

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
SALTON SEA AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
November 20, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Salton Sea Authority ("Authority") Board of Directors ("Board") was called to order by Chair Dockstader, at 10:07 a.m., November 20, 2025 at the Imperial County BOS Chamber and via Zoom Webinar.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Led by Ex-Officio Shea

ROLL CALL

DIRECTORS PRESENT ON SITE

Gina Dockstader, President
Alex Cárdenas, Director
Ryan E. Kelley, Director
Director Singh, Director
Joseph Mirelez, Director
V. Manuel Perez, Director
Ex-Officio Joe Shea

AGENCY

Imperial Irrigation District
Imperial Irrigation District
Imperial County
Imperial County
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
Riverside County
California Natural Resources Agency

DIRECTORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM

N/A

AGENCY

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Yxstian Gutierrez, Treasurer
Cástulo R. Estrada, Vice-President
John Aguilar, Director

AGENCY

Riverside County
Coachella Valley Water District
Coachella Valley Water District

President Dockstader asked if there were any changes to the agenda.

No Changes

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

On Site: Evon Wilhoff, DWR, Trina Hamby, Imperial County, EHD, Sonia Herbert, Frank Herbert, Bob DeMaster, Tom Duff, Lakes Country Club, Eric Reyes, Los Amigos de la Comunidad, Isabel Solis, IVC Trustee, Pat Cooper, Riverside County, Camila Bautista, Audubon, Aydee Rodriguez, Alianza, Thomas Brinkerhoff, JCAPCD, Larissa Sinclair, Iron Dad.

Via Zoom: Paul Najar, Gafcon, Enrique Arroyo, Ocotillo Wells, Lowry Crook, BB&K, Alan Pace, SSAC, Glenn Farrell, Nick Romo, Cruz Strategies, Larissa O., Darren Simon, Czar Tide, S Virgen, Jim Barrett, CVWD, Jaysel Mendoza, Gafcon, Michael Cohen, Pacific Institute, Kim Ferree SD Natural History Museum, Antonio Ortego, Corrine Odom, Erin LaCombe, JJB, Corrie Stetzel, USACE Susie Ming, USACE, EcoMedia Compass, Tom Sephton, Lisa Moore, Cultivating, Tom Sephton, Nick Romo, Cruz Strategies, Steve Cruz, Cruz Strategies,

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Aydee Rodriguez thanked the Authority for all the work done and shared how it complements Alianza's work including the important restoration and mitigation work the Authority and partners are carrying out and that the remaining prop 68 and prop 4 ensures that the project moves forward and leverage new funding opportunities.

Camila Bautista Audubon, commented on their ongoing bird monitoring efforts including the Pacific Flyway shorebird survey and how the migratory birds rely on the Sea especially in wetland areas.

Iron Dad commented positively on the public's attendance at the meeting, and stated a need for projects with outcomes that benefit the community.

Larissa Sinclair, read off comments from the community and their concerns.

Eric Reyes provided public comments.

Mark – stated that the State of California promised to do in the QSA agreement that they were committed to restoring the Salton Sea. He's hoping that Desert Shores project will be completed and show goodwill to the community.

Jasmyne Phillips provided public comments.

III. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

President Dockstader thanked 14-year-old Sophia Gaspar for writing into the Salton Sea Authority board on her ideas to save the Sea. Dockstader will be responding back and encouraged the board to do the same.

Supervisor Perez thanked everyone for being there at the meeting. A lot of good ideas have come up, we need to stay consistent and be committed. It's been a long road, 30+ years. He was born and raised here in the Valley, he has seen how it was and how it is now. We need to listen to the community. He also thanked staff for being committed when there have been many times that he wanted to walk away, but not anymore, he looks forward to the feasibility study and once completed we can move forward with the efforts of the Army Corp. There have been a lot of projects in Imperial County but the most important one was the North Lake Pilot Demonstration Project. We lost momentum, then we received bad news from the state that came from a study. We have been going in circles, but now feel that in the last couple of months of conversations he feels good about where we're going.

IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE BOARD ACTION

- A. CONSENT CALENDAR – Approve; Receive, and File
 1. Minutes of Salton Sea Authority Board Meeting: September 18, 2025
 2. Salton Sea Authority Warrant Register Ratification for: August, September, and October, 2025
 3. Salton Sea Authority Internal Financial Report for: July 1 through September 30, 2025
 4. Salton Sea Authority 2026 Schedule of Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations

*On motion by Cardenas second by, Mirelez the Board **approved** the Consent Calendar per staff recommendation.*

Approved by the Following Vote:

Ayes: 8

Noes: 0

MOTION PASSED: Unanimous

ABSTAINED: 0

- B. Colorado River Update – Tabled

- C. Imperial Streams Salton Sea Feasibility Study project update – United States Army Corps of Engineers - Corrie Stetzel and Susie Ming, USACE gave a presentation and update on the feasibility study, upcoming meetings and study purpose. Public meetings are scheduled sometime in early 2026 to give an update on their studies and announce the final array of alternatives. October 2027 the tentative selective plan is scheduled to be chosen.

