

# Public Comment 4-28-22

**From:** Joan Taylor

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 27, 2022 11:05 AM

**To:** G. Patrick O'Dowd; Manny Manuel Perez

**Cc:** Patricia Cooper

**Subject:** Important 2nd Re: SSA Agenda Packet inaccessible

Thanks again, Patrick, for making the full SSA packet available. There were two items that had caught my eye earlier, and now seeing the detail in the packet, I'd like to alert both you and Manny's office that indeed, **these items each raise environmental concerns:**

## LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE IMPERIAL CO LITHIUM VALLEY ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY PLAN

1) The letter draft by Supervisor Kelly re the Imperial BOS lithium plan does not reflect what he indicated at the last Lithium Valley Commission meeting. At that meeting he essentially told the Commissioners they could ignore the controversial provision in Imperial's resolution that proposed doing a Programmatic EIR for a lithium specific plan, **and then exempting all further projects from CEQA.** This exemption is not appropriate, and it raised eyebrows at the Lithium Commission. While there are supportable provisions in the Imperial plan, this is not one. If a project tiering off a lithium specific plan PEIR were consistent with the PEIR, then it could have a simple Mitigated Negative Dec; otherwise it should be subject to an EIR. Given the potential for impacting the community and/or the Salton Sea, Imperial's proposed CEQA exemption would fly in the face of responsible development.

2) Imperial County's lithium plan also fails to address the role lithium development should play in sustaining the Salton Sea. An ongoing fee on lithium extraction could be a sustainable source of funding for operations and maintenance of a remediated Salton Sea. As we know, capital funding is relatively easy to procure, but ongoing maintenance funding is much harder to come by, and the state has been ignoring this elephant in the room. Lithium could be a huge boon in this regard, and we should be sure to explore the opportunity that it promises.

## LETTER OF INTENT WITH CADIZ INC

Securing sustainable sources of water for Salton Sea projects is also an elephant in the room, and I commend the Salton Sea Authority for recognizing it. However, as you may know, the Cadiz water "mining" project is hugely controversial because of impacts to Mojave National Preserve in particular. As a point of comparison, the Cadiz project would pump as much groundwater in one year as the Eagle Mountain Pump Storage would have pumped in fifty. Frankly, it's an outlandish project. All environmental NGOs are opposed and several are litigating it, including Sierra Club. I realize that your proposed LOI is conditioned on the Cadiz project passing muster with environmental laws, but still we must object to the Authority entering into this agreement.

In sum, I ask your consideration of these concerns. While I do hope to join the zoom and comment, just in case I cannot, please make this email a part of the record on these items.

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Thanks again for your courtesy and cooperation as we work together for a better future for the Salton Sea region.

Sincerely,

Joan Taylor, Chair  
California/Nevada Desert Committee  
Sierra Club