

DRAFT

Salton Sea Authority

*Making Lasting Change
at the Salton Sea*

saltonsea.com

Points of Interest

Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Tribal Lands

Desert Shores Channel Restoration Project

Salton City

Species Conservation Habitat Project

Audubon Bombay Beach Wetland

Salton Sea State Recreation Area

North Lake Pilot Demonstration Project

*For maps and aerial imagery,
please see page 14.*



The Salton Sea Authority (The Authority) is committed to working with state, federal and local government and community stakeholders, to ensure a safe, thriving Salton Sea for generations to come.

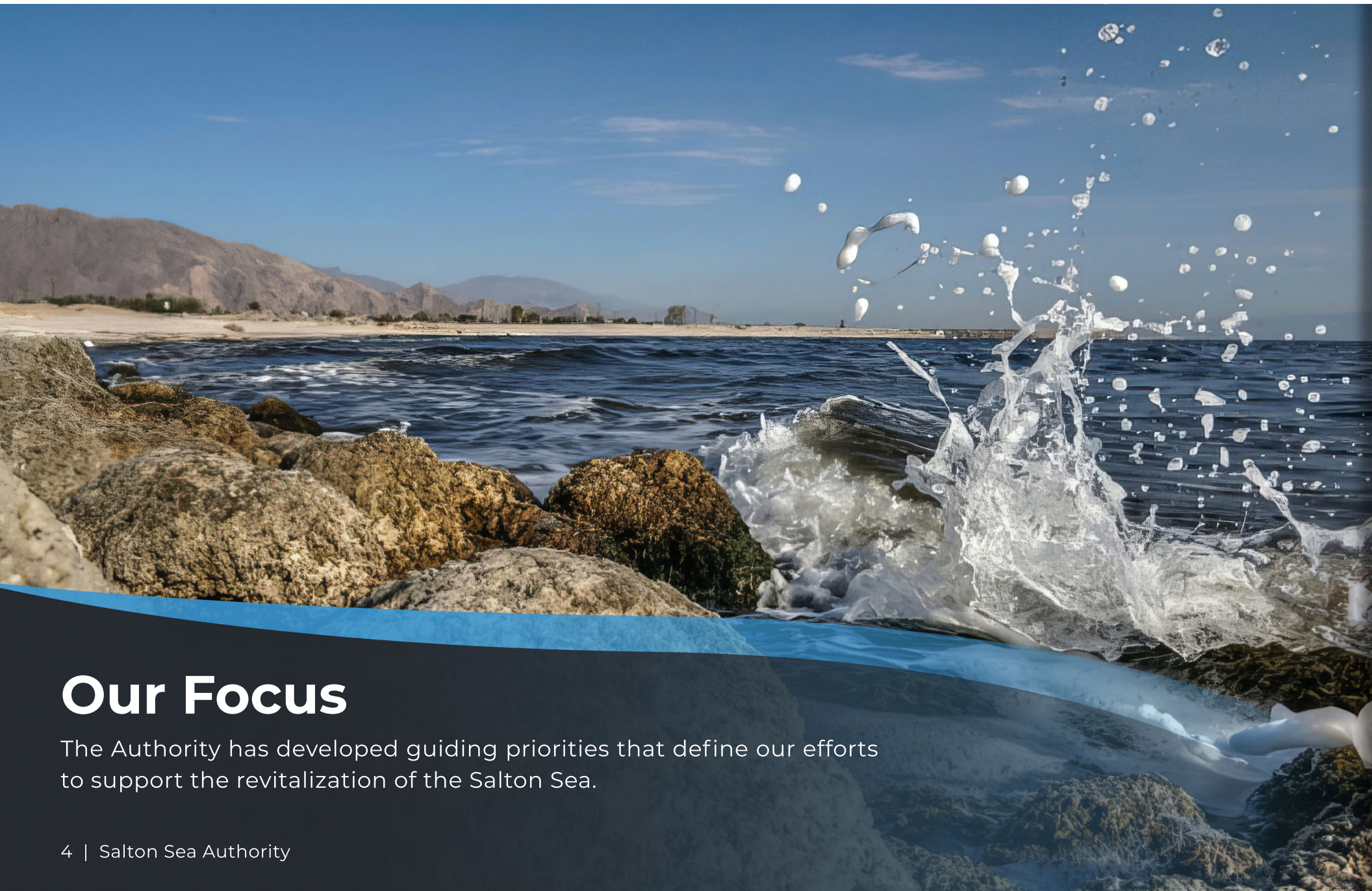
Who is The Salton Sea Authority?

