

THE RESOURCES AGENCY DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES • DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME

# Salton Sea

ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROGRAM



## Community Meetings

*We Want to Hear From You*

November 14, 15 and 16, 2006

## Dale Hoffman-Floerke

Chief, Colorado River and Salton Sea Office  
Department of Water Resources

## Chuck Keene

Environmental Program Manager  
Department of Water Resources

## Kim Nicol

Senior Environmental Scientist  
Department of Fish and Game

## Dee Sudduth

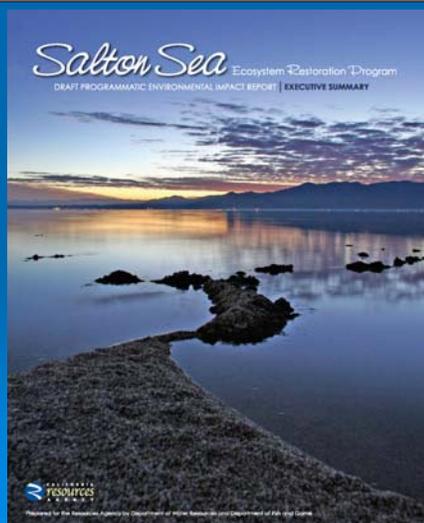
Environmental Program Manager  
Department of Fish and Game

## Project Participants

- California Resources Agency
- Department of Water Resources
- Department of Fish and Game
- In consultation with:
  - Salton Sea Advisory Committee
  - US Geological Survey, Salton Sea Science Office
  - US Bureau of Reclamation
  - Salton Sea Authority
  - Imperial Group

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## Meeting Overview



- Introduction to the Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)
- Overview of Alternatives
- Contents of the PEIR
- PEIR distribution
- Commenting on the PEIR
- Next Steps

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## Restoration Planning Process - Legislation

- Salton Sea Restoration Act
  - Directs the Secretary for Resources to prepare:
    - Ecosystem Restoration Study (ERS)
    - Programmatic environmental document
    - Funding Plan for the preferred alternative

“It is the intent of the Legislature that the State of California undertake the restoration of the Salton Sea ecosystem...”



## PEIR – Requirements and Development

- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
  - Requires preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) when an agency action may have a significant impact on the environment
  - Specifies various requirements for content and process when preparing an EIR
- Programmatic EIR is conceptual in nature
  - Uses available information at a broad level
  - Component locations and specific details will be addressed in subsequent project-level EIRs

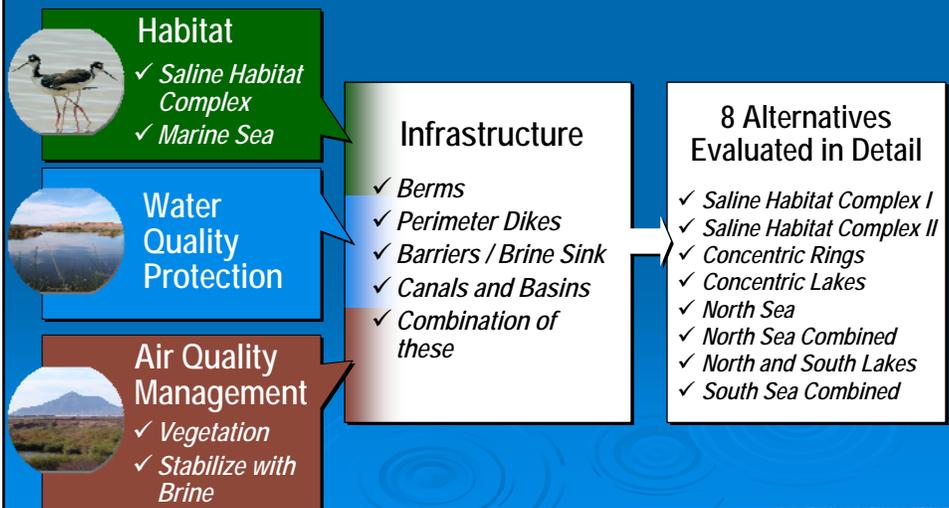


## PEIR – Requirements and Development (con't)

- Represents an independent analysis of various alternatives for restoration
- Conducted as an open process with input from various stakeholders
- The PEIR is needed regardless of which alternative is selected
- No preferred alternative identified
  - To be selected from one of the alternatives or a combination of alternatives

