



COUNTY OF IMPERIAL

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

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JUL 19 2010

DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

ROBIN HODGKIN, M.P.A.
Director

STEPHEN W. MUNDAY, M.D., M.P.H.
Health Officer

July 12, 2010

Ms. Kim Nicol
Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat Project
78-078 Country Club Drive, Suite 109
Bermuda Dunes, CA 92203

SUBJECT: Comments on Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat (SCH) Project

Dear Ms. Nicol,

We appreciate the opportunity to attend the SCH scoping meeting and welcome the opportunity to comment on the Vector/Mosquito aspects of the project. As per the meeting we understand that there are many details about the project that are yet to be fully planned with regard to the design and implementation of the project, but now is a good time to consider Best Management Practices to minimize and/or eliminate mosquito production. It is encouraging to hear that other agencies have also addressed potential vector problems associated with this project.

Imperial County Vector Control like other vector agencies has encountered problems in the following areas:

- Large wetlands and water projects in general have the potential to breed and harbor tremendous amounts of mosquitoes and other disease/nuisance vectors.
- Poorly designed and ill-maintained projects are often difficult to correct once they have been established. We do not believe this project must necessarily pose a health hazard or public nuisance. Since there are currently so many unknown aspects to the project, we anticipate an advisory relationship with your agency that will enhance the project's environmental and recreational usefulness.

Specifically, we need assurance that the following concerns will be evaluated:

- Who will be responsible for monitoring and treating mosquito populations? What thresholds will be established?

- What jurisdictions will be encountered and what permitting will be needed to control any vector problems that may result? Will the California Department of Fish and Game and/or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have the ultimate authority regarding vector operations in relation to endangered species?
- Is there funding for mosquito control with respect to maintaining and monitoring the facility?
- Will a mosquito abatement plan be developed for this project?
- Will the project have a dedicated vector biologist and supporting staff?
- Will a designated party serve as the contact point with the authority to act in the event of unforeseen circumstances during and after construction?

We realize there are many unresolved issues that will still need to be addressed. As the process moves forward we may begin to examine more specific potential problem areas. We look forward to working with you and your staff towards the design and development of an environmentally sound and safe marsh that will enhance Imperial Valley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul E. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "P".

Paul Johnson
Imperial County Vector Control