

Salton Sea Authority Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, April 25, 2019
10:00 a.m.

Imperial Valley College
In the Planetarium
380 E. Aten Road
Imperial, CA 92251



AGENDA: BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
DATE: Thursday, April 25, 2019
10:00 a.m.
LOCATION: Imperial Valley College
Planetarium
380 E. Aten Road
Imperial, CA 92251

UPDATED 4/22/19

I. CALL TO ORDER
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
ROLL CALL

*A copy of the complete agenda packet is available for viewing or download at:
<http://saltonseaauthority.org/ssa-board-of-directors-meeting-4/>*

II. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

This is the time set aside for any Board Member to ask questions or address any issue posed by a member of the public.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

*Any member of the public may address and ask questions of the Board relating to any matter within the Authority's jurisdiction. **This Public Comments time is reserved for matters not already on the agenda. The law prohibits members of the Board from taking action on matters not on the agenda.***

Citizens are invited to speak on any item listed in the agenda upon presentation of that item.

Remarks shall be limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes unless additional time is authorized by the Board.

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR – Receive, Approve, and File (*see attached*)

- A. Minutes of March 28, 2019
- B. Warrant Register Ratification for March 2019
- C. Internal Financial Report for: 7/01/2018 – 2/28/2019

V. PRESENTATIONS

- A. Intro & Overview with Salton Sea Authority Board (Anna Morales, Area Operations Manager IBWC, U.S. Section)

VI. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Review federal advocacy support agreement

VII. REPORTS

- A. General Manager's Report on Activities – (Phil Rosentrater, GM/Executive Director, Salton Sea Authority)
- B. Standing Reports from Federal and State Partners
 - 1. FEDERAL: US Bureau of Reclamation – (Genevieve Johnson, Program Manager for the Salton Sea)
 - 2. STATE: Salton Sea Management Program – (Bruce Wilcox, Assistant Secretary for Salton Sea Policy)
- C. Salton Sea State Recreation Area Update on Activities – (Steve Quartieri, Acting District Superintendent, California State Parks)

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

NEXT MEETING TIME & LOCATION:

Thursday, May 23, 2019
10:00 a.m.

Coachella Valley Water District
Steve Robbins Administration Building
75515 Hovley Lane East
Palm Desert, CA 92260
(760) 398-2651

Any public record, relating to an open session agenda item, that is distributed within 72 hours prior to the meeting is available for public inspection in the lobby at the front desk of the County Law Building located at 82995 Highway 111, Indio, CA 92201.



OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
SALTON SEA AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
March 28, 2019

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Salton Sea Authority (“Authority” or “SSA”) Board of Directors (“Board”) was called to order by Thomas Tortez, Jr., President at 10:04 a.m., March 28, 2019, at the Coachella Valley Water District, Steve Robbins Administration Building, 75515 Hovley Lane East, Palm Desert, CA 92260, (760) 398-2651.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Director Estrada led the Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL:

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Thomas Tortez, President
Cástulo R. Estrada, Vice-President
Luis A. Plancarte, Treasurer
G. Patrick O’Dowd, Director
V. Manuel Perez, Director

AGENCY

Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
Coachella Valley Water District
Imperial County
Coachella Valley Water District
Riverside County

In keeping with the Salton Sea Authority Bylaws, there being at least three of the five member agencies represented, and a single Director carrying the vote of both Directors when the second Director of the same agency is absent, a Quorum was declared, and the meeting proceeded.

DIRECTORS PRESENT
VIA TELECONFERENCE

Ryan E. Kelley, Director *

AGENCY

Imperial County

** Director Kelley announced his presence by teleconference at 10:20, prior to agenda item IV, as noted in the text.*

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Alex Cardenas, Secretary
James C. Hanks, Director
Jeff Hewitt, Director
Joseph Mireles, Director

AGENCY

Imperial Irrigation District
Imperial Irrigation District
Riverside County
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians

SALTON SEA AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT

Phil Rosentrater, Executive Director/General Manager
Bob Hargreaves, Best Best & Krieger, Legal Counsel

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

AGENCY

Juan Pablo Bautista
Shannon Ayala
Nasseer Idrisi
Anna Gradys
Gerardo R. Avitia
Josh Zipperman
Pat Cooper
Esmeralda Perez
Suzie Earp
Nikola Lakic
Robert Betancourt
Joanna Hoff
Faye Winkler
Andy Vossler
Vickie Doyle
Kurt Schoppe
Andy Horne
Jackie Lopez
Michael McCulloch
Jessica Humes
Felicia Sirchia

Community
Davis Farr LLP
CDFW
City of Indian Wells
Public
Burke Rix Communications
Supervisor Perez
Supervisor Perez
Cal State San Bernardino
Geothermal Worldwide, Inc.
IID
IID
Landmark Golf
IID
S A Recycling
County of Imperial
Congressman Ruiz
Public
IID
USFWS

II. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- A. Director Perez expressed appreciation to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and to Joaquin Esquivel for providing an update and to his staff for attending in his absence. He will be following up with the SWRCB and other agencies that are helping move forward.
- B. Director O’Dowd said he heard a portion of the hearing on the Drought Contingency Plan (DCP), believes in the states working together, and believes the DCP is an important vehicle to move toward a sustainable Colorado River, but is concerned about Congressman McClintock’s characterization of the Salton Sea. Director O’Dowd said that it’s important for the decision makers in DC to have a good understanding of the history and the importance of the Salton Sea and the Colorado

River delta to the entire ecosystem of the region and to the West, and he hopes to help educate them. The long-term plan for the Colorado River should consider the impacts and importance of the Colorado Delta including the Salton Sea region.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

A. Nikola Lakic, architect, read a prepared statement asking the Board to consider his project.

B. Robert Betancourt, Jr., gave the Board information about how the Salton Sea Authority might obtain surplus equipment for use on projects at the Salton Sea

** Director Kelley announced his presence by teleconference at 10:20, prior to agenda item IV.*

IV. CONSENT CALENDAR – Receive, Approve, and File

A. Minutes of February 21, 2019

B. Warrant Register Ratification for February 2019

C. Internal Financial Report for: 7/01/2018 – 1/31/2019

*Director Perez **moved** that the Consent Calendar be approved. **Seconded** by Director Plancarte. Roll call vote was taken. **Unanimously carried.***

V. PRESENTATIONS

A. Shannon Ayala, Senior Manager of Davis Farr, LLP, gave a brief presentation on the results of the annual audit of Salton Sea Authority's finances. The financial examination evaluated the handling of SSA accounts for revenues and expenditures as well as internal controls over cash receiving, cash disbursement, payroll and investment transactions. The audit closely scrutinized state grant funds and found all revenues and expenditures in proper order and accounted for. Salton Sea Authority was once again granted the highest level of approval one can receive.