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## Components of All Alternatives



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## Marine Sea and Brine Sink

### Marine Sea

- Salinity between 30,000 and 40,000 mg/L, similar to typical ocean water

### Brine Sink

- Provide the “outlet” necessary to manage elevation and salinity



- Expand and contract seasonally depending on flows
- Salinity would eventually exceed 200,000 mg/L (over 6 times saltier than ocean water)
  - The Great Salt Lake = 3 to 5 times saltier than ocean water
  - Mono Lake = 2 to 3 times saltier than ocean water

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## Saline Habitat Complex and Air Quality Management

### Saline Habitat Complex

- Provides wildlife habitat

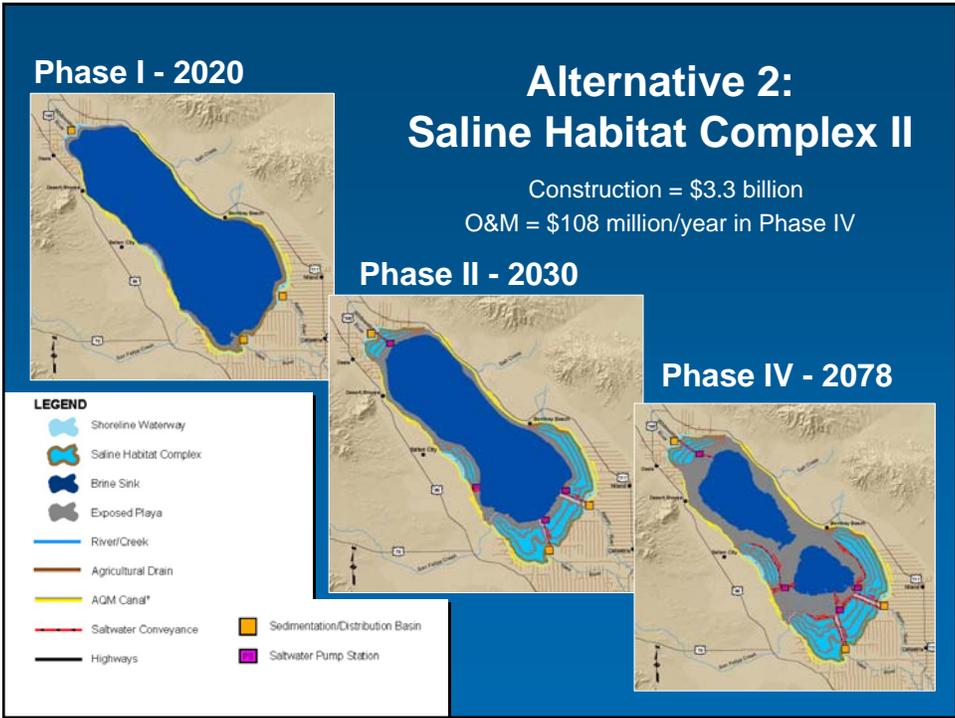
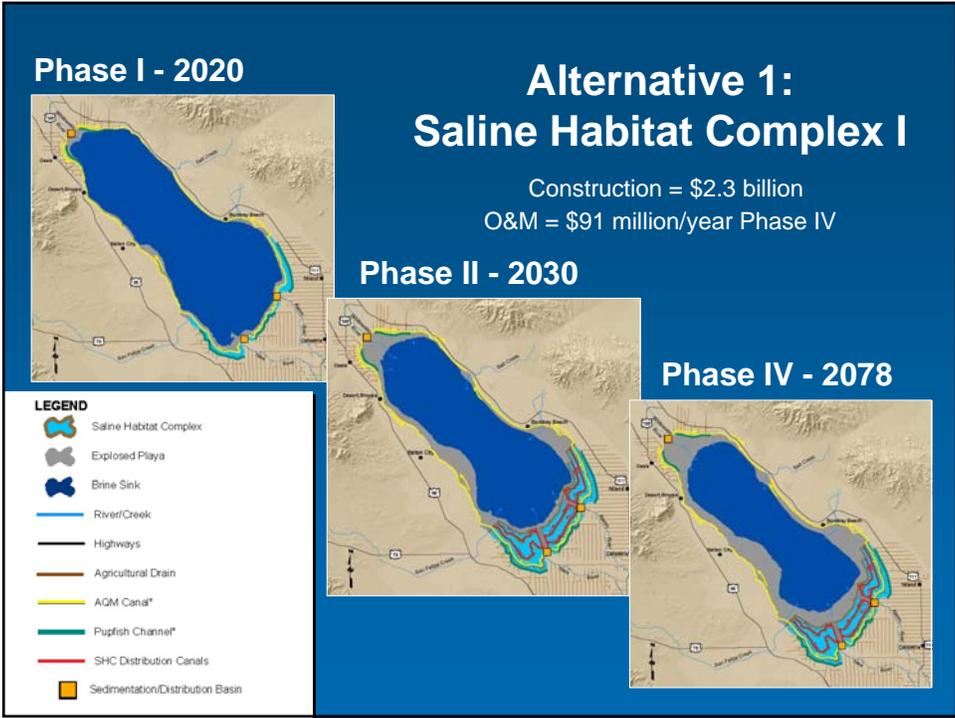


