commentletters

From: Tom Sephton <tomsephton@sephtonwatertech.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 11, 2016 1:15 AM
To: commentletters
Cc: Eco Info
Subject: 8/16/16 BOARD MEETING – ITEM #10 Update regarding the status of the Salton Sea Management Program
Attachments: WaterBoardLetter_Sephton_2016_08_10_SignedScan.jpg

Dear State Water Resources Control Board members,

I've had the opportunity to work on projects that develop methods to manage salinity, supply clean water for habitat, and suppress dust at the Salton Sea. These projects make direct use of local geothermal and solar energy to reclaim Salton Sea water at high quality to sustain the local ecosystem while converting what would normally be desalination waste brine to valuable products to pay for the process. There are multiple feasible and cost effective strategies available to prevent collapse of the Salton Sea ecosystem and public health damage from windblown dust off the dry lakebed.

The Salton Sea is quickly reaching a salinity that will no longer sustain the fish that many of the migratory and resident birds depend on. Additionally the shoreline will recede at a much more rapid rate starting in a year and a half when QSA mitigation flow stops. This will also accelerate the increase in salinity.

The need is urgent to create enough managed salinity habitat to sustain a fish population that will preserve the vital role of the Salton Sea as a key rest and feeding stop on the Pacific Flyway. Based on the information disseminated at public workshops, it does not appear that the larger projects under the Salton Sea Management Program can be permitted, funded, and constructed rapidly enough to preserve habitat for the population of fish eating birds that now rely on the Salton Sea.
The smaller projects may be in place in time to offset the loss of the greater Salton Sea as fish habitat, but the scale of those small projects will not be able to sustain enough fish to support the current population of fish eating birds.

I would urge the State Board to look carefully at the scale and timing of the projects proposed and consider whether they can fill the need in enough time to matter. If not, new ideas may be needed.

Best Regards,
Tom Sephton
President, Sephton Water Technology