

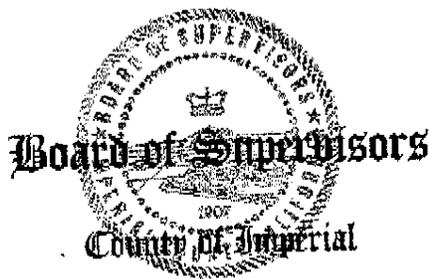
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January 16, 2007

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**Subject: Comments to the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report for the
Salton Sea Ecosystem Restoration Program**

The Imperial County Board of Supervisors appreciate the efforts by the California Department of Water Resources and the Department of Fish and Game, under the direction of the California Resources Agency, to solicit public comments on the Salton Sea Ecosystem Restoration Program Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report.

Please accept this letter as the Imperial County Board of Supervisor's comments regarding this extremely important matter. The restoration and revitalization of the Salton Sea is of vital significance to the future health of our residents and economic vitality of our County. We are sure you are aware that Imperial County has traditionally been one of the most economically disadvantaged in the State.

First and foremost, we are concerned with unintended consequences of the differences between assumptions regarding future inflows to the Salton Sea. The Quantification Settlement Agreement forecasts inflows to the Salton Sea of 960,000 AFY after all water transfers are fully implemented. The State, in the DPEIR, is using an inflow assumption of 717,000 AFY. Although we feel the 960,000 AFY amount was accurate,

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our Board has stated in previous actions that we would agree to inflow assumptions of no less than 800,000 AFY for a Salton Sea restoration project. We contend that agreeing to the 717,000 assumption would open the Imperial County up to the potential of future water transfers that would further destroy the Salton Sea's ecosystem, adversely impact air quality in this region, devastate the communities in the vicinity of the Salton Sea and create an intolerable environmental justice situation in Imperial County.

Already the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California has two applications in place to divert agricultural water from the New and Alamo rivers. Additionally, there are groups in the Imperial Valley seeking to sell additional water but fear the impact of such action because of the effect and liability of such action on the Salton Sea.

We are also concerned with the substantial impact most of the plans will have on the low to moderate income residents in the Riverside and Imperial Counties' communities. As you note in Chapter 22 of the DPEIR (Page 22-1), Government Code Section 65040.12 and Public Resources Code Section 72000 defines Environmental Justice as "the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures and income with respect to the development, adoption, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies." Furthermore, you also note in the DPEIR that the intent of Resource Agency Environmental Justice policies includes ensuring that minority and low income populations are not "caused to experience disproportionately high and adverse health or environmental effects from environmental decisions."

Therefore, in accordance with the stated intent of the above noted Environmental Justice provisions, our Board expects residents of Salton Sea area communities to remain whole in the value of their homes, businesses and other real property. Furthermore, if there is adverse impact in those communities from the State's Salton Sea restoration decision, we expect the State to cover their losses.

In Chapter 21, Power Production and Energy: Figure 21-2 shows Geothermal KGRAs are adequate for general information. However, we request an additional exhibit of the Geothermal Resources area within the Salton Sea. Cal-Energy has maps of the commercial areas that are capable of power plant production. It is important that these areas be planned for commercial development if California is to meet its "green" energy benchmarks. It would not be a prudent use of taxpayer funds to create an environment that would preclude development of this valuable resource.

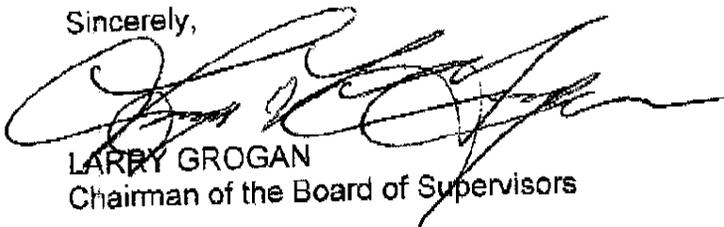
Page 9.2 of Chapter 2 defines the standards by which dam structures come under supervision of the Division of Safety of Dams. Under these provisions, we request clarification that the Concentric Rings plan (Alternative 3) would fall under this provision (as would other alternatives that would have dams) as inflows at or above the 717,000 or 800,000 AFY total would result in more than 15 acre feet of water in the areas confined by the dams.

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Finally, this Board is on record as supporting the Salton Sea Authority's plan for restoration of the Salton Sea (Alternative 7). We realize there may be some reasonable modifications to the plans outlined in this DPEIR as a result of these comments, but any plan that results in a series of "mud puddles" for fishing and recreation—mud puddles that create visual blight, economic distress to Sea communities or further damage to the region's air quality—will be actively opposed by this Board. This includes the so-called "hybrid plan" that would incorporate the Concentric Rings Alternative with a very small lake to the North fed by the Whitewater River.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at (760) 482-4306 or by email at larrygrogan@imperialcounty.net.

Sincerely,



LARRY GROGAN
 Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

CC. Roberta Burns, County Executive Officer
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 Board of Supervisors
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 US Fish & Wildlife Services, Calipatria Office
 CA State Dept. of Water Resources File
 CA State Dept. of Fish and Game File
 SS Ecosystem Restoration Draft PEIR File
 File 10.10C, 10.105, 10.124, 10.130, 10.133, 10.134, 10.142, 10.150, 10.331, 40.110

ID/S:/Salton Sea/Restoration DEIR 10 24 06/Board Comments 011607