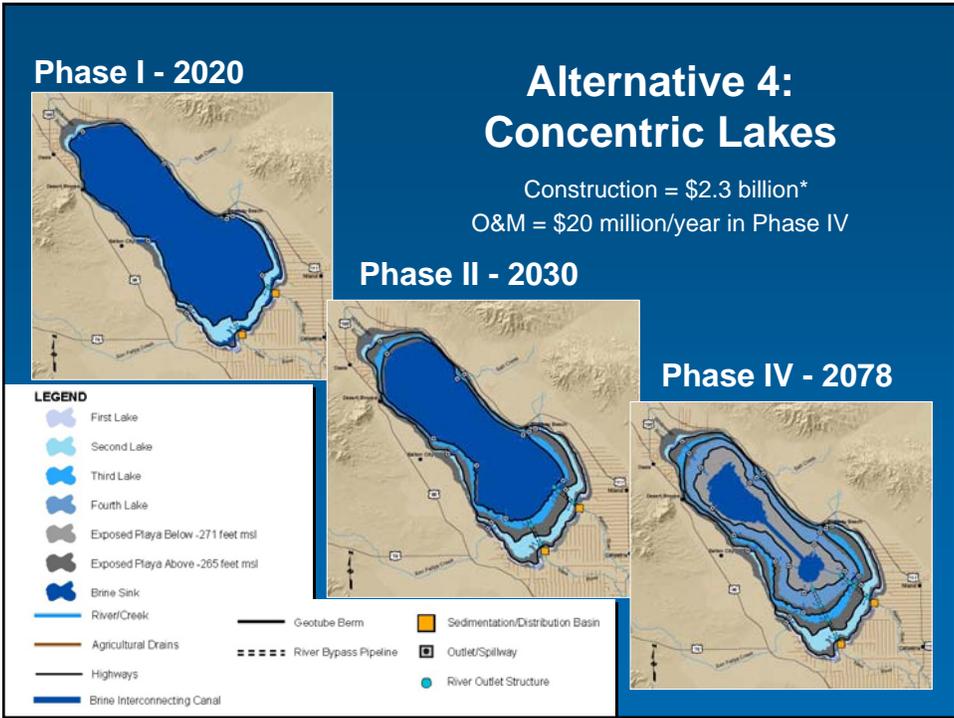
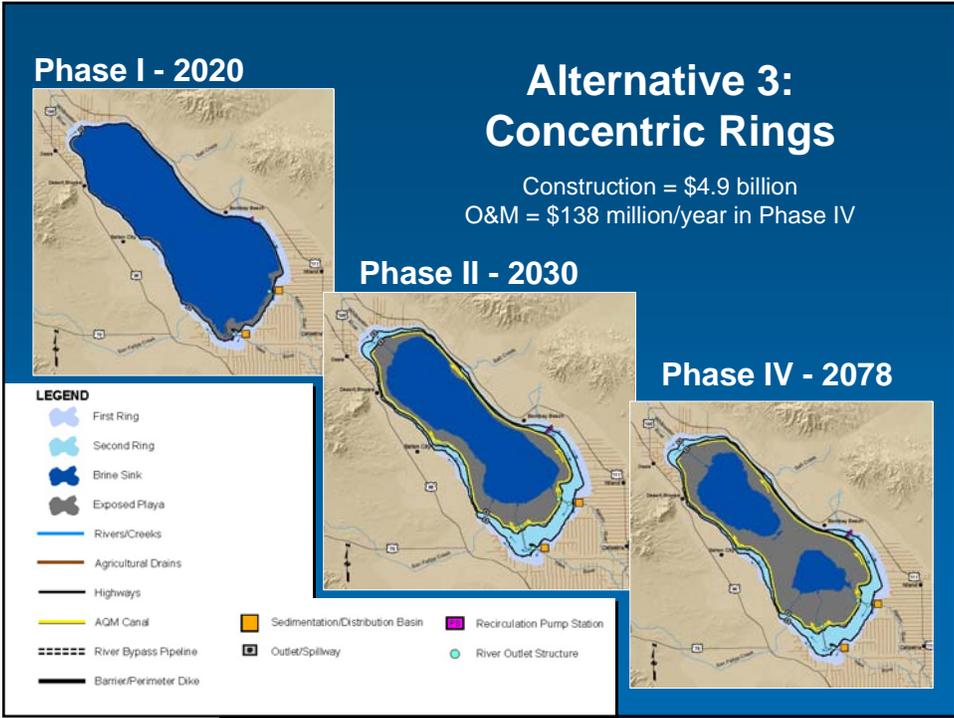
### Air Quality Management

