments in the region and engagement with local border communities. The report also highlights important issues relating to the adequacy and reliability of energy supplies, including production from conventional and renewable sources, as well as electricity transmission, and considerations relating to permitting and compliance. The report also addresses the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement. Additionally, the report identifies considerations relating to the environment of the border region and recognizes the importance of effective water management, including appropriate water reuse, to meet regional needs.

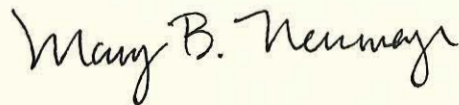
Looking ahead to the 20th Report, we support the GNEB's proposal that the report address water and wastewater infrastructure in the United States-Mexico border region. Our nation's investments in drinking water, wastewater, and water reuse are vital to our economic well-being and the protection of public health and the environment. Given the potential benefits associated with modernized infrastructure, including improved water quality and reliability of water supplies, addressing improvements to water and wastewater infrastructure will assist both countries in more efficiently managing the water resources in the United States-Mexico border region.

Water scarcity is a real and pressing issue for many parts of the country, including the United States-Mexico border region. To address this challenge, this Administration has been focused on promoting increased coordination to improve water resource management. On October 19, 2018, President Trump signed a Presidential Memorandum titled "Promoting the Reliable Supply of Water in the West." In this Presidential Memorandum, the President directed agencies to "promote the expanded use of technology for improving the accuracy and reliability of water and power deliveries," including through "investment in technology and reduction of regulatory burdens to enable broader scale use of recycled water" and "investment in programs that promote and encourage innovation, research, and development of technology that improve water management."

We look forward to the GNEB's specific recommendations on policy and regulatory approaches to modernizing water and wastewater infrastructure in the United States-Mexico border region in order to improve water quality and to support effective and efficient water resource management.

Thank you and the GNEB for your advice and important work. We look forward to your forthcoming report and to continued engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary B. Neumayr". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "M" and "N".

Mary B. Neumayr
Chairman

cc: Mr. Eugene Green, Designated Federal Officer, Good Neighbor Environmental Board,
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency