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Transcript of Proceedings  
Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat Project

Thursday, July 8, 2010  
6:30 p.m.

Brawley Elks Lodge #1420  
161 South Plaza  
Brawley, California

Reported By:  
Terri L. Emery  
CSR No. 11598, CCR

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A P P E A R A N C E S

MODERATOR:

Rick Davis, The Davis Group

SPEAKER PANEL:

Rob Thomson, Entrix

Lanika Cervantes, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Arturo Delgado, California Department of Fish and Game

1           MR. TRIMM: I've got a question. Robert Trimm,  
2 T-r-i-m-m. We farm. Can the -- I work a farm on the  
3 southern end of the sea separated by the levy and the sea  
4 has retracted a number of feet and exposed some ground.  
5 Now, is this going to be also part of the building these  
6 ponds in this specific area, doesn't address the  
7 retraction of the sea all the way around and the dust  
8 problem, how much of the dust problem is going to be part  
9 of this project? I understand creating the habitat is,  
10 but the dust problem seems like it would be the topic of  
11 the day around here.

12           MR. THOMSON: I'll start with the project. The  
13 project's 2400 acres, maybe 3,000 acres, about the size --  
14 the project is about the size that will support the area  
15 that has the potential to become what we call emissive, is  
16 that the soils can get up in the air and create dust,  
17 much, much greater than that. There's a little bit of  
18 uncertainty as to exactly how much and where and so on  
19 being emissive. This project is not designed to solve  
20 that problem. There's an ancillary benefit of covering up  
21 some of that land, but this project isn't designed to  
22 solve that problem.

23           MR. TRIMM: This project, does it involve -- you  
24 know, like operations that are established, would they be  
25 able to participate in this or this is something that your

1 different agencies are all going to handle without the  
2 cooperation of the landowners adjacent to those projects?

3 MR. DELGADO: We fully intend to engage the  
4 public and landowners. In fact, I think we should have  
5 sent notices to adjacent property owners.

6 MR. TRIMM: That's the reason I'm here.

7 MR. DELGADO: So we're fully committed to  
8 engaging landowners. As far as mitigating the impacts of  
9 the potential air quality issues, we're going to be fully  
10 responsible for any air quality issues attributable to  
11 this project. I think that's the question you were  
12 asking.

13 MR. TRIMM: I just -- I somewhat understand the  
14 scope of the project, but getting back to the whole Salton  
15 Sea, we've been talking about this thing and problems for  
16 50 years and talking and talking and it's always a hot  
17 potato, hand it off to the next administration down the  
18 line. I think I've been here for years, a lot of people  
19 have been here for years and maybe see this as another  
20 item of such.

21 I've seen two projects in place that do address  
22 the quality of the sea and those are the two wetlands  
23 projects that are relatively inexpensive, create habitat  
24 and seem to work. What puzzles me or troubles me is why  
25 there's not a continuation for such as items such as that

1 which would contribute cleaning up the body of the sea,  
2 and in addition to those two items, harvesting salt from  
3 the sea has got to be the ultimate goal or the solution to  
4 this big elephant in this room. And those are the two  
5 items that I've been reluctant to hear for a number of  
6 years and it just puzzles me why we're busy doing all  
7 these other things but not addressing the true item, and  
8 maybe this is a step that may fix that. I don't know.

9 MR. DELGADO: Well, we don't have authorization  
10 from the legislature, which is basically our boss, so  
11 we're only -- we're governed by this legislation. We have  
12 temporary resources that's been called and submitted for  
13 alternative to the legislation in 2007. The legislature  
14 has yet to take any action on a full sea restoration  
15 project. This is the only avenue we have at this point,  
16 this project, so until we get direction from the  
17 legislature, this is all we can do.

18 MR. TRIMM: This is a federal project?

19 MR. DELGADO: This is a state project.

20 MR. TRIMM: And no -- federal funds are not going  
21 to participate in this?

22 MR. DELGADO: There's currently been no federal  
23 funds that have been offered.

24 MR. DAVIS: I think it's important to note that  
25 the preferred alternative Arturo was referring to

1 addressed the sea as a whole. The big picture, it  
2 addressed air quality, addressed dealing with the salt  
3 issues. So that study had been done, that alternative is  
4 there, but it's yet to be acted on.

5 MR. DELGADO: It's been submitted to the  
6 legislature. It was our preferred alternative, but until  
7 we get direction to move forward with a whole sea  
8 restoration action, we can't do anything.

9 MR. DAVIS: This project is really completely  
10 consistent with that bigger project, so it's not like if  
11 this happens, it wouldn't -- if it gets approved, they  
12 wouldn't compliment each other. They completely do. This  
13 is sort of like a first step while that is going to be  
14 debated.

15 MR. TRIMM: How is the IID involved in this?

16 MR. DELGADO: They're stakeholders, so we're  
17 having discussion with them. So you know, we'll have to  
18 talk with them about the land ownership issue. A lot of  
19 the land is currently owned by IID. They are involved and  
20 they're going to be very involved.

21 MR. TRIMM: Thank you.

22 MR. DAVIS: Thank you for the questions and your  
23 attendance. Any other questions for you, gentlemen, or  
24 anyone else? You're making it easy on us.

25 MR. TRIMM: What were some of the other comments

1 today or yesterday?

2 MR. DAVIS: Mostly questions. We've had the  
3 mosquito vector folks from both Coachella Valley and  
4 Imperial wanting to provide input, very helpful input  
5 about how to design these kind of ponds to not create  
6 breeding grounds. That's probably been a lot of the info  
7 we've gotten. And then a lot of just questions. Some  
8 folks were questioning a little bit about how this  
9 relates -- what you were talking about, relates to the  
10 restoration of the larger restoration project and we've  
11 been explaining that quit a bit. Other things that you  
12 guys can think of?

13 MR. DELGADO: Those are the key ones.

14 MR. DAVIS: Ted, do you have any questions?

15 MR. FRANK: I always have questions. I said I'd  
16 take easy on these guys today.

17 MR. DAVIS: At the last meeting he started asking  
18 questions. He knew the answers to them.

19 MR. FRANK: They were loaded questions.

20 MR. DAVIS: He was giving us some to hit. Well,  
21 we made it to 7:00. I stalled long enough to get to 7:00  
22 o'clock. Thanks for coming. It's helpful to have your  
23 comments and questions.

24 MR. TRIMM: Who is it at the IID that's working  
25 with you?

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MR. THOMSON: Bruce Wilcox.

MR. DAVIS: He comes to the stakeholder meetings.  
He was at the meeting earlier today.

MR. THOMSON: Tina Shields will be a backup.

MR. DAVIS: Well, I guess that's it. Thank you.  
Again, grab a couple of those comment forms if you want to  
send us anything or others might folks in your  
organizations.

(Proceedings concluded at 7:01 p.m.)

1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATION

2  
3 I, Terri L. Emery, Certified Shorthand Reporter,  
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5  
6 That the foregoing proceedings were taken before me  
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8 proceedings were reported stenographically by me and  
9 later transcribed into typewriting under my direction;  
10 that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings  
11 taken at that time.

12  
13 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have subscribed my name this  
14 16th day of July, 2010.

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19 Terri L. Emery, CSR No. 11598, CCR