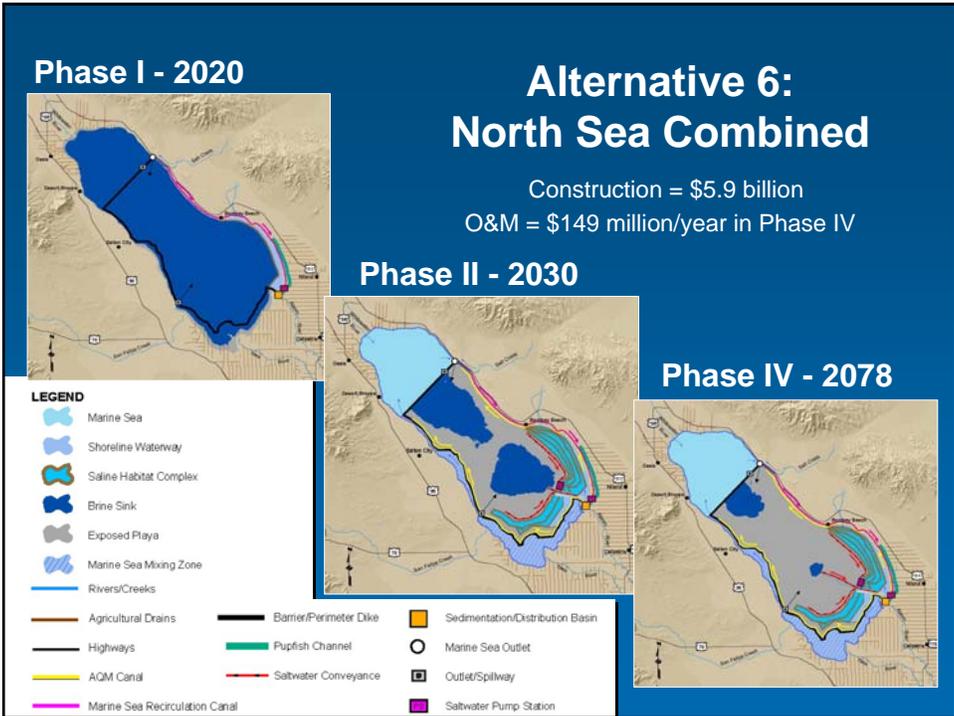
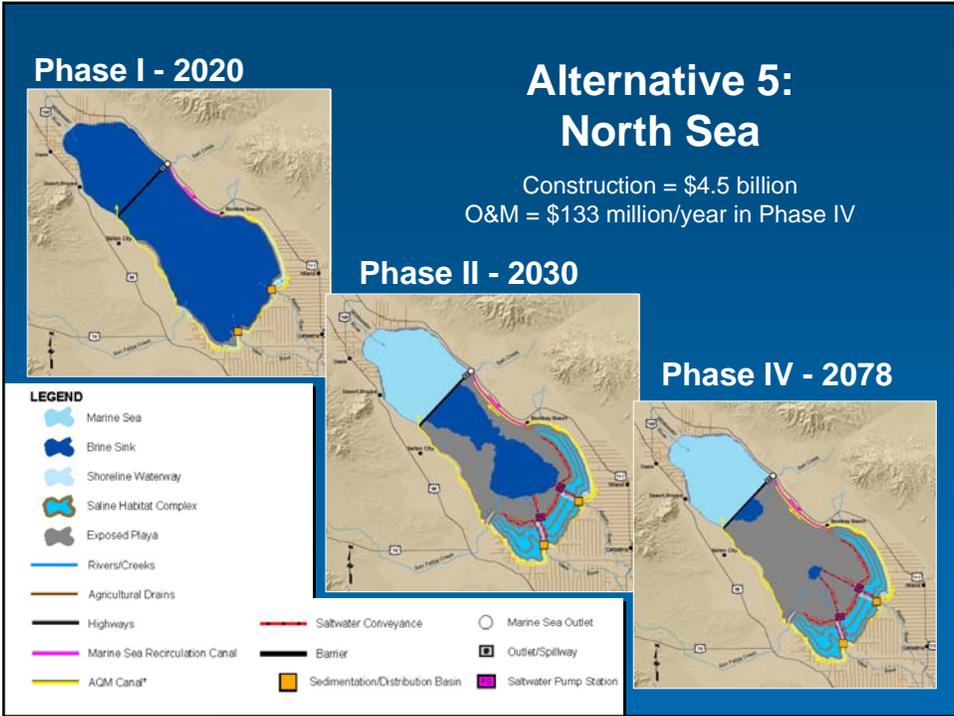
- Dust control with vegetation or other measures