VI. ACTION ITEMS

A. The Board was asked to consider approval of modifications to the Board-approved 2019 SSA Board Meeting Schedule:

1. SSA staff and board members were approached by Imperial County at the February SSA Board meeting to consider a change of venue for the April SSA Board meeting from the typical IID Board room to the Imperial Valley College in El Centro during the Imperial Valley Energy Summit that is being held at the same location on April 25, giving summit attendees ready access to the SSA Board meeting, and possibly attracting people who have not previously attended.
2. SSA staff recommended that the SSA Board considering moving the June Board meeting date from June 20 to June 27 in order to more closely align the meeting with the close of the fiscal year.

Director Perez moved that these modifications to the meeting schedule be approved. Seconded by Director Plancarte. Vote was taken by roll call. Unanimously carried.

- B. Consider SSA support for Letter of Intent filing by Torres Martinez Band of Desert Cahuilla Indians for Tribal Partnership Program (Army Corps of Engineers)

The Executive Director introduced this item: This letter is in support of Torres Martinez Tribe engaging with the Army Corps of Engineers in a Tribal Partnership Program which would allow the Army Corps to develop a master plan for riparian habitat projects on tribal land. This is seen as compatible and complementary to the Salton Sea Management Plan activities in and around the Sea. The Torres Martinez would be the lead agency; Salton Sea Authority would be in a support role. This has been a very successful formula for delivering wetlands development on the tribal lands.

He also underscored that the 2016 WRDA reauthorization acknowledges the Salton Sea Authority as the preferred nonfederal partner for Army Corps projects at the Salton Sea.

Director Perez moved that the letter of intent be approved. Seconded by Director O'Dowd.

Discussion: Director O'Dowd commented that CVWD and the Torres Martinez Tribe will have to collaborate on this to get it implemented.

The vote was taken by roll call. Unanimously carried.

- C. Consider nomination to ACWA Region 9

GM/Executive Director Rosentrater stated that, in keeping with the SSA board's directive to assert local leadership in matters of interest for the Sea, he serves on the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) Region 9 Board and is now vice chairman, which provides him a seat on ACWA's state board.

Director O'Dowd advised that nominating Mr. Rosentrater for this position means that the SSA Board supports his efforts in that regard: whatever he does in respect to ACWA will be funded by the SSA. Director O'Dowd (Federal Affairs Chairman for ACWA) believes that having an agency like the SSA on the ACWA Board is good for the ACWA Board, which is comprised largely of water agencies. He strongly recommended reaffirmation of Mr. Rosentrater in that capacity and nominated him for consideration as a Region 9 Board member.

Director O'Dowd nominated SSA GM Phil Rosentrater to represent the SSA on ACWA Region 9's Board. Seconded by Director Perez. Vote was taken by roll call. Unanimously carried.

- D. Consider approval of Federal advocacy support agreement

A retainer agreement was submitted to the Board for Cultivating Conservation, of which Lisa Moore – a highly-specialized consultant, formerly with Grandview Consulting – is a principal advocate. She has worked on behalf of the SSA and the Salton Sea for five years – through other funding that recently terminated – and had a tremendous role in motivating changes to the Farm Bill to benefit the Salton Sea.

Director O'Dowd said he has observed Ms. Moore's efforts in and around the Sea: she is a highly specialized professional that brings a lot of value to the process. He is concerned about moving forward without IID present, as he believes she also has an arrangement with IID that should be discussed before finalizing a longer-term arrangement with Ms. Moore.

Director O'Dowd moved that the contract be approved, subject to review at next Board meeting with IID present. Seconded by Director Perez...

Counsel pointed out that the agreement contains a 30-day cancelation clause that would allow SSA to get out of the contract should there be issues with it.

*Given that fact, Director O'Dowd amended his motion and **moved** to approve the contract as written, with the stipulation that this matter be brought up for review at the next board meeting. Director Perez confirmed his **second**. Vote was taken by roll call. **Unanimously carried.***

VII. REPORTS

A. General Manager's Report on Activities

The GM/Executive Director invited question or comment from the board on the GM report provided in the meeting's agenda packet. There were none.

B. Standing Reports from Federal and State Partners

1. FEDERAL: US Bureau of Reclamation

Genevieve Johnson, Program Manager for the Salton Sea, gave an update on BOR's FY19 budget for the Salton Sea Program.

- This year, in addition to their normal program administration operating budget of \$300,000, they received \$2.5 million
- They are working with the state to provide funding (about \$1M to \$1.5M - still working on the exact numbers) for dust mitigation activities around the Sea.
- They are working with Riverside County to restore boat access at the North Shore Yacht Club. (She thanked Mr. Rosentrater for connecting her with the right people to get that going.) They hope to be able to enter into an agreement to get that done this year.
- They will be providing additional funding for the Red Hill Bay project which was a little bit short this year. (She thanked the state for moving forward with project management on that issue so they can get a full picture of what is needed. They hope this year to be fully obligated on that funding.

Director O'Dowd asked that she take back with her a request for continued advocacy for securing the USDA funds because they are important – especially in light of the lack of passage of Prop 3 and the big hole that left. Ms. Johnson said she would do that and assured him that those conversations are still continuing back in Washington, DC, between the Department of Interior and the Department

of Agriculture staff members. It is a slow process, but she believes it is gaining some momentum.

2. STATE: Salton Sea Management Program (SSMP)

Bruce Wilcox, Assistant Secretary for Salton Sea Policy, reported:

- The state water board meeting was held at the Yacht Club. Many locals attended and it was a fairly productive meeting. Some of the advocacy groups offered suggestions on how to move forward on some things, some of which the state may implement over the course of the next six months. The state will come back in June or July with a schedule and some responses to questions. Due to the heat the July meeting will probably not be held at the Yacht Club.
- He confirmed that Lisa Moore is responsible for getting the Farm Bill in place for the Salton Sea, and that bill makes a tremendous difference in how the state is going to approach the Salton Sea funding issues. It gives the state access to the federal funding coffers that they struggled with to this point.
- Mr. Wilcox hopes the Bureau of Reclamation will continue to be an advocate for the Salton Sea, as they move forward with the USDA bill, as they have been in past years. To do that they need a schedule of projects. The state will work in the next month or so with Lisa Moore and the SSA and its member agencies to put together a schedule that looks at revolving funding for this. \$200M isn't enough in itself but can act as the matching funds that the Farm Bill requires. The state plans to try to get additional funding so that they can continue to ask for money. The Farm Bill has \$4 billion in it over multiple years. The state thinks they are fairly well positioned to get some of that. Stay tuned. They will need support at some point and hope to move forward rapidly.

