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Salton Sea
ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROGRAM



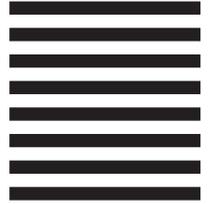
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Salton Sea UPDATE
ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROGRAM



Developing a Restoration Plan *An Objective and Transparent Process*

Two years ago, the state legislature directed the State of California to “undertake the restoration of the Salton Sea ecosystem and the permanent protection of the wildlife dependent on that ecosystem.” The legislature also directed the Secretary for Resources to prepare a restoration study and accompanying programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The state Resources Agency is following an objective and transparent process that includes broad public involvement for preparation of the Ecosystem Restoration Plan and programmatic EIR called for in the legislation. This process is intended to provide balanced representation of the numerous stakeholders with interest in restoration of the Salton Sea.

The state Legislature assigned the Salton Sea Ecosystem Restoration Plan to the Resources Agency, including the Department of Water Resources and the Department of Fish and Game, for several reasons. First, the State of California assumed substantial responsibility for actions related to the Quantification Settlement Agreement and its impacts on the Salton Sea ecosystem. Second, the Resources Agency has the experience and the ability to independently evaluate water management issues in the region, including those involving Colorado River water supplies. Third, the Resources Agency has the expertise to plan, design, construct, and manage a project of this magnitude and complexity. Fourth, involvement of various agencies within the State of California initiates a long-term

commitment of state resources, and will facilitate involvement of other local, regional, state and federal agencies. Lastly, the state is a neutral party with respect to the current and previously proposed restoration alternatives, and will select a preferred alternative only after extensive evaluation of numerous alternatives and a full and open public involvement process.

The legislation requires the state to prepare an Ecosystem Restoration Plan that will be submitted to the legislature by the end of 2006. Specifically, the state is directed to focus the plan on several key elements – protecting fish and wildlife and maintaining ecosystem benefits, minimizing air quality impacts, and improving water quality.

It’s a major undertaking. For example, the state has identified 27 groups of alternative plans, involving hundreds of options aimed at improving habitat, stabilizing salinity and water elevations, and improving water quality at the Sea. In addition, the plan must maintain use of the Sea for agricultural discharge, consider recreational and economic opportunities, and is reliable and flexible.

In order to develop the best solution for the Sea, the state, through the efforts of the Department of Water Resources and Department of Fish and Game, is engaged in a proactive effort to bring all major stakeholders together. Many of the stakeholders are represented on the Salton Sea Advisory Committee.

Community outreach efforts have been significantly expanded to involve residents,

local officials, federal agencies, business, agriculture, and recreational interests, environmental organizations, and tribal members who live and work in the region. In the first half of 2005, more than a dozen public meetings were held throughout the Salton Sea area. Several hundred people attended these meetings, and a productive dialogue on solutions, challenges, and partnerships have been started.

Additional meetings will be held in September and will be ongoing throughout the process.

The state is not advocating a specific plan or alternative at this time; rather, the state is working to bring a diverse group of stakeholders together to implement a plan that will have lasting benefits and will protect this treasured ecosystem.

Upcoming Public Meetings

The upcoming public meetings will be interactive in order to encourage communication between the various stakeholders and the state. The focus will be on the various infrastructure alternatives and how they meet the water quality, air quality, and habitat objectives based on a range of waterflows and shoreline elevations. Each series of meetings will focus on two to three of the alternatives.

Public Meetings – September 2005

Sept 13, 2005 • 2:00-4:00 PM
Bombay Beach Community Services District
9590 Avenue C, Bombay Beach

Sept 13, 2005 • 6:00-8:00 PM
Elks Lodge • 161 South Plaza, Brawley

Sept 14, 2005 • 2:00-4:00 PM
Salton Community Services District
2098 Frontage Road, Salton City

Sept 14, 2005 • 6:00-8:00 PM
Coachella Valley Association of Governments
73-710 Fred Waring Dr., Palm Desert

Sept 15, 2005 • 5:00-7:00 PM
66-725 Martinez Rd. Thermal, Torres-Martinez

We are currently scheduling additional meetings. The locations and times for these will be provided via mail and on the project website at www.saltonsea.water.ca.gov.

We want to hear from you. Please take a minute to fill out and return the Public Feedback Card so we can understand the issues important to you.

Name _____

Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

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