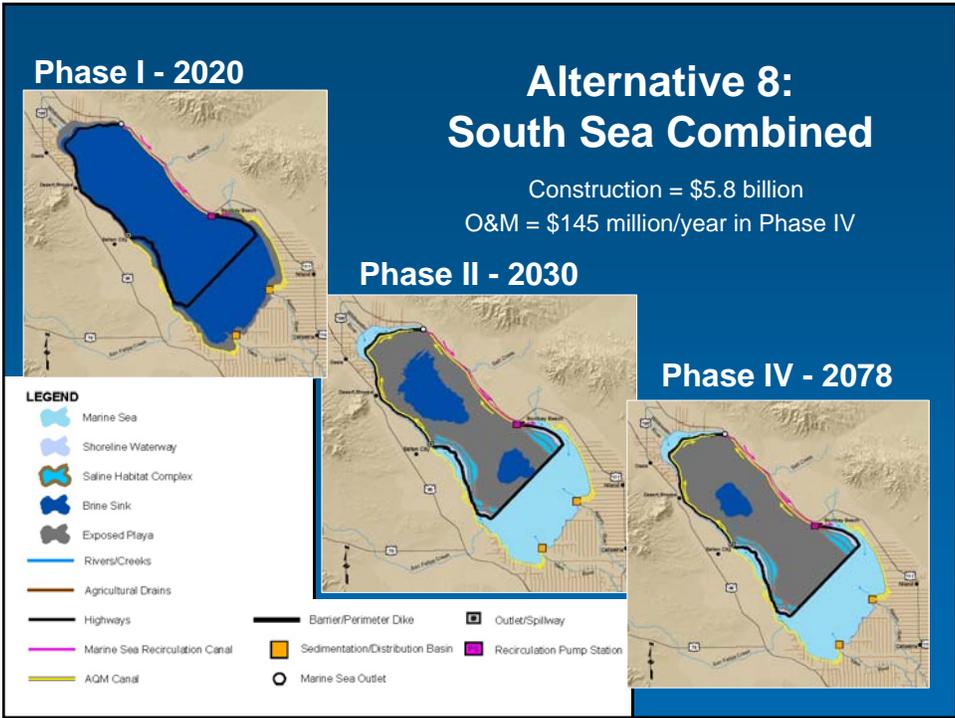
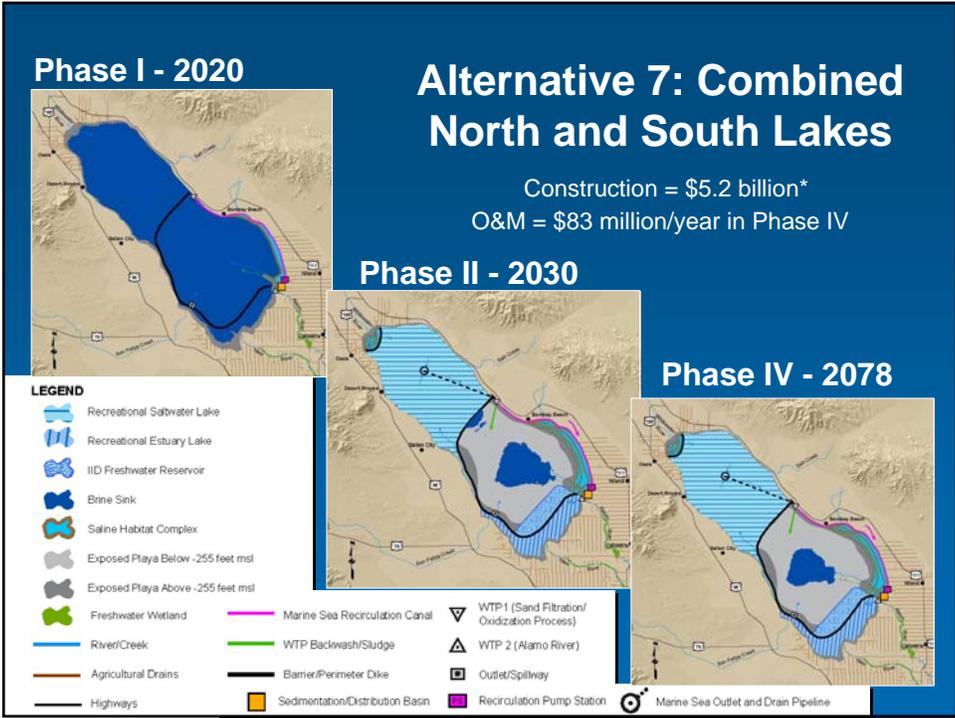