Project updates:

- The state continues to work on the North Lake. Supervisor Perez has been helpful in setting up a series of meetings so they can move forward on details on how it will fit into the overall SSMP and he is confident that they will make extensive progress over the next few months.
- Species Conservation Habitat (SCH): the state's engineering folks are looking into ways to accommodate Supervisor Kelley's request on behalf of Imperial County to have a more recreational focus without major changes to the plans. They will be building the west side of it in a manner to be able to connect to the Perimeter Lake, just as they'll build the west side of the North Lake in a manner that it can connect to the Perimeter Lake when funding becomes available. The SCH has been increased in size from 640 acres to 3770 acres in an effort to get back closer to the requirements of the Stipulated Water Board order. They did not meet the requirements this year because of land use issues, but he's confident that they can get caught up fairly quickly when they start doing chunks of habitat that size.

- There has been great progress in the last few weeks toward settlement of the easement. The state is meeting every week with IID. Secretary Crowfoot (Bruce's boss) and Henry Martinez the GM for IID are in those meetings to be able to cut through the bureaucracy and red tape that the Assistant Secretary can't cut through at the state level and the Water Department can't necessarily cut through at IID. They made a lot of progress this week. He believes they will soon come to the point that the state can do what IID needs and IID can do what the state needs.

Director O'Dowd said he saw a posting of positions that the state hopes to fill regarding the Salton Sea. Mr. Wilcox replied that those are engineer and project manager positions to help streamline coordination with the SSA – to have staff whose main focus is working with the SSA on these projects. Director O'Dowd's concern was that these positions are being created in Sacramento instead of locally, which he felt would be more in line with AB-71

Mr. Wilcox responded that these are not intended to take over what the SSA does for them, but to fill holes the state has so that they can respond quicker.

Director Perez advised Mr. Wilcox to have the Salton-Sea-focused staff call in and listen to the SSA board meetings; have them come visit on an ongoing basis. Chime in a bit on behalf of the SSA how we are going to communicate with each other, coordinate our efforts, what those responsibilities are going to look like, etc.

Director Perez reported that he had a meeting with Dianne Feinstein, and she is willing to fight for the Salton Sea.

Mr. Wilcox said that when construction starts the state will have project managers housed down here.

C. Salton Sea State Recreation Area Update on Activities

Ray Lennox, Acting Sector Superintendent, California State Parks, reported that visitation is still up from last year – 500 each Saturday and Sunday.

Due to reorganization within State Parks, Management of state recreation at the Salton Sea is being transferred from Colorado Desert region at Anza Borrego to Ocotillo Wells; staff will stay the same.

D. Audubon California

Frank Ruiz, Salton Sea Program Director, reported that, in the midst of recent political turmoil about the DCP, on behalf of California Audubon team he wants to express their commitment to work with the Salton Sea Authority and its member agencies on issues about the Salton Sea.

He gave an overview of projects they are working on:

- They are continuing to survey the lake in coordination with California Fish & Wildlife and US Fish & Wildlife, coordinating and standardizing their systems how to best create better and more efficient data when it comes to understanding the declining many of the bird colonies. As the ecosystem keeps rapidly changing,

they want to make sure they have better understanding and good coordination with the many different groups and agencies working around the Salton Sea. He also committed support for the North Lake plan - more and better bird habitats are needed. More than 7000 birds were lost to bird cholera over this winter and spring of this year.

- They just launched two new programs: Community Science and Education programs. Benefits: education and research.

One is a pilot project with the high school in Indio. Its purpose is to analyze water and soil, coordinating the analysis with California Fish & Wildlife. The end goal is to provide good quality data and gain a better understanding of the water and soil.

Mr. Ruiz showed a video clip of students analyzing sediment and hoped that that this would open the door to them working on soil remediation through composting and other processes. Most of the students had never been to the Sea despite living so close to it. His goal is to get them out there so they will care about the Sea.

E. Salton Sea Action Committee

Mr. DeLara, President, was unable to attend and there was no report.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Tortez asked if there were any further comments prior to adjourning. Director Perez urged SSA to get a lobbyist as soon as possible. Director Estrada gave a quick summary of the Ad Hoc Executive Committee meeting

There being no further business, Board President Thomas Tortez, Jr. adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.

NEXT MEETING TIME & LOCATION:

Thursday, April 25, 2019

10:00 a.m.

Imperial Valley College

Planetarium

380 E. Aten Road

Imperial, CA 92251

Checking Account Activity
March 1, 2019 through March 31, 2019



Warrant	Warrant	Vendor	
Date	Number	Name	Amount
			Beginning Cash \$ 212,176.27
03/07/2019	EFT	Pitney Bowes	-71.09
03/18/2019	EFT	AMEX	-7,845.72
03/21/2019	EFT	Money Market Funds Transfer	300,000.00
03/25/2019	16474	Best, Best & Krieger	-8,330.80
03/25/2019	16475	Bravata, Lisa	-134.76
03/25/2019	16476	Platinum Consulting Group LLC	-9,066.07
03/25/2019	16477	Rosentrater, Phil	-717.92
03/25/2019	16478	Seroy, Linda	-61.13
03/25/2019	16479	SystemGo IT LLC	-699.50
03/25/2019	EFT	Verizon Wireless	-229.31
03/25/2019	EFT	Visa	-60.95
03/26/2019	16480	VOID	0.00
03/26/2019	16481	Cultivating Conservation	-4,100.00
03/29/2019	EFT	Service Charge	-25.00
			Net Activity 268,657.75
			Ending Cash \$ 480,834.02

Salton Sea Authority
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Fund Balance
Year to Date through February 28, 2019

