

Salton Sea Preferred Alternative Working Group Meeting Summary
9:30am – 3:00pm
September 7, 2006
Ontario, California

Meeting Attendees:

US Bureau of Indian Affairs: Rick Gundry
US Fish and Wildlife Service: Peggy Bartels; Carol Roberts; Chris Schoneman
US Geological Survey: Lee Case
Torres Martinez Tribe: Al Loya
Senator Ducheny's Office: Pat Cooper
Department of Fish and Game: Dee Sudduth; Juliet Virtue
Department of Water Resources: Dale Hoffman-Floerke; Charles Keene; Doug Osugi
State Water Resources Control Board: Bart Christensen
Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board: Jose Angel
Imperial County: Larry Grogan
Imperial County Farm Bureau: Al Kalin
Imperial Irrigation District: Bruce Wilcox
California Waterfowl Association: Jason Rhine
Defenders of Wildlife: Kim Delfino
San Diego County Water Authority: Jeff Harvey; Bill Tippets
Salton Sea Authority: Bill Brownlie; Rick Daniels; Jeff Greene; Kay Hazen
Imperial Group: Patrick Maloney
CH2M Hill: Gwen Buchholz
Facilitator: Patti Kroen

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Meeting Agenda
Attachment 2: Ground Rules

The Working Group discussed the following topics:

- ❑ Ground Rules (see Attachment 2)
- ❑ Letter describing legal requirements for Salton Sea ecosystem restoration that was distributed in advance of the Working Group meeting by some members of the Salton Sea Coalition.
- ❑ Desired outcomes for this Working Group and what happens if the group cannot agree on a process recommendation to the Advisory Committee. Other factors the Secretary could ultimately use to identify the Preferred Alternative. How the Working Group might reach agreement on a process and the potential to provide a recommendation with a minority opinion.
- ❑ The Working Group task is to develop a process, not to use the process to identify the Preferred Alternative.
- ❑ The value of 'interest-based' over 'position-based' discussions: interests allow more options thereby expanding opportunities and typically have greater longevity.

- ❑ Using a matrix approach to compare alternatives during decision-making; value of matrix as a sorting tool; use of ranking among the attributes identified within the matrix; use of multiple matrices;
- ❑ The need to identify Environmentally Preferred Alternative in addition to Preferred Alternative.
- ❑ Use of criteria contained within the legislation, Fish and Game Code, and Water Code to develop the eight action alternatives that are evaluated in the PEIR. Alternatives were developed to also provide additional opportunities.
- ❑ Recognition that the legislation provides for the minimum requirements that the Preferred Alternative must meet but does not limit the Preferred Alternative from also meeting other desires after legislation is satisfied.
- ❑ While the environmental document is programmatic, it will include a discussion of 'Next Steps' to mitigate impacts that could arise from implementation of the alternatives.
- ❑ Potential to develop a hybrid alternative by evaluating the four individual components of the alternatives: deep marine sea; moderately deep marine sea; saline habitat complex; and air quality management.
- ❑ Attributes to use in a matrix structure. The Working Group brainstormed a list of potential attributes to use and the facilitator recorded them on flip charts.

Desired Outcomes for the Working Group:

- ❑ Recommend a process by October 24, 2006 to the Advisory Committee to identify a Preferred Alternative by the Secretary
- ❑ Develop a tool to organize information for effective decision-making

Group Agreements - The Working Group agreed to:

- ❑ Accept and follow ground rules
- ❑ Use a matrix approach and develop the attributes to be considered
- ❑ Develop the matrix to compare the eight action alternatives rather than components of each

Action Items:

- ❑ Facilitator will 1) compile the attributes suggested by the Working Group and recorded on flip charts during the meeting, 2) provide CEQA checklist components used during development of the PEIR, and 3) provide a list of attributes used in other processes. She will provide this list to the Working Group by September 11 for review and comment prior to the next meeting.
- ❑ Working Group participants will provide their comments on the attribute list provided by the Facilitator for compilation and distribution in advance of the next Working Group meeting.

Next Meeting: October 5, 2006 9:30am – 3:30pm Ontario

Meeting Notes

Attributes	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Fish and Game Code Components (legislation)								
Habitat Restoration								
Quality of long-term stable aquatic and shoreline habitat								
Quantity of long-term stable aquatic and shoreline habitat								
Habitat for diversity of fish and wildlife								
Bathymetric considerations								

Meeting Notes

Attributes	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Habitat Restoration								
Time to achieve biological results								
Quality of habitat								
Quantity of habitat								
Diversity of habitat								
Construction disturbance to existing habitat								
Bathymetric considerations								
Wildlife disease mgmt – accessibility of habitat								
<i>Effects on T&E fish and wildlife</i>								
Effects on movement of species								
Water Quality								
Effects on selenium								
Effects on hydrogen sulfide								
Effects on salinity								
Causes erosion, siltation, or increased runoff, or flooding								
Structures in 100-yr flood zone								
<i>Causes inundation by seiche</i>								
Effects on groundwater quality or quantity								
Air Quality								
Fugitive dust control (construction)								
Fugitive dust control (O&M)								
Fugitive dust control on exposed playa								
Construction exhaust								
O&M exhaust								
Hazardous air pollutants								
Odorous emissions (water quality related)								