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### Phase I - 2020



## No Action Alternative- Variability Conditions

Construction = \$0.8 billion  
O&M = \$48 million/year Phase IV

### Phase II - 2030

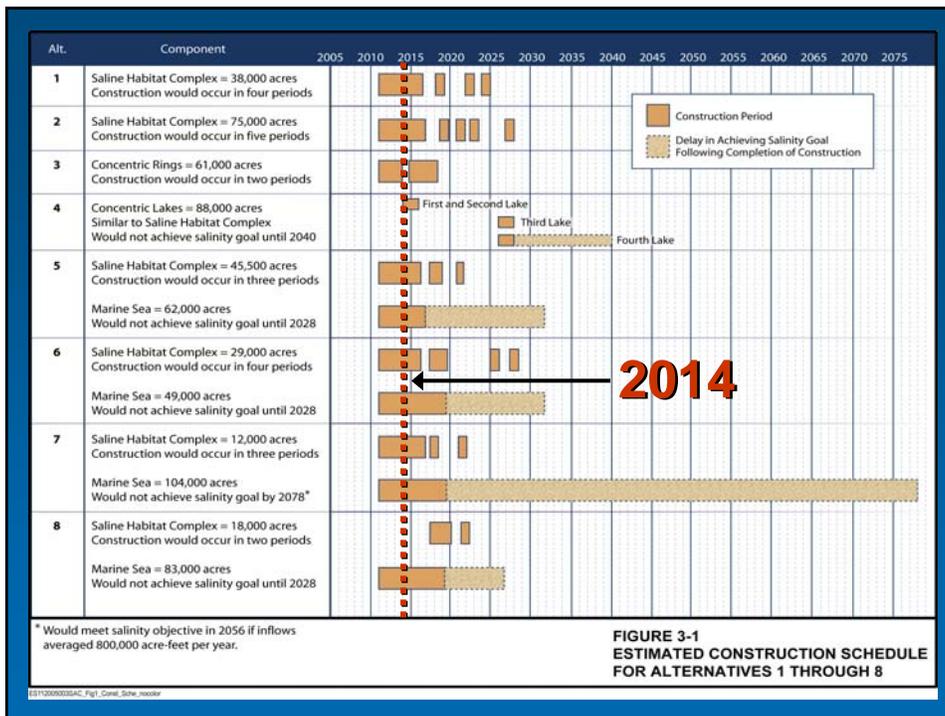


### Phase IV - 2078



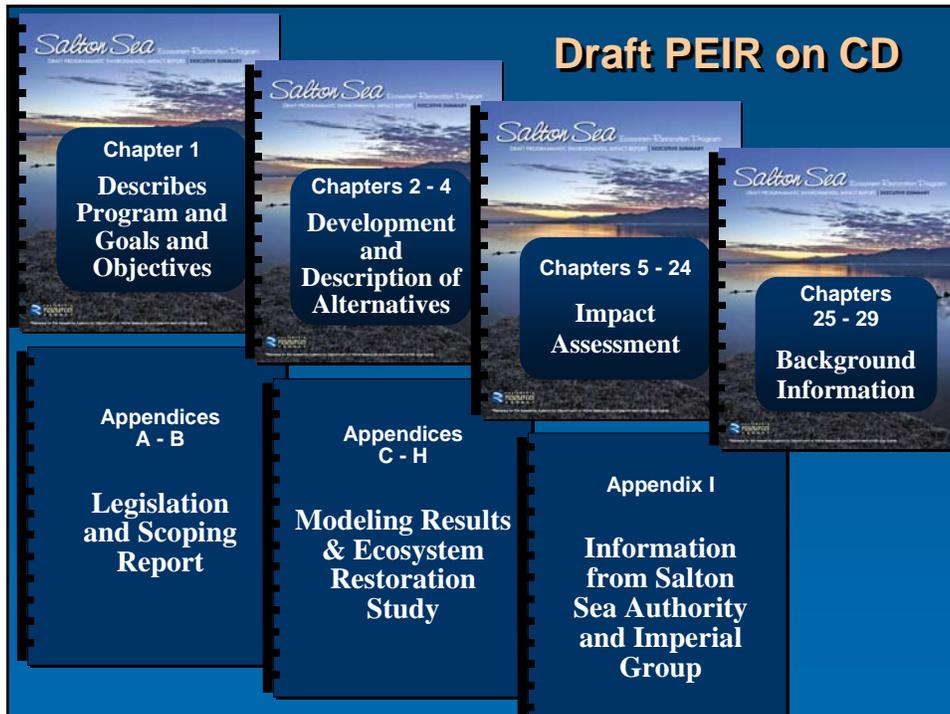
#### LEGEND

- Salton Sea
- Exposed Playa Between -228 and -235 feet msl
- Exposed Playa Between -235 and -249 feet msl
- Exposed Playa Below -249 feet msl
- River/Creek
- Drain Extension
- Pupfish Channel
- AQM Canal
- Agricultural Drains
- Highways
- Sedimentation/Distribution Basin



