



OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
UNITED STATES SECTION

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO
FIRST NATIONAL BANK BUILDING
EL PASO, TEXAS

January 28, 1949

Laura Gilpin, Photographer,
General Delivery,
Brownsville, Texas

Dear Madam:

This office has, by reference from Resident Engineer Hamilton of Laredo, Texas, your letter of January 14, 1949, requesting certain information regarding the Rio Grande. Answering the questions attached to your letter and in the same order, you are advised:

- 884
357
1241
1. The river distance from El Paso to Laredo is 884 miles.
 2. The river distance from Laredo to the Gulf of Mexico is 357 miles.
 3. The "Atlas Geografico de la Republica Mexicana", published by the Secretaria de Agricultura y Fomento, Mexico, D. F., Mexico, 1919-1921, shows that the name of the main mountain range in Mexico opposite the Big Bend District is the "Serranias Del Burro". The local range of mountains immediately opposite the Big Bend is the "Sierra Del Consuelo".
 4. As regards the size and extent of the Edwards Plateau, you are referred to pages 85 to 90 of Bulletin 3401, published by the Bureau of Economic Geology, University of Texas, Austin, Texas, and entitled "The Geology of Texas. Vol. II. Structural and Economic Geology".
 5. The Atlas Geografico above referred to, does not give the names of mountain ranges in Mexico bordering the Rio Grande Valley between Del Rio and the Gulf.

6. As regards agriculture in Mexico between Villa Acuna and Nuevo Laredo, the latest figures available to this Commission were furnished by the Mexican Section in 1942. It was stated that there were 37,200 acres of irrigated land between Villa Acuna and Piedras Negras, and about 11,400 acres of irrigated land between Piedras Negras and Nuevo Laredo. These figures do not, of course, include any lands which have been cultivated by other methods than by irrigation.
7. The delta at the mouth of the Rio Grande has its apex at Roma, Texas, from which city the delta area increases in width, gradually at first, to a point below Mission, Texas, and then fans rapidly, reaching a total width of about 100 miles at the Gulf. Its total area is approximately 2500 square miles.
8. The Edwards Plateau does not divide the Rio Grande Valley from the Nueces River Valley.
9. Between El Paso and the Gulf, the principal United States tributaries to the Rio Grande are the Pecos and Devils Rivers. The principal Mexican tributaries are the Rio Conchos, the Rio Salado and the Rio San Juan.

You further inquire if there is any delta in the world that has a greater area of irrigated agriculture than the Lower Rio Grande Valley. It is probable that the delta of the Ganges River in India has the largest irrigable area, followed by the delta of the Nile in Egypt; and the delta of the Colorado River in the United States and Mexico is comparable in irrigated acreage to the delta of the Rio Grande.

It is noted that your proposed book is being divided into sections titled "The Flat Country" and "The Delta". You may be interested in knowing that this Commission designates the section between the Pecos River and Roma, Texas, as being the Hill Section.

Very truly yours,

L. M. Lawson

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Commissioner