	General Fund	Wetlands Grant 1	Wetlands 2	TOTAL
1 INCOME				
2 Local Government/Member Assessments	\$ 610,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 610,000
3 State of California Grants	-	-	-	-
4 Pooled Cash Allocated Interest	1,144	-	-	1,144
5 Miscellaneous Revenue	6,866	-	-	6,866
6 TOTAL INCOME	618,011	-	-	618,011
7 EXPENSE				
8 SSA Administration				
9 Salaries				
10 Salaries - GM / Executive Director	78,729	-	-	78,729
11 Executive Director Support	46,083	-	-	46,083
12 Admin Support A	31,782	-	-	31,782
13 Admin Support B	25,091	-	-	25,091
14 Total Salaries	181,686	-	-	181,686
15 Employee Benefits				
16 Employee Benefits - GM / Exec. Dir.	25,192	-	-	25,192
17 Employee Benefits - Other SSA Staff	51,825	-	-	51,825
18 Total Employee Benefits	77,017	-	-	77,017
19 Audit/Accounting	52,308	-	-	52,308
20 Contract Attorney	25,610	-	-	25,610
21 Equipment Maintenance	5,846	-	-	5,846
22 Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
23 Equipment Lease	287	-	-	287
24 Insurance	4,669	-	-	4,669
25 Office Exp/Operating Supplies	759	-	-	759
26 Office Exp/Online Services	1,349	-	-	1,349
27 Postage, Mail	285	-	-	285
28 Printing Services	937	-	-	937
29 Dues, Subscriptions	11,069	-	-	11,069
30 Communications	2,458	-	-	2,458
31 Travel/Mileage	45,881	-	-	45,881
32 Technical Support - Consultant	-	-	-	-
33 Technical Support - Engineering	-	-	-	-
34 Technical Support - General	-	-	-	-
35 Contract Svc / Website	-	-	-	-
36 Utilities	-	-	-	-
37 Grants & Advocacy	-	-	-	-
38 Project Manager	-	-	-	-

Salton Sea Authority
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Fund Balance
Year to Date through February 28, 2019

	General Fund	Wetlands Grant 1	Wetlands 2	TOTAL
39 Total SSA Administration	410,161	-	-	410,161
40 Wetlands Grant Administration				
41 Contract Svcs/Attorney	-	-	1,214	1,214
43 Total Wetlands Grant Administration	-	-	1,214	1,214
44 Wetlands Grant Technical				
45 Contract Svcs/LCP	-	-	-	-
46 Contract Svcs/Construction	-	-	-	-
47 Transfer In/Out Grant Administration	-	-	-	-
48 Total Wetlands Grant Technical	-	-	-	-
49 TOTAL EXPENSE	410,161	-	1,214	411,376
50 NET INCOME	\$ 207,850	\$ -	\$ (1,214)	\$ 206,635

**No assurance is provided on these financial statements. The financial statements do not include a statement of cash flows. Substantially all disclosures required by accounting principles generally accepted in the U.S. are not included.*

Salton Sea Authority

Balance Sheets

As of February 28, 2019

	General Fund	Wetlands Grant 1	Wetlands 2	702 Fish Clean Up Trust	TOTAL	
1	ASSETS					
2	Local Government/Member Assessments					
3	Checking/Savings					
4	Cash - Checking	\$ 214,623	\$ -	\$ (2,447)	\$ -	\$ 212,176
5	Cash - Money Market	419,374	-	-	20,991	440,366
6	Cash - RivCo Fund	122,204	-	-	-	122,204
7	RivCo investment fund	1,608	-	-	-	1,608
8	Cash - Petty Cash	156	-	-	-	156
9	Total Checking/Savings	757,965	-	(2,447)	20,991	776,510
10	Other Current Assets					
11	Prepaid Items	2,944	-	-	-	2,944
12	Total Other Current Assets	2,944	-	-	-	2,944
13	TOTAL ASSETS	760,909	-	(2,447)	20,991	779,453
14	LIABILITIES & EQUITY					
15	Liabilities					
16	Current Liabilities					
17	Accounts Payable	19,417	-	-	-	19,417
18	Credit Cards					
19	Credit Card Payable (Visa)	61	-	-	-	61
20	Credit Card Payable (AE)	3,467	-	-	-	3,467
21	Total Credit Cards	3,528	-	-	-	3,528
22	Other Current Liabilities					
23	Accrued Expenditures	108,074	-	-	-	108,074
24	Accrued Payroll	5,701	-	-	-	5,701
25	Accrued Vacation	9,239	-	-	-	9,239
26	Total Other Current Liabilities	123,015	-	-	-	123,015
27	Total Current Liabilities	145,960	-	-	-	145,960
28	Total Liabilities	145,960	-	-	-	145,960
29	Equity					
30	Fund Balance	407,099	-	(1,233)	20,991	426,858
31	Net Income	207,850	-	(1,214)	-	206,635
32	Total Equity	614,949	-	(2,447)	20,991	633,493
33	TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$ 760,909	\$ -	\$ (2,447)	\$ 20,991	\$ 779,453

Memorandum

To: Salton Sea Authority Board of Directors
From: Phil Rosentrater, GM /Executive Director
Date: April 25, 2019
Re: **Review Approval of Federal Advocacy Support Agreement**
CM No. **V.A – 04-25-2019**

BACKGROUND:

The SSA Board regularly expresses its commitment to shape favorable outcomes for the SSA in legislative policies and procurement priorities at federal and state levels.

In fact, the Salton Sea Authority has effectively achieved significant results from its Board-approved legislative agenda in the past four years with SSA staff working through partner agencies, their advocates and dedicated staff as well as advocates supported by nongovernmental institutions willing to work pro bono in coordination with the SSA.

Among the most productive of these pro bono relationships has been the development of a new and vitally important SSA/ USDA relationship with the Salton Sea through policy and procurement related to programs in the Farm Bill. The demonstrable success in navigating this complex path to success is due to the unique expertise, diligence and extensive background and familiarity with the USDA programs and staff by Grandview Consulting, under contract with a nongovernmental organization. While the NGO contract with Grandview Consulting to provide this support was abruptly eliminated by the sponsoring NGO, the Farm Bill opportunities for the Salton Sea require ongoing federal coordination now, and hold great prospects to benefit the Salton Sea in the future.