# Comparison of Components of the Alternatives

Component	Benefits	Concerns	Alternative
Deep Marine Sea (greater than 10 feet deep)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Diverse fish &amp; bird use</li> <li>✓Diverse recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Requires a lot of rock</li> <li>✓Water quality issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓North Sea</li> <li>✓North Sea Combined</li> <li>✓North and South Lakes</li> <li>✓South Sea Combined</li> </ul>
Moderately Deep Marine Sea (up to 10 feet deep)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Diverse fish &amp; bird use</li> <li>✓Moderately diverse recreation</li> <li>✓More shoreline water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Requires a lot of rock</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Concentric Rings</li> <li>✓North Sea Combined</li> <li>✓North and South Lakes</li> <li>✓South Sea Combined</li> </ul>
Shallow Saline Habitat (up to 6 feet deep)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Diverse bird use</li> <li>✓Can be built in phases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Limited fish species</li> <li>✓Less diverse recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓All except:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concentric Rings</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Air Quality Management of Playa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Reduces dust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Requires canals, pumps, irrigation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓All fully managed except:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concentric Lakes</li> <li>- North and South Lakes</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



## Your Executive Summary

- Overview of:
  - Importance of the Salton Sea
  - Ecosystem Restoration Program purpose, study area, and study participants
  - Alternatives and alternative development process
  - Analysis assumptions
  - Benefits and impacts
- CD at back contains entire PEIR

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## PEIR Distribution

- Executive Summaries with CDs of entire PEIR
  - Mailed to over 1,300 people on the mailing list
- Hardcopies
  - Available for review at various locations throughout the watershed
- On project website
  - [www.saltonsea.water.ca.gov](http://www.saltonsea.water.ca.gov)

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## Commenting on the PEIR

- Public participation is an essential part of the CEQA process
- CEQA requires evaluation and written responses to comments on environmental issues
- Comments should focus on:
  - Sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts
  - Adequacy of mitigation measures (called Next Steps)
- Specific, detailed comments are most helpful
- Comment period ends January 16, 2007

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## Submitting Comments on the PEIR

- Comments can be submitted via:
  - Mail to:
    - Dale Hoffman-Floerke
    - Salton Sea PEIR Comments
    - Department of Water Resources
    - 1416 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 1148-6
    - Sacramento, CA 95814
  - E-mail to:
    - [SaltonSeaComments@water.ca.gov](mailto:SaltonSeaComments@water.ca.gov)
  - Fax to:
    - 916-654-4925

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## Steps to Selecting a Preferred Alternative



## Selecting a Preferred Alternative

- Possible considerations in selecting a preferred alternative:
  - Ability to achieve the objectives of the Salton Sea Restoration Act
  - Ability to be adaptable in response to uncertainty
  - Environmental and technical factors
  - Non-environmental factors
    - Public support
    - Cost and funding
- Could be a combination of several alternatives

## Next Steps

- Consider comments on the Draft PEIR
- Identify a preferred alternative
- Prepare Funding Plan for the preferred alternative
- Prepare Final PEIR
  - Includes:
    - Responses to comments on the Draft PEIR
    - Preferred alternative
    - Changes, if any, to the Draft PEIR
- Decision by State Legislature - 2007



## Upcoming Meetings

- Salton Sea Advisory Committee
  - December 13, 2006
  - Torres Martinez Reservation, Recreation Hall
  - 9:30 am to 3:30 pm
- Next Public Outreach Meetings
  - In the watershed:
    - Early January
  - Outside of the watershed:
    - Early December



## **Your Input is Important!**

Send Your Comments to:

**Dale Hoffman-Floerke  
Salton Sea PEIR Comments  
Department of Water Resources  
1416 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 1148-6  
Sacramento, CA 95814**

Visit [www.saltonsea.water.ca.gov](http://www.saltonsea.water.ca.gov) for more information