Cardenas commented on the 2020 personal testimony in DC for the tributary recognition to the Torres Martinez Tribe. The important part of the study are reasons why we are here today and is due to the success in providing testimony on the hill. Cardenas asked Ms. Stetzel what the goal behind the feasibility study was, and do they involve a project that addresses the following:

- Public health
- Restoration of habitat
- Recreation

She confirmed that yes, all 3 goals are what they are working towards.

Tom Sephton asked about water quality and the community's concerns, does that fit in any of the 3 goals and whether water transfers are being considered in the Long range plan. Corrie stated they normally don't work with water quality, which falls under EPA. The Army Corp understands that it's important and they are relying on Long Range Plan to inform different alternatives, which includes water transfers.

Supervisor Perez, commented on the Sea to Sea concept, is this still part of the study or not, we need to put it to rest if it's not and state the reason why and why not. ED O'Dowd noted the complexity associated with importing water for the Sea, and that while being considered it will likely be difficult to feasibly achieve.

Several comments/concerns were made from the public of why the feasibility study it takes so long, and Ms. Stetzel explained that this was a "MEGA" study which has expanded scope and benefit, which takes time.

D. Framework Task Force Update – Informational Only

E. Strategic Planning / Public Relations – CV Strategies, Beatrice and Jennifer gave a brief update on the outcome of the Strategic Planning Workshop held on October 27, 2025

1. Strategic Plan Status
2. Review/Revise CV Strategies Scope of Work – O'Dowd reviewed the estimated cost for the project completion and asked the board to authorize and not exceed 30k for the amended scope of work. Cardenas and Dockstader commented.

On motion by Cardenas second by, Perez the Board approved item #2 per staff recommendation.

Approved by the Following Vote:

Ayes: 8

Noes: 0

MOTION PASSED: Unanimous

ABSTAINED: 0

F. Project Updates

1. North Lake Demonstration Pilot Project, Joe Shea, CNRA, Eron Willhoff, DWR and Juan Perez, COO of the County of Riverside shared presentations on the proposal from the state to expand the scope of work on DWR's North Lake Wetlands project and to incorporate and include the construction of the North Lake Pilot Demonstration Project concept with available pilot project funding.

Juan Perez shared the challenges on the NLPDP project and the Geotech site conditions and water quality. He appreciates the state's commitment and is ready to have them move forward with the project.

O'Dowd confirmed that the remaining \$17MM in prop 68 funds will go remain dedicated for a project in the North Lake area, subject to finalizing an agreement with DWR/CNRA.

Site Conditions:

- Water Supply and Seasonality
- Soil conditions
- Increased Costs
- Integration with future phase in the state project.
- Regulatory process

Geotech Site Conditions:

- Very soft clay
- Fine sand
- San Andreas Fault
- Ground motion
- Barnacles

- 12/31/25 Grant Expiration

- Future Roles and Responsibilities
- Proposition 68 funds reallocation

3. Desert Shores, Paul Najar gave a brief update on the Feasibility Study, site conditions, technical challenges, estimated costs to determine a viable path forward, and reviewed several alternatives. ED O'Dowd spoke about Eminent Domain. Cardenas, Dockstader and Kelley shared their concerns. Kelley asked that the state get more involved in this project. Tom Sephton and Jasmyne expressed a preference for a project with water. Cardenas motioned to give GM discretion on the grant modification that would allow the remaining USBR funds (approximately \$600,000) to be used for design purposes in hopes of creating a "shovel ready" project

- Grant Modification (Expires 12/31/25)
- Site Control – Land Acquisition Options and Risks

On motion by Cardenas second by, Kelley, to authorize the grant modification on terms acceptable to the Executive Committee.

Approved by the Following Vote:

Ayes: 8

Noes: 0

MOTION PASSED: Unanimous

ABSTAINED: 0

V. REPORTS

- A. Federal
 - 1. Federal Activities – Lisa Moore Lehman, Partner, Cultivating Conservation, gave a brief update on the long, productive history of the Authority's Federal Advocacy.
 - 2. US Bureau of Reclamation - Unassigned
- B. State
 - 1. State Advocacy – Nick Romo, Cruz Strategies and Glen Farrel, GF Advocacy, gave a brief update on the 2026 advocacy plan.
 - 2. State of California – Mr. Miguel Hernandez, Public Affairs Officer, California Natural Resources Agency gave a brief update
- C. Salton Sea State Recreation Area Update on Activities – Enrique Arroyo, State Park Ocotillo Wells District Superintendent
- D. Local
 - 1. Salton Sea Action Committee – Alan Pace, SSAC President
- E. Executive Director's Report and Comments - G. Patrick O'Dowd, Executive Director/GM, Salton Sea Authority – No further updates

VI. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting Adjourned at 12:49 p.m.

NEXT MEETING TIME & LOCATION:

The Salton Sea Authority board will meet as established pursuant to Agenda Item A.4. above.