



Audit finds Salton Sea Authority tops in fiscal integrity

(For Immediate Release)

The Salton Sea Authority (SSA) is operating at the highest professional standard of fiscal integrity and public accountability, according to a recently completed independent audit of the organization.

Independent auditor Shannon Ayala, partner in David Farr LLC financial audit firm, reported audit results to the Salton Sea Authority Board of Directors finding that the SSA's audit was exceptionally clean, the very best financial review an organization can receive. Ayala praised the SSA staff for their professionalism and readiness.

The financial examination evaluated 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, such as the SSA's Torres Martinez Wetlands project (Phase I) – completed on time and under budget by the SSA – and found all revenues and expenditures in proper order and accounted for.

“The Salton Sea Authority is poised for a year of tremendous success,” observed Board President Thomas Tortez. Over the past Fiscal Year, the SSA and its partners achieved historic success in raising state and federal funding support for projects at the Sea. State bonds in Proposition provide \$200 Million on top of the \$80.5 Million in state monies lined up in Proposition 1 which was approved the prior year. Outstanding progress in aligning federal Farm Bill monies for Salton Sea projects has developed an eligible pot of nearly \$4 Billion over the next five years.

“In light of these opportunities, and SSA management's demonstration of exemplary stewardship and accountable performance,” stated Tortez, “the Salton Sea Authority Board of Directors is firmly supporting efforts to financially empower the SSA to assert local leadership in full partnership with state and federal agencies that hold serious contractual and public trust responsibilities at the Salton Sea.”

The SSA is a joint powers authority empowered to work in consultation and cooperation with the state of California Natural Resources Agency to restore the Salton Sea. As the largest inland lake in the state of California, the Salton Sea is a vital rest stop for nearly two thirds of all migratory waterfowl traveling the Pacific Flyway. The Sea's ecosystem and economy are threatened by rising salinity levels and lowering water elevations.

The SSA and its partner agencies – Torres Martinez Tribe, Coachella Valley Water District, Riverside and Imperial Counties, and Imperial Irrigation District – are working tirelessly to establish a healthy, prosperous future for the Salton Sea. For more information, go to the SSA website at <http://saltonseaauthority.org>.

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For more information contact: Phil Rosentrater, GM/Executive Director, SSA, PRosentrater@ssajpa.org