To date, SSA and partner agencies have built tremendous momentum in this area that could be lost if the expertise that brought us here is not maintained. Specifically, with help from Grandview and consistent with the SSA Board-adopted federal platform, the SSA supported a successful \$1.5 million allocation from NRCS to provide funding through the CNRA to secure engineering review of the SSMP by the Army Corps of Engineers. Also with help from Grandview and consistent with the SSA Board-adopted legislative platform, SSA requested \$150 million in the USDA budget under the Watershed Act to be included in the budget Omnibus bill and that request was granted. Reinforcing these actions is progress in the House version of the Farm Bill which would make an additional \$350 million available annually in flexible mandatory funding through two programmatic tools available at the Salton Sea (RCPP and Watershed Act).

In addition, the SSA and partners have sought (and gained in current Farm Bill language) modifications that allow these resources to be deployed directly on the playa.

SSA staff strongly recommended, at the March 28, 2019 SSA Board meeting that the Board of Directors take action expeditiously to retain the principal consultant from Grandview, Lisa Moore, now working with Cultivating Conservation. Staff further recommended that action to enact this retainer under SSA Procurement Policy E4 (Procurement by noncompetitive proposals) is warranted due to the fact that this consultant has unreproducible experience in the efforts contemplated in the attached contract, where she has been engaged in these exact efforts on behalf of the Salton Sea since 2015.

To go out for bid would be to lose valuable time and experience. Further, an emergency exists given the suddenness of the cutoff of funding support from the prior NGO sponsor and there is an urgent need to stay engaged given the critical nature of negotiations involving the Salton Sea and prospects in the Farm Bill.

The SSA Board concurred, noting that representatives from SSA member agency (Imperial Irrigation District) were in Washington, DC, during this vote and unable to offer their stance on the matter. The SSA Board further noted that a cancellation clause exists in the contract, and members approved the retainer with the provision that the matter be brought back for review at the next SSA Board meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Salton Sea Authority Staff recommends that the Salton Sea Authority Board approve the vendor and award of contract for federal advocacy support to the Salton Sea Authority from Lisa Moore of Cultivating Conservation.

Respectfully submitted,

Phil Rosentrater
General Manager



Cultivating Conservation

600 Cameron Street
Suite 309
Alexandria VA 22314

Lisa Moore
lisa@cultivating.org
202-957-3466

January 28, 2019

Mr. Phil Rosentrater
Salton Sea Authority
82995 Highway 111
Suite 200
Indio, California 92201

RE: Retainer Agreement

Dear Phil:

Thank you for the opportunity to work on behalf of the Salton Sea Authority (SSA) to facilitate federal engagement at the Salton Sea. Cultivating Conservation has been engaged as a partner with SSA since 2014, facilitating the engagement of the Department of Agriculture (USDA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and federal congressional representatives to support Salton Sea conservation.

This work has resulted in the initial establishment of a USDA Regional Conservation Partnership Project (RCPP) at the Sea (\$7.5 million), the re-establishment of a USDA Watershed Act infrastructure funding tool through the congressional appropriations process and successful application of that tool at the Sea (\$1.5 million), the establishment of a foundation for EPA engagement for Sea-related infrastructure funding, and the initial steps for streamlined SSMP Corps permitting.

Together we have successfully engaged the California congressional delegation to support these efforts, as evidenced by congressional support letters and federal appropriations language advocating for the Salton Sea.

Most recently, we worked to develop and secure bipartisan 2018 Farm Bill legislation that authorizes USDA to significantly expand its funding role at the Sea through multiple, streamlined USDA conservation program authorities that together are funded at over \$4 billion annually. In addition to our successful work together on behalf of the Salton Sea in the 2018 Farm Bill, Cultivating also secured an overall increase in Farm Bill conservation funding of \$2.6 billion through the development additional policy innovations. This is the first increase in federal Farm Bill conservation funding since 2002, and will help support our efforts to increase USDA Salton Sea funding.

Farm Bill funding is mandatory, meaning that no further federal appropriation or congressional action is required to authorize USDA to provide additional assistance to the Salton Sea. Robust administrative advocacy at USDA is required, however, to secure additional assistance. Strong congressional and stakeholder advocacy to encourage USDA to act is key.

Cultivating Conservation has extensive experience securing and leveraging federal investment to address agricultural, economic and natural resource concerns. Founded by former U.S. Senate leadership staff, Cultivating has over two decades of experience in developing successful legislative strategies, effective coalition building, project and policy development and implementation in the areas of water resource development, water conservation and quality, air quality, endangered species conservation, renewable energy and nutrition policy.

In the context of agricultural policy, we have been engaged in the development of every Farm Bill and its USDA implementation since 1996, successfully developing new bipartisan federal agricultural conservation programs to address emerging natural resource concerns. We design new legislative policies and strategies to grow Farm Bill conservation funding, and to bring together coalitions to craft, fund, and implement innovative conservation projects on the ground.

Since 2014, Cultivating Conservation has secured roughly \$100 million in USDA funding to implement locally framed and led conservation projects and initiatives across the nation. Cultivating has worked extensively with USDA DC leadership staff and state leadership staff throughout the West, including in California. Our 2018 Farm Bill legislation was developed in partnership with USDA. We have 100% success rate in securing USDA support for Cultivating-led projects and initiatives.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to assist you in your efforts to expand federal investment at the Salton Sea.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lisa Moore".

Lisa Moore
Cultivating Conservation

RETAINER AGREEMENT

This Retainer Agreement is entered into effective February 1, 2019 by and between Cultivating Conservation LLC, a Virginia corporation ("Cultivating Conservation") and the Salton Sea Authority, a California Joint Powers Authority, ("Client").

1. Scope of Work. In coordination with the Client and at the Client's direction:

1. Work with Client to frame and implement SSA's federal legislative agenda; attend lobby visits with Client; draft associated policy proposals and advocacy letters to congressional and agency policymakers.
2. Facilitate SSA's engagement with BOR, EPA, and Corps relating to the Salton Sea.
3. Capitalize on our successful 2018 Farm Bill work to mobilize USDA and partners to secure additional USDA support for Salton Sea conservation by drafting documents and advocacy pieces, advocacy with California's congressional delegation, USDA, and the State of California.
4. Facilitate SSA engagement in federal Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) discussions to ensure that DCP or related efforts do not undermine Salton Sea conservation.
5. Facilitate the implementation of current USDA Salton Sea pilots.

2. Term. The term of this Agreement shall begin on February 1, 2019 and end on January 31, 2020. It is also agreed that each party to this agreement has the right to terminate this engagement upon providing 30 days written notice.

