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New Mexico State Professor Brown Awarded \$100k Grant from IALC

June 15, 2005 - Las Cruces, NM - Professor Christopher Brown, a geography professor at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico, was awarded a \$100,000 grant from the International Arid Lands Consortium to study cost-sharing arrangements regarding wastewater facilities infrastructure located nearby the borders of neighboring countries with asymmetrical relations.

Building and operating infrastructure to treat transboundary pollution requires dividing the cost of pollution prevention between bordering countries. Yet how the cost could and should be divided between neighboring countries is unclear. Dr. Brown hopes to identify cost-burden formulas to finance wastewater treatment and to examine their implications. The pollution-prevention measures along the US/Mexico border, and its cost-sharing evolution over the 20th century, are used as a case study. The relevance of the lessons learned from the US/Mexico case will be examined to effectively resolve issues of wastewater management between Israel and areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority with the result of improved water quality.

Dr. Itay Fischhendler, an assistant professor of Geography at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, is the co-investigator. The project is expected to take two and a half years.

According to Professor Fischhendler, "A study on the cost-burden formulas for controlling transboundary pollution would provide policy makers with funding options, especially given the growing importance of this issue in US-Mexico and Israel- Palestinian relations."

Nearly \$400,000 in funding was approved by the International Arid Lands Consortium to facilitate three research projects and one demonstration project. The projects were proposed by collaborating arid land researchers from American universities, Israel and Jordan.

The proposals were recommended by scientists from the IALC Research and Demonstration Advisory Committee which reviewed 46 proposals submitted from Arizona, Illinois, Israel, Jordan, Nevada, New Mexico, South Dakota and Texas. The proposals are usually multilateral collaborations between two or more principal investigators from different research institutions. Funding for all IALC projects is contingent upon receipt of federal funding.

"The research that we were able to fund today offers the prospect of results that will have an important impact on arid land management and the world we live in," said Dr. Colin Kaltenbach, President of the IALC Board of Directors. "However, we would not have been able to support such work without the generous assistance of the USDA CSREES."