Attributes	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Additional Considerations								
Recreation								
Fishing								
Swimming								
Motor boating								
Non-motorized boating (canoes, wind-surfing, sailing)								
Water skiing								
Wildlife watching								
Camping								
Hunting								
<i>Substantially change rec opportunities</i>								
Economic Considerations								
Economic development opportunities								
Recreational economics								
Cost								
Amount of water required - inflow								
Construction impacts to resources								
Sustainable – what could go wrong?								
Risks								
Physical uncertainty								
Biological uncertainty								
Aesthetics								
Noise – <i>excess noise generation</i>								
Odor								
Visuals – <i>degrade character, quality Or scenic vistas</i>								

Attributes	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
New source of light and glare								
Traffic increases								
Materials								
Imported from?								
Excavated – fate of materials								
Disturbance from excavation								
Availability								
Land Use								
Compatibility with existing land uses (e.g. ag land, developed wetlands, refuge, State parks, wildlife areas)								
Conversion of agricultural land								
Compatible with Tribal land use plans, treaties								
Distance from existing shoreline to water								
Compatible with County General Plan								
Adaptability (e.g. inflow changes)								
Flexible components								
Cultural resource protection								
<i>Paleontological resource protection</i>								
Acceptability – public, local, State, NGOs support								
Public Health and Safety								
Hazardous materials								
Fish consumption – selenium concentration								
Geologic hazards – seismic risk, ground failure								
<i>Public exposure to unstable soils</i>								
<i>Risk due to vectors or disease</i>								
<i>Effect on fire, police, or emergency services</i>								
<i>Effect on stormwater, solid waste, communication facilities</i>								
Length of time to:								

Attributes	Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5	Alt 6	Alt 7	Alt 8
Permitting								
Initiation of construction								
Timing of construction – timing windows								
Completion of construction								
Achieve goals								
Energy Development (geothermal & others)								
<i>Induce population growth</i>								
<i>Loss of known mineral resource or local mineral recovery site</i>								
Environmental Justice – Disproportionately high impacts to minority or low income populations on the following:								
<i>Health effects (bodily impairment, infirmity, illness or death</i>								
<i>High exposure to hazards (risk or rate of)</i>								

Note: All attributes that appear as *italics* are taken from the CEQA checklist as applied in the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). Many attributes included in the CEQA checklist already identified by the work group were not duplicated on the table.

Meeting Notes

Some attributes used in other matrix-type evaluations of alternatives:

Terrestrial wildlife

Botanical resources

Aquatic species (may be subdivided further by life stages – e.g. spawning habitat, nursery, foraging, etc. or individual species of interest)

- Macroinvertebrates

- Fishes

- Amphibians

- Aquatic-dependant species (mammals and birds)

Threatened, Endangered, Species of Concern

Wetlands

Riparian habitat

Water Quality and Quantity

- Beneficial Uses (specifics dependent on applicable Basin Plan)

- Water chemistry (DO, nutrient loading, etc.)

- Water temperatures

- Flows

Controls lake level (elevation)

Disposal of by-products

Permitting costs

Construction costs

Operational costs

Maintenance costs

Enhances recreation

- Angling

- Boating

- Swimming

- Shoreline-based recreation

 - Hiking and other trail use

 - Picnicking

 - Camping

 - Wildlife watching

 - Hunting

Creates recreation hazards (submerged hazards)

Land acquisition needed?

Partnering opportunities

Intergovernmental cooperation – permitting efficiency

ATTACHMENT 1:

DRAFT AGENDA
Salton Sea Process Working Group
Thursday, September 7, 2006
9:30 am – 3:30 pm
La Quinta Inn & Suites
Ontario Airport
3555 Inland Empire Blvd.
Ontario, CA
(909) 476-1112

- 9:30 – 10:15 Call to Order
- Self-Introductions
 - Agenda Review
- 10:15 – 10:30 Ground Rules – Review and Acceptance
- 10:30 – 11:00 Desired Outcomes for Workshops
- 11:00 – 12:00 Interests VS Positions:
What is the difference and how does this help?
- 12:00 – 1:15 LUNCH
- 1:15 – 3:15 Evaluating Alternatives – Developing a Process
- Example of a common matrix approach
 - Other approaches?
- 3:15 – 3:30 Future Meeting Schedule – Next Steps – Document needs

ATTACHMENT 2:

GROUND RULES FOR WORKING GROUP

GROUND RULES FOR PARTICIPANTS

- Respect each other – person and perspective
- Actively participate
- Be brief and prepared
- One person speak at a time
- Actively listen
- Leave 'baggage' at the door
- Communicate interests, not positions
- Seek solutions for all – Find 'what' is right, not 'who' is right

GROUND RULES FOR FACILITATOR

- Maintain neutrality
- Enforce participant ground rules
- Help group accomplish objectives
- Help guide discussion
- Help involve all
- Ask 'why' to clarify
- Manage time