3. Compensation. In full consideration for performance of services under this Agreement, Client shall pay Cultivating Conservation a monthly retainer of \$4,100 per month plus travel expenses upon approval by the client.

4. Professionals. Lisa Moore and Jonathon Lehman will jointly implement this contract for services. A firm description and professional bios are attached to this agreement.

5. Relationship of the Parties. Nothing in this Agreement shall be deemed to create any relationship of employer and employee between Client and any individuals employed by Cultivating Conservation to provide services under this agreement.

6. Disclaimer. Cultivating Conservation shall make its best effort to assist Client in pursuing the objectives described in this scope of work. Cultivating Conservation, however, gives no assurances and makes no representations as to the particular results of its services, or the response and timeliness of actions taken by relevant government officials or their staffs.

7. Disputes. Any controversy or claim arising out of or relating to this Agreement, or the breach thereof, shall be settled by non-administered arbitration under the International Institute for Conflict Prevention and Resolution Rules for Non-Administered Arbitration.


8. Indemnity. Each party agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the other party from and against any and all losses, claims, damages, legal fees, expenses, or liabilities that the indemnified party may incur arising from the indemnifying parties actions or failures to act in the performance of this agreement, including based upon the indemnifying party's information, representations, reports, data, or releases furnished or approved by the indemnifying party or its authorized representatives.

9. Termination. Either party may terminate this Agreement if the other party breaches any material obligation provided hereunder and the breaching party fails to cure such breach within fifteen days (15) from the receipt of notice of the breach. If such breach is not cured within that time period, the non-breaching party may immediately terminate this Agreement by providing written notice to the other party.

10. Full Agreement. This Agreement contains the entire understanding of the parties. While Cultivating Conservation has tendered this contract, it has done so as a matter of convenience to the parties, and it shall not be construed against either party, but shall be construed pursuant to the plain meaning on its terms. This contract may be changed only by written agreement.

In witness whereof the authorized representatives do hereby execute this contract.

Date: 1/28/19

By: 

Lisa Moore
Cultivating Conservation

Date: _____

By: _____
Phil Rosentrater
Salton Sea Authority

Cultivating Conservation

Cultivating Conservation partners with agricultural producers, federal and state legislators and agencies, and tribes to build support for policies that benefit agriculture, communities and natural resources. We have over two decades of experience developing successful legislative strategies, effective coalition building and policy implementation in the areas of water resource development, water conservation and quality, air quality, endangered species conservation, renewable energy and nutrition policy.

In the context of agricultural policy, Cultivating has been engaged in the development of every Farm Bill since 1996, both on and off Capitol Hill, successfully developing new bipartisan federal agricultural conservation programs to address emerging natural resource concerns. We design new legislative policies and strategies to grow Farm Bill conservation funding, and to bring together coalitions to craft, fund, and implement innovative conservation projects on the ground. We believe that consensus driven and locally-led conservation solutions are the most durable, effective and appealing to policymakers. Since 2014, Cultivating Conservation has secured roughly \$100 million in USDA funding to implement locally framed and led conservation projects and initiatives across the nation. We have 100% success rate in securing USDA support for Cultivating-led projects and initiatives.

Cultivating's 2014-2018 Farm Bill strategy to support Salton Sea conservation was to build a durable network of producers, partners and policymaker supporters through strategic conservation project development that could then be mobilized to support expanded drought authority in the Farm Bill. Cultivating's successful work led to the creation of multiple USDA conservation pilot projects at the Salton Sea for a total of \$9 million, and establishing the initial USDA engagement needed to socialize the concept of a USDA leadership role at the Salton Sea. This project work was developed by Cultivating with philanthropic support. This philanthropic support has not been extended to expanding these initial USDA pilot efforts, and was not provided to support our Farm Bill advocacy on behalf of the Salton Sea.

Beginning in 2016, Cultivating developed a bipartisan coalition of congressional champions and producer supporters (including IID) from nine Western states to develop and secure drought legislation in the 2018 Farm Bill. With the enactment of this legislation, Cultivating secured access to over \$4 billion annually in flexible and mandatory conservation program funding for water conservation, watershed protection, fish and wildlife habitat conservation, and drought-related environmental mitigation - all of which is authorized to address Salton Sea conservation, but requires administrative action to secure.

Cultivating also developed and deployed a strategy to increase the total amount of funding available for conservation programs in the Farm Bill, resulting in an overall increase in conservation title funding of \$2.6 billion. This success reversed the trend of cuts to the title that occurred in the last two Farm Bill cycles, and was a necessary predicate to seeking significantly expanded conservation funding at the Salton Sea.

Cultivating's Farm Bill legislative policy development and advocacy on behalf of the Salton Sea was developed and executed entirely on a pro bono basis.

Management/Key People

Jonathon Lehman and Lisa Moore are the principal co-founders of Cultivating Conservation.

Jonathon has over 15 years experience in conservation policy, having served as principal counsel to Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD) and as professional staff on the Senate Agriculture Committee under the leadership of Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA). Jonathon developed agricultural, energy, water resource, rural development and forestry legislation on behalf of the Leader, and was the principal negotiator of such legislation for the Democratic caucus. Jonathon developed successful bipartisan renewable energy legislation during his time on Capitol Hill, and now works extensively with agricultural producers and cooperatives to develop renewable fuel and other environmental markets for agricultural commodities. Jonathon holds a J.D. from Vermont Law School. Jonathon grew up on his family's dairy farm near Watertown, South Dakota.

Lisa Moore has over 20 years of experience in politics and policy development, having served as chief counsel and legislative director to Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid (D-NV). In that role, Lisa developed the Leader's legislative strategy and managed his legislative team, oversaw federal appropriations work, and was responsible for negotiating legislation and nominations for the Democratic caucus with the Republican caucus and Republican White House. Prior to those roles, Lisa served as professional staff on the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works handling fish, wildlife and endangered species, water resource development, and environmental issues affecting children's health. Lisa holds a J.D. from Georgetown Law School. Lisa's first job on Capitol Hill was agriculture and environment policy counsel to Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA).

Salton Sea Authority

General Manager/Executive Director Progress Report to the Board of Directors

April 25, 2019

PURPOSE:

- 1) Provide Salton Sea Authority (SSA) Board of Directors with an executive summary of progress toward essential objectives; and
- 2) Provide accountability and perspective for staff performance.

