

Memorandum

To: Salton Sea Authority Board of Directors
From: G. Patrick O'Dowd, Executive Director /GM
Date: March 21, 2024

Re: SSMP Annual Report Workshop

In recent years, the State Water Board has held its annual review of the Salton Sea Management Program locally in the Imperial and Coachella valleys. Due to fiscal constraints, this year's review will be held in Sacramento, only available to local residents via video streaming. In order to more localize this update and assessment, and to afford locals a deeper dive into the status and direction of the SSMP and related works (including the Community Needs Assessment and the Monitoring Implementation Plan, among others) we have proposed to the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) that two workshops, one in each of Riverside and Imperial counties, be held and hosted by the Salton Sea Authority working in collaboration and coordination with CNRA. We would be aided in that effort by an array of local and other stakeholders, including the Pacific Institute, Salton Sea Action Committee, the environmental justice community to ensure that the event is well publicized and properly executed.

To accomplish this, we have requested the use of funds made available by the state under the Outreach, Engagement, and Education contract which is set to expire in June. I have attached a more detailed email which outlines this request, along with a first draft of what that program might look like. We await the state's reply and are ready to move forward if authorized to do so.

From: [G. Patrick O'Dowd](#)
To: [Arthur, Samantha@CNRA](mailto:Arthur_Samantha@CNRA)
Cc: [Lisa Bravata](#)
Subject: SSMP Annual Report Workshop
Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 12:07:11 PM
Attachments: [proposed SSA 2024 workshops for SSMP annual report \(002\).docx](#)

Good afternoon, Samantha,

We understand that the Salton Sea Management Program will hold its annual meeting with the State Water Board on May 22nd in Sacramento. As you know, in the past these local gatherings of the State Water Board have proven beneficial in updating residents and partners on the status of your important work. This remote hearing risks losing some of that momentum.

We also understand that the SSMP may be planning local presentations of the annual report prior thereto. We support that decision, and would like to participate in the development and implementation of those gatherings. To that end, the Authority proposes hosting a "Community Workshops for the SSMP Annual Report", working together with CNRA and regional partners including the Pacific Institute, the Salton Sea Action Committee and others. The draft program outline attached, prepared principally by Michael Cohen, could be used as a first step in framing these events. We agree that it is important to implement this workshop prior to the state's annual Water Board presentation, tentatively planned for early May. We agree that two events, one in the Imperial Valley, one in the Coachella Valley, would be optimal. To that end, we have inquired as to the availability of venues including the Torres-Martinez Tameka Gym and the Calipatria High School or the Grace Smith Elementary School in Nyland, but a location has yet been determined or secured.

This effort should fall squarely within the scope of our outreach and engagement agreement, and working together it would be beneficial to utilize some of the remaining resources available thereunder to fund allowable expenses to ensure its success. Once a budget is developed, and if it is determined that certain expenses would not be allowed under the agreement, we would seek alternate funding sources.

This item will be discussed at Authority board on Thursday, and we welcome your feedback prior thereto.

GPO'D

G. Patrick O'Dowd
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Proposed SSA Community Workshops for SSMP Annual Report

Overview

1. SWRCB annual Salton Sea workshop to be held in Sacramento this year, limiting local public engagement.
2. SSMP is likely to schedule ~1.5-hour public workshop for late April in the region.
3. SSA could support and expand this workshop, with additional panels, improving engagement.
4. SSA could leverage existing state funding.

Objectives

1. Expand local community engagement.
2. Provide a platform for organized community response to SSMP annual report.
3. Improve communication between SSMP and research community.
4. Leverage SSA local leadership role to educate and inform community.

Context

Order 2017-0134 states that the SWRCB “will hold a public meeting to receive oral and written comments on the status of Salton Sea Restoration, including a report from state agencies,” each year. Due to state budgetary constraints, the SWRCB will not hold this meeting in the Salton Sea region this year, imposing significant financial hardship on local residents who might otherwise wish to attend the meeting in person. At the SWRCB meeting, comments are directed to the SWRCB (which lacks authority to direct or manage SSMP activities) rather than directly to the SSMP team. At the proposed Community Workshops for SSMP Annual Report, comments would be directed to the SSMP team itself.

Proposed Format

Simultaneous interpretation to be provided and workshops would be livestreamed.

1. Introductions by SSMP and SSA (10 minutes)
2. Comments by local elected officials (10 minutes)
3. SSMP in-depth overview of the 2024 SSMP Annual Report (45 minutes)
4. Public comments and questions (30 minutes)
5. Research panel (45 minutes)
 - a. Hydrology (Reclamation or CO R Bd of CA)

- b. Playa exposure & dust emissions (IID?)
- c. Public health (UCR Salton Sea Task Force?)
- 6. Community panel (45 minutes)
 - a. ECV resident
 - b. IV resident
 - c. AB 617 representative?
 - d. Other?
- 7. Public comments and questions (30 minutes)
- 8. Closing comments by SSMP & SSA (5 minutes)

Coachella workshop

At North Shore Yacht Club or at Torres-Martinez Tameka Gym? Weekday starting at 5:30 pm or on a Saturday. Some catering (drinks, snacks) provided. Week of April 22nd?

Imperial workshop

At Imperial Valley College or other site closer to the Sea? Weekday starting at 5:30 pm or on a Saturday. Some catering (drinks, snacks) provided. Week of April 22nd?

Budget

- 1. Interpreters
- 2. Venue rental?
- 3. Light catering
- 4. Outreach/media announcements