The Authority serves as the table where critical conversations about revitalizing the Salton Sea and region take place. The Authority brings together state, federal and local efforts to secure a healthy prosperous future for the region.

As a Joint Powers Agency (JPA), the Authority aligns the combined resources of its five member agencies — Imperial Irrigation District, Coachella Valley Water District, Riverside County, Imperial County, and Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians — in this pursuit.

Together with community stakeholders, partnering with state and federal governments, the Authority works toward consensus in securing regional, environmental, and economic health and vitality.





Our Focus

The Authority has developed guiding priorities that define our efforts to support the revitalization of the Salton Sea.

Advancing Our Core Priorities

The work of the Authority is focused on three key priorities: Health, Habitat, and Opportunities. We call that Salton Sea H₂O! The Authority is equally committed to ensuring the safeguard of human health, revitalizing the lake's ecosystem for wildlife, and fostering economic development and recreation opportunities at the Sea.

Facilitating the Feasibility Study

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District, is in the feasibility study phase of implementing a project or projects to repair the Salton Sea's ecosystem. The Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement (FCSA) between the Department of the Army, Los Angeles District, the California Department of Water Resources and the Authority was signed in December 2022 and amended in 2025 to reflect a higher level of state and federal funding commitment of more than \$22 million. The Authority is dedicated to ensuring this study is properly supported, progresses steadily, and ultimately offers a viable, achievable plan, for the Salton Sea's revitalization.

Supporting the Salton Sea Conservancy

The Salton Sea Conservancy (the Conservancy), established in August 2024, was created to operate and maintain completed projects from the California Department of Natural Resources's Salton Sea Management Plan (SSMP) and own land associated with the SSMP. The Authority is working closely with the State to ensure that the Conservancy is well positioned to achieve its mission. Through strong board leadership provided by each of the Authority's five member agencies including the Authority's current President, we play a key leadership role in the formation and direction of this important new regional partner.

Working together with federal and state partners and key local stakeholders will ensure that the best, most capable resources are brought to bear on each of the myriad efforts necessary to achieve ultimate success.



Understanding the Salton Sea

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With a surface area of 343 square miles and a shoreline that spans 110 miles, the Salton Sea is California's largest lake. It is situated in Riverside and Imperial Counties near the California-Mexico border.

Once a popular tourist destination and home to many thriving communities, the Salton Sea has been impacted over the decades from reduced inflows, declining water quality, and exposed playa (exposed land once covered by the Sea). This triple threat to human, ecological, and economic health left unmitigated may result in:



Possible adverse health and economic outcomes from the exposed playa and declining water quality



Loss of a major Pacific Flyway route, historically vital to more than 400 species of birds



Potential negative impacts on Western water security

The Authority is committed to pursuing and facilitating Salton Sea revitalization strategies designed to deliver multiple benefits. We are dedicated to our ongoing work with our state, federal and local partners to make it happen.

Recovery Progress:

Salton Sea Projects

With federal, state, and local projects under way and more on the horizon, the Authority remains dedicated to support restoration projects that deliver generational impact.

➤ **Species Conservation Habitat Project** — Led by DWR and nearing completion of its initial phase, the Species Conservation Habitat (SCH) Project is the first large-scale project that restores approximately 4,100 acres of shallow water habitat.

➤ **Vegetation Enhancement Projects as Part of the Dust Suppression Action Plan** — As part of the DWR's Salton Sea Management Program's (SSMP) Dust Suppression Action Plan (DSAP), these projects aim to suppress dust from exposed lakebed areas through vegetation enhancement.





U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and SSMP Collaborative Projects: Clubhouse, Tule Wash, and West Bombay Beach — Three sites have been prioritized for dust suppression due to their emissivity potential and proximity to communities.



San Felipe Fan — The San Felipe Fan, an area of exposed lakebed where the San Felipe Creek flows into the Salton Sea, is undergoing dust suppression and vegetation enhancement through the spreading of storm water to support vegetation.



