

Salton Sea Authority

2013 STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

Adopted: December 20, 2012

The following Legislative Platform is provided for the purpose of implementing the goals of a restored Salton Sea, by working with all interested parties in developing a feasible restoration alternative, backed by a credible funding plan.

The platform establishes a unified voice for the Salton Sea Authority on legislative matters by summarizing Salton Sea Authority Guiding Principles and Policy Statements for the 2013 Legislative Session. The Directors of the Salton Sea Authority recognize the need to protect the shared interests of the SSA members at the Sea, plus local legislative authority and avenues to advance the strategic goals of the SSA.

The Legislative Platform provides general guidance to SSA officials, staff and the affiliated legislative advocates in considering legislative proposals introduced both at the State and Federal levels. Maintaining a legislative platform allows consistent, timely response to SSA issues in the legislature, including communication from the Board Chairman, Executive Director and member agencies to legislators. The Platform also summarizes the SSA's positions on priority issues without precluding the consideration of additional legislative and budget issues that arise during the legislative session.

The Guiding Principles and Policy Statements are core principles and positions that the SSA has adopted to address a variety of issues that may or may not be addressed in the 2013 Legislative Session. The Board of Directors for the SSA has established goals and policies in various strategic plans and policy documents. These goals have traditionally been based on the Board of Director's understanding that investments of financial, physical, and staffing resources made today ensure that quality of life is preserved and enhanced in the future for the Salton Sea and the communities that surround it.

The Legislative Platform will guide the SSA until a new Platform is ratified by the Board of Directors.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

I. PRESERVE LOCAL CONTROL; ASSERT LEADERSHIP ROLE

Preserve and protect the Salton Sea Authority's charter powers, duties and prerogatives to harness the joint powers of its member agencies in a manner that asserts local leadership of efforts to revitalize the economy and restore the Salton Sea environment. The SSA will oppose legislation that preempts local authority or that shifts responsibilities and liabilities to the locals from state or federal governments. Local agencies should preserve and enhance authority and accountability for revenues raised and restoration projects that are facilitated.

II. EVALUATE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES THAT PROMOTE FISCAL STABILITY

Support measures that establish a financially credible action plan for restoration, promote fiscal stability, predictability, financial independence, and preserve the Salton Sea Authority's revenue base and protect local control over local government budgeting for Salton Sea restoration projects. Oppose measures that shift proceeds from P-3 revenue streams from Salton Sea restoration to the State or Federal Government. Oppose measures that increase SSA dependence upon State or Federal Governments for financial stability, or that increase burdens of liability or mandated costs with no guarantee of local reimbursement or offsetting benefits.

III. INTEGRATE FUNDING RESOURCES TO RESTORE THE SALTON SEA

In an era of limited public funding and enormous competing needs, it is the responsibility of leaders at the state and local levels to cooperate on projects that yield multiple benefits and ultimately achieve a greater common good. Support cooperative ventures between public and private sectors to expedite development of public infrastructure and programs consistent with locally preferred plans for Sea restoration. Oppose financial arrangements that enable state/federal or other entities outside the region to extract – without remuneration to locals and the Salton Sea restoration effort -- revenues from the local area derived from local resources on public lands overseen by publicly agencies.

PRIORITIES AND POLICY STATEMENTS

Complete the Financial Feasibility Action Plan, Maintain Mitigation Momentum

Enormous economic opportunities in renewable energy and mineral extraction at the Salton Sea offer the financial means to revitalize the economy and restore the environment. Top interim priority for the Salton Sea Authority is completion of the Financial Feasibility Action Plan. The Action Plan is to be developed in tandem with a re-evaluation of previously studied alternatives from the perspective of current circumstances and opportunities for private sector partnerships on public infrastructure. Current Interim efforts to restore and maintain shallow habitat viability and other incremental habitat and air quality mitigation would remain under control of the state Resources Agency.

The policy statements below focus on legislative outcomes that will provide the SSA with the authority and funding necessary to complete a Financial Feasibility Action Plan.

Support SSA efforts to secure the maximum amount of State and Federal funding, and that create synergies and opportunities to meet more than one need and to optimize the use of resources.

- Support legislation and grants that would provide funds to support projects that demonstrate cost effective, environmental restoration enabled through new technologies and renewable energy for publicly owned facilities
- Support legislation reinforcing SSA authority to negotiate conditions of project development sufficient to retain revenues necessary to implement the SSA locally preferred alternative for restoration.