MISSION-CRITICAL OBJECTIVES FOR SSA (NEXT 6 MONTHS TO 1 YEAR):

Time is extremely short, funding limited, and staff focus is finite. While the SSA GM/Executive Director is committed to seizing every opportunity, and maximizing Return on Investment (ROI) on every dollar and all time invested, we recognize we cannot do everything in this complex assignment. Accordingly, the following top priority imperatives must be accomplished within this fiscal year:

- **ASSERT LOCAL LEADERSHIP: REFINE STRUCTURE OF WORKING PARTNERSHIPS**
- **INTEGRITY/PERFORMANCE: DELIVER EXISTING PROJECTS ON TIME, UNDER BUDGET**
- **SECURE SIGNIFICANT FUNDING TO CHANGE THE LANDSCAPE**
- **LAUNCH SELF-HELP REVENUE STRATEGIES: Infrastructure Financing District/Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (IFD/EIFD)**

LEADERSHIP

Administration

In recognition of the approvals of major new federal funding opportunities (particularly the 2018 Farm Bill) that may be aligned with significant state funding dedicated to accomplishing SSMP projects, SSA staff have focused attention on capacity building for grant and project delivery in partnership with member agencies, as well as state and federal entities.

SSA remains dedicated to empowering local stakeholders to work "in cooperation and consultation with the Salton Sea Authority" as called for in AB 71 (M Perez) and to leverage these shared resources in a strategy that favors increased state and federal investment in a healthier, more prosperous Salton Sea. The SSA has engaged the services of a grant writer with a strong record of successful grant writing, and this person is now focused on aligning grant opportunities with existing and potential Salton Sea projects. Additional advocacy support for these efforts in Sacramento has been recommended by members of the SSA Board, and staff is developing a scope of service to be considered in the upcoming SSA board meeting.

SSA staff, working cooperatively with member agencies to provide outreach support to other local agencies and entities, has successfully secured broad support for the joint agency MOU calling for cooperative planning to develop a Perimeter Lake at Salton Sea. Every Salton Sea Authority member agency, along with every city in both Imperial and Coachella Valleys plus tribal councils have adopted a support position toward the inclusion of the Perimeter Lake in the state Salton Sea Management Plan (SSMP). In turn, the state of California now recognizes the Perimeter Lake as a positive inclusion in the SSMP, while also noting that additional funding will be needed to achieve full buildout of the SSMP.

Internal support for project management in conjunction with partner agencies is underway in anticipation of additional workload related to bond funds and other grant sources that can drive projects at the Sea.

Meanwhile, the Salton Sea Authority continues to work with stakeholders and staff from partner agencies and counterparts at state and federal levels to ensure technical coordination is happening as the SSMP plans take shape. In addition, SSA is coordinating interagency meetings for staff at local, state, and federal levels to ensure a unified local voice is maintained in efficient and effective advocacy for funding as well as project implementation.

DEVELOP REALISTIC REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

Salton Sea Management Plan (SSMP) / 10-Year Plan / Stipulated Order

A series of developments in federal drought management plans for Colorado River flows brought the Salton Sea to the forefront of discussions that may, in potential drought scenarios of the future, shift additional water from the Imperial Valley to Lake Mead in order to stabilize water elevations there. SSA member agencies recognizing these actions may impact the Sea, if not the viability of the first ten-year phase of the SSMP, expressed concern along with a pointed recommendation for realistic solutions and matching funding available to accomplish a positive partnership between local, state and federal agencies.

A Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) for the Colorado River was eventually amended to clarify a specific concern that such future potential water transfers implemented by the Department of Interior left uncertain whether full environmental protections for the Salton Sea would be recognized in the process. In the absence of such protections, some Salton Sea stakeholders and SSA member agencies raised concern that the responsibility to mitigate environmental problems resulting from additional water transfers would fall back on the state and local entities that are working cooperatively to implement the SSMP.

Congress passed, and the President signed, on April 16, 2019, the DCP into law. A legal review has been requested by Imperial Irrigation District.

Notwithstanding the DCP passage, and consistent with state law (AB 71), SSA is pursuing cooperation and consultation with the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), to implement a revitalization plan for the Salton Sea as defined in the 10-Year Plan for the SSMP.

The State has indicated that a concerted effort is being made to launch the most shovel-ready project in the state inventory for SSMP: Species Conservation Habitat (SCH), a 3770-acre wetlands project located at the New River. State staff have acknowledged that while the SSMP ten-year plan is behind schedule, an aggressive staff recruitment is underway. SSA Directors have requested state consideration for more staff to be recruited and placed in the Coachella and Imperial Valley areas to enhance efficiency and coordination.

State representatives report progress in resolving easement issues on the SCH project.

SSA staff continues to meet with numerous community organizations and stakeholder groups to provide updates consistent with SSA board policy, focusing on the real progress being accomplished on the ground in every instance where the locals served as project lead with proper funding to implement projects in cooperation and consultation with the state.

Significantly, the county member agencies of SSA have achieved historic progress in securing support for the joint county coordinated development of EIFD that can reinforce and accelerate public-private partnership investment at the Sea, leveraging the public infrastructure investments anticipated with the SSMP. The SSA and all of its member agencies, as well as cities across the Salton basin, have also adopted Resolutions of Support for this collaborative approach.

In a related development, a progress report on the feasibility of an EIFD for Imperial County will be presented at a workshop sponsored by the Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation and Imperial County preceding the April SSA Board meeting. SSA Board action was taken at the March 28 board meeting to amend the April SSA Board meeting venue to accommodate the workshop in conjunction with the annual Energy Symposium produced Imperial Valley Economic Development Corp.

The EIFD rules call for investment in a specific defined infrastructure that establishes a clear nexus of benefit to the community or district that funds the infrastructure. The infrastructure associated with the Perimeter Lake, to be built in a manner that complements the state priorities and investment in SSMP, is identified as the primary project to be supported by local agencies and tribes throughout the Imperial and Coachella Valleys.

These SSMP 10-Year Plan first-phase projects have been proposed by the state with the expectation that they can be constructed quickly, delivering multiple benefits of air quality improvement through playa coverage, and habitat restoration, while also enhancing economic development potential that builds long-term financial sustainability into the projects across the watershed. The Perimeter Lake concepts are now officially included in the SSMP, which is a significant step toward establishing viable EIFD's in the respective county jurisdictions. Properly

configured, the state funding deployed in Sea projects designed to create a stable shoreline would enhance economic benefits on shore – thus stimulating an otherwise nonexistent revenue stream that can be harnessed locally in partnership with the state and federal governments to address shared concerns at the Sea.