The Salton Sea North Lake Pilot Demonstration Project — Funded through a Proposition 68 grant secured by Salton Sea Authority and being implemented by Riverside County, this \$19.25 million demonstration pilot project was envisioned as an approximate 160-acre lake at the North end of the Salton Sea. Informed by geologic testing and environmental analysis, this project is now being programmed to include shallow habitat, constructed and natural wetlands on an approximate 70-acre footprint, creating shallow and deep-water habitats with targeted community benefits being additionally pursued.



Desert Shores Channel Restoration Project — Funded by a \$1.25 million grant from the Bureau of Reclamation, this project was originally a community led effort. The Authority, in partnership with Imperial County and the State, have been working to implement a project which supports habitat restoration and dust suppression by refilling the five “keys” left dry by the Salton Sea’s declining shoreline.



SCH Expansion Project — The SCH Expansion Project aims to create additional aquatic habitat downstream and adjacent to the SCH.

Recovery Progress:

Salton Sea Projects (cont.)



Audubon Bombay Beach Wetland Enhancement Project – The Audubon’s Bombay Beach project aims to stabilize, preserve, and enhance an existing 564-acre emergent wetland near the Bombay Beach community.



Imperial Wildlife Area Wister Unit Marsh Bird Habitat Restoration Project – This project restores bird habitat at 150 acres of the Wister Unit of the Imperial Wildlife Area.



SCH Vegetation Project – Covering 537 acres south of the current SCH Project, this vegetation project would serve as a buffer between aquatic habitat and the agricultural lands and duck clubs south of SCH.



Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA) Mitigation Implemented by IID – As part of the Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA) water transfer and on behalf of the QSA-JPA, Imperial Irrigation District (IID) is diligently pursuing environmental mitigation.



Torres Martinez Wetland and Vegetation Restoration Projects – Through a series of projects, the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians aim to preserve and enhance desert habitat around the Sea.



New River Improvement Project – Through funding secured by the Authority in Proposition 68, this project is under development and when completed will encase the New River’s impaired inflows from Mexico as they pass through the Calexico area, minimizing direct or indirect human contact.



Salton Sea Milestones

The Salton Sea has a long history and has played many roles in California's water landscape. It may be the body of water currently occupying the Salton Basin, but it was not the first to do so.

Tribal oral history recounts the existence of a sea or lake in the basin since time immemorial. Through filling and refilling over the millennia, the Sea has played many roles in California's water landscape.

As part of the Colorado River delta, historic evidence indicates that the river has flowed into the Salton Basin multiple times over the last 2,000 years, creating intermittent lakes.

While it is unknown how many times water has filled the Basin over the centuries, The current filling of the Sea occurred at the turn of the 20th century and has been a continuous, active, regionally significant water body ever since.

Salton Sea Milestones

1905

A levee breach in the Colorado River causes 100% diversion to the Salton Sink, now known as the “Salton Sea”



1924

The Salton Sea is designated for use as an agricultural drainage reservoir by an Executive Order from President Calvin Coolidge



1940s

The War Years – Salton Sea saw extensive use for military training and testing

1951

The Salton Sea Regatta boat race sets 21 world records. The beginning of a golden age.

1960s

The Salton Sea becomes a booming recreation destination for movie stars and tourists alike — attracting more visitors than Yosemite Park



1970s

A series of tropical storms raise water levels and inundate the communities along Bombay Beach and Salton Sea Beach



1980s

Tourism begins to die off as increased salinity and lack of oxygen causes fish die offs



1993

The Salton Sea Authority is formed as a JPA to oversee the revitalization of the Salton Sea

2003

Agricultural return flows that supplied the Salton Sea is reduced by the Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA), which transfers Colorado River water to cities

2014

Pacific Institute report finds that inaction could cost the area \$70 billion over 30 years due to increased health issues and falling property values



2016

The Perimeter Lake Concept is proposed by the Salton Sea Authority, garners broad public support

2017

Adoption of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) stipulated order for the Salton Sea Management Program (SSMP)



2020

The SSMP releases the Dust Suppression Action Plan (DSAP); U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and SSMP Collaborative Projects for dust suppression at the Clubhouse, Tule Wash, and West Bombay Beach commence

2021

Species Conservation Habitat Project initiated



2022

The US Army Corps of Engineers, the Authority, and the California Department of Water Resources sign a Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement (FCSA) to begin development of an achievable plan for the Salton Sea restoration

2023

Desert Shores Channel Restoration Project coordination begins; Reclamation grants the State \$70 million to begin the expansion of the SCH Project



