

**Matthews, J. J. 1981. Field Administration: A Mexican Case Study. Ph.D. dissertation. University of Florida. Gainesville, Florida. 143 pp.**

The city of Mexicali in the state of Baja California located in Mexico's northwestern corner, exists in spite of a shortage of nature's one indispensable resource, water. Rainfall there amounts to about one inch a year. Although the city's population exceeds one half million and the principal economic activity of the region is farming, the area is dependent on the Colorado River for its principal water supply.

Since the Colorado has its source in the United States, the regulation of the waters of this international river is coordinated between the two countries through the jointly administered International Boundary and Water Commission. It plans delivery schedules between them and participates in the arbitration of water quality disputes.

Mexico, a country which is chronically short of water in almost all regions, has nationalized all surface and sub-surface waters and institutionalized the Secretaria de Recursos Hidraulicos (Ministry of Hydraulic Resources) to administer this precious, life giving resource. The SRH maintains field offices in irrigation districts throughout the country. Irrigation District 14, located in Mexicali, is the subject of this research effort which takes the form of a single case study.

The central office of the Ministry has been described previously and this study of field administration complements that work by adding to our knowledge of the everyday bureaucratic administration of water in the field. It centers on how the SRH functions in the field to discharge its official mission. In doing so it also clarifies the Ministry's pursuit of an unofficial mission, the maintenance of political system stability for Mexico's ruling political party, the PRI.