



# MEMORANDUM

**TO:** IEDA Board  
**RE:** Water Committee Report  
**DATE:** April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025

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## Mexico Water Deliveries

The Trump administration’s unprecedented decision to deny a delivery of water to Mexico is raising alarm among experts, who fear it could jeopardize future cross-border negotiations in an increasingly thirsty region.

The refusal, which marked the first such rejection in 81 years, pertained to a special request from Mexico for the transfer of additional Colorado River water to the city of Tijuana. Defending this decision, the U.S. State Department accused Mexico of failing to uphold commitments to Texas included in a 1944 water-sharing treaty.

Through the 1944 treaty — which focused on the “utilization of waters of the Colorado and Tijuana rivers and of the Rio Grande” — the U.S. pledged to convey Colorado River water to Mexico, while Mexico agreed to make deliveries to the U.S. from the Rio Grande.

Regarding the Rio Grande, the 1944 treaty directs Mexico to deliver 1.75 million-acre feet to the U.S. over the course of a five-year distribution cycle — with the proviso that Mexico can carry over deficits from one cycle to the next. Over the years, the country has accrued considerable Rio Grande water debt and has fallen behind on its water-sharing payments.

“This would be the second time that we’ve been in this situation,” he said, noting that the first time was in 1997. “The treaty provides that the U.S. can extend forbearance and allow Mexico to roll over its debt into a second cycle.”