2024

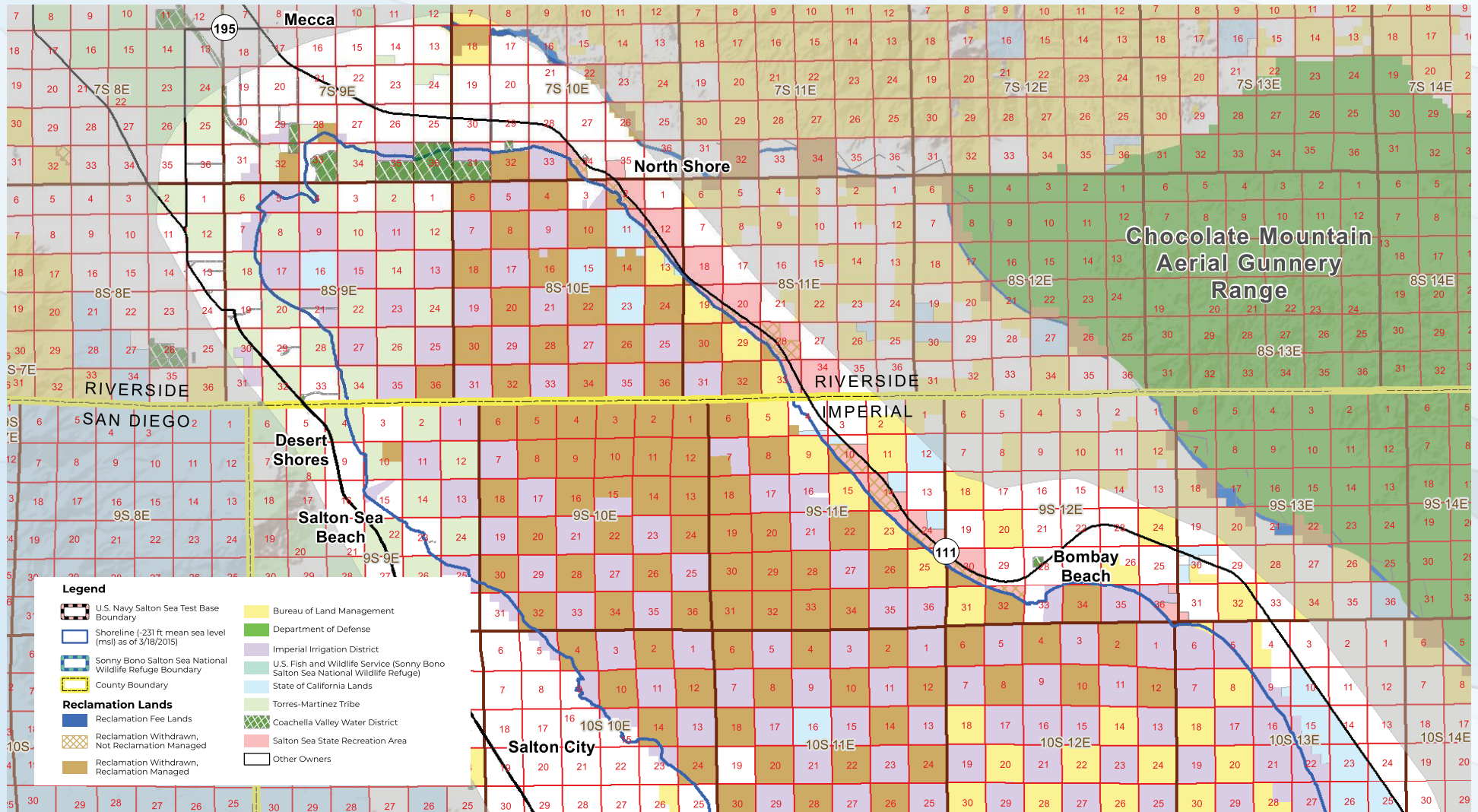
The Salton Sea North Lake Pilot Demonstration Project is launched; Salton Sea Conservancy is formed



Torres-Martinez Wetlands Project

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Audubon Bombay Beach Wetland



Salton Sea State Recreation Area



North Lake Pilot Demonstration Project



Thank You for Your Support

Without your help, the Authority cannot continue to create real, meaningful change at the Salton Sea. Thank you for supporting our mission to protect human health and revitalize the environment and economy of the Sea.

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