

WORKSHOP FOCUSES ON TIJUANA RIVER WATERSHED

By [Sandra Dibble](#) 12:01 a.m. May 15, 2013 Updated 6:41 p.m. May 14, 2013

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TIJUANA — The close environmental connection between Tijuana and San Diego is the central theme of a three-day conference this week that focuses on issues such as solid-waste management and land-use changes in the Tijuana River watershed.

A workshop titled “Managing the Binational Tijuana River Watershed,” brings together academics with representatives of local and state agencies that work on cross-border environmental issues. “The idea is to put together the pieces of the puzzle,” said Carlos de la Parra, a researcher at the Colegio de la Frontera Norte, and a former official with Mexico’s environmental agency, Semarnat.

Measuring 1,750 square miles — about the size of Rhode Island — the watershed straddles the international border, with about one-third of its area in the United States and two-thirds in Mexico.

The opening ceremony at Tijuana’s Lucerna Hotel was attended by Tijuana Mayor Carlos Bustamante and San Diego Mayor Bob Filner, along with Remedios Gómez Arnau, the Mexican consul general in San Diego and Andrew Erickson, the U.S. consul general in Tijuana.

Paul Ganster, director of the Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias at San Diego State University, said participants will look at ways to collaborate on issues such as trash, sedimentation and restoration of urban rivers.

“If the city of San Diego spends \$200,000 on removing sediment, how about if they work with Mexico and stop that sediment at the source? What if they could do it for \$100,000? That would be a win-win situation,” Ganster said.

The workshop includes field trips on both sides of the border, and concludes Thursday at the Tijuana River National Estuarine Reserve in Imperial Beach.

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