

- On May 5, 1997, Secretary Babbitt, Department of the Interior, and Julia Carabias, SEMARNAP, signed a Letter of Intent for Joint Work in Natural Protected Areas on the United States-Mexico Border. Pilot areas include the western Sonoran Desert and Big Bend National Park and adjacent protected areas in Mexico. The FCC played an important role in developing the Letter of Intent.
- In September 1997, Water-Resources Issues Fact Sheet No. 2 was printed describing "Water-resources Issues in the Mexican Highlands Subarea."
- Minerals Management Service sponsored, with FCC support, a Coastal and Marine Bi-National Energy and Environmental Information Transfer Meeting on December 16-18, 1997.
- "Protected Area of Wild and Aquatic Flora and Fauna in the Sierras of La Mariquita, La Elenita, and Rio San Pedro, in the Municipalities of Cananea, Naco and Santa Cruz, Sonora, Mexico," a 75-page management plan, was translated into English to enhance FCC understanding of the Upper San Pedro River Basin in Mexico.
- FCC member bureaus supported jaguar research in Northern Sonora Mexico per the Memorandum of Understanding between the US Fish and Wildlife Service and US Forest Service.
- A "Sisters Park" project was initiated at Chiricahua National Monument, Arizona, and Sierra los Ajos, Sonora, Mexico. A field office was established in the Mexican protected area.
- Site visits to southwest United States protected areas were coordinated by the National Park Service Mexico Affairs Office for Mexican environmental educators to review current programs in both natural and cultural protected areas managed by state and federal bureaus.
- FCC bureaus provided guidance for Chiricahua National Monument, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, and Coronado National

Memorial cooperating with Mexican park managers in Sonora, specifically, El Pinacate and Sierra los Ajos.

- FCC member bureaus, partnered with several non-governmental organizations, formalized a Chihuahuan Desert Grassland Binational Cooperative Research Working Group.
- In April 1998, Water-Resources Issues Fact Sheet No. 3 was printed describing "Water-resources Issues in the Rio Grande—Rio Conchos to Amistad Reservoir Subarea."



Rio Grande east of Santa Elena Canyon, Big Bend National Park. Photo by L. Norris.

- "The Upper San Pedro River Basin of the United States and Mexico, A Resource Directory and an Overview of Natural Resource Issues Confronting Decision-makers and Natural Resource Managers," a 110-page report, was printed in May 1998 and distributed.
- Color infrared digital orthophotography and digital mapping have been completed for a large portion of the border region in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California. This multimillion dollar production effort is continuing. Finished projects are available through the US Geological Survey.

For more information, see the FCC Home Page at <http://www.doi.gov/fcc>.