At the federal level, SSA and the state are working cooperatively to address the lack of federal funding at the Sea that stands in stark contrast with the growing portfolio of state and local investments. In the context of drought conditions on the Colorado River system, federal agency investments commensurate with property ownership and public trust and tribal trust responsibilities at the Sea present a central concern for SSA and its member agencies.

SSA is committed to do its utmost to facilitate local, state and federal success in performance of the Stipulate Order SSMP 10-Year Plan as the first steps prerequisite to maintaining water security in California, in the southwestern US, and in Mexico.

PERFORMANCE

Making good on existing grants for projects at the Sea

DWR-Funded Grant -- Torres Martinez Wetlands Project (Phase 2)

SSA staff and new grant writer have met with counterparts at Torres Martinez to review status of Phase 2 proposal for expansion of the TM Wetlands with installation of a seepage barrier. Additional grant resources have been identified to secure the seepage barrier which would otherwise exceed the scope and budget of the original Phase 2 proposal to the state. The seepage barrier, while costly up front, is expected to pay for itself over time by reducing the pumping burden required to offset seepage and evaporation losses. The barrier will also help reduce maintenance costs by inhibiting growth of invasive plants and trees in the ponds.

Meanwhile, with the exception of the additional seepage barrier installation, the project at Phase 1 level has been found to be fully functional as designed and built.

As more projects and funding come online at the Salton Sea, this model for funding contracts for the SSA to implement final design and construction serves as an example of effective structure for implementing future projects at the Sea.

FUNDING

State:

- The SSA has requested guidance from CNRA regarding the process for defining projects eligible for state funding (\$20 Million) designated to the SSA for direct oversight role in implementing SSMP projects, as well as the potential \$10 million additional for treatment wetlands at the New River.

Federal:

- US Department of Agriculture – Every SSA Director along with leaders from stakeholder groups and the CNRA signed a series of joint letters to help reinforce successful passage of the Farm Bill which was passed and signed in December of 2018. SSA staff and partner agencies have spent great effort for several years to align this opportunity and continue to work in good faith with partners to find positive opportunities to deploy and expand federal match funds potentially available in this program.
- Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) – In accord with SSA board direction, the SSA is pursuing placement and funding for the ACOE Work Plan for upcoming budgets, and eventual access to WRDA authorization (\$30 million). The SSA is working with the TM Tribe in support of the Tribal Partnership Program that may provide Army Corps engagement in projects in the Salton Sea watershed on Torres Martinez tribal lands.
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – An SSA-supported Letter of Interest (LOI) for the EPA Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) submitted for Salton Sea on behalf of the state in first round was scored exceptionally well on program compatibility and technical planning/design criteria but fell short on the element of loan repayment. Discussions are on-going among potential local partners in EIFD strategies that may offer a solution to this challenge in subsequent rounds of WIFIA. WIFIA provides a federal loan and guarantee program that aims to accelerate investment in the nation’s water infrastructure by providing long-term, low-cost supplemental loans for regionally and nationally significant projects, including many county water infrastructure projects. Prospective borrowers seeking WIFIA credit assistance must submit a letter of interest (LOI) to EPA to initiate the process. SSA and the state stepped out of the most recent round and will reconsider options in upcoming rounds based upon the outcomes of the pending state bond measures as well as initiatives being considered locally such as IFD strategies.

SELF HELP STRATEGIES

IFD/EIFD

Official state inclusion of the Perimeter Lake concepts in the SSMP -- along with nearly universal support from both counties, all SSA member agencies, all cities in both Imperial and Coachella Valleys plus all major Tribal nations – provides a major boost toward establishing viable EIFD's around the Salton Sea.

A Perimeter Lake designed to create a stable shoreline would deliver the essential state mitigations for environmental protection and habitat while enhancing economic development that can provide a more financially sustainable Sea in the future. Over time, EIFD's are expected to harness local revenues that would otherwise dissipate to the general fund and instead direct them to productive projects at the Salton Sea in potential partnership with private sector, as well as state and federal governments.

Riverside County and Imperial County are both moving ahead with strategies to generate local capital through EIFD scenarios that may jump-start infrastructure investments consistent with the SSMP. The counties, who are member agencies of the SSA, recognize the value of coordinating projects within the shared watershed that may be funded in part with locally leveraged finances.

Riverside County Board of Supervisors established an EIFD boundary to fund projects in October 2018. The District is a Riverside County portion surrounding a northern section of a Perimeter Lake extending into Imperial County. Riverside County Supervisors also appointed a finance board to oversee the funding. Approval by property owners within the EIFD is still required to fully activate the EIFD. Imperial County is following suit with a feasibility analysis commissioned in partnership with the SoCal Association of Governments. This preliminary report will be unveiled for public review at a workshop to be held prior to the SSA Board meeting in April, in conjunction with the Energy Summit sponsored by the Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation.

SSA initiated preliminary action on IFD strategies by completing its contract – on time, and under budget – with the state Natural Resources Agency (as a result of AB 71) to identify potential revenue generated by improved property values and economic activity around the Sea due to stable shoreline allowing recreation and renewable energy development. This data has been shared with the two counties as partner agencies of the SSA in order to expedite progress within their respective taxing jurisdictions.

The IFD concept in the SSA Financial Feasibility Action Plan assumes the primary benefits to the property values would be derived from infrastructure built in the sea that would create a stable shoreline with water distribution for dust control and deep-water habitat in addition to restored recreational value for marina communities and renewable energy development. A subsequent

report by Tourism Economics, based on far more conservative assumptions, still supports the findings that significant revenues may be generated from a project that creates deep water habitat on the north end of the Sea.

The report assumes the in-sea infrastructure would: 1) protect existing and future communities from an emissive lakebed exposed by a shrinking sea and an otherwise receding shoreline; and 2) provide a shoreline with aquatic recreation on a scale that would draw tourists, recreationists, and additional residential or commercial investment that could meet a growing demand for services and amenities related to a recreational lake. A follow-up analysis by SCAG on renewable energy opportunities and land value improvement is anticipated in Imperial County.

The SSA has convened additional follow-up meetings with county officials for the purpose of outlining a coordinated strategy and timeline for next steps that can accelerate local priorities in a manner consistent with state obligations and resources under the SSMP.