



My name is Lorraine Salas and I am a resident of Palm Desert that commutes everyday at 8am to Oasis Elementary School located in Thermal, California. Oasis Elementary School is located seven miles west of the Salton Sea. Before moving to Oasis Elementary School to teach special needs students, I taught special needs students at Saul Martinez Elementary for nine years, another school that shares the area surrounding the Salton Sea. This is my tenth year in which I will be working within 15 miles of the Salton Sea and working with resident who live less than five miles from the shore lines of the Salton Sea. I have, in the most recent years, been seeing students with severe asthma problems and I have yet to see a more proactive approach from the local air quality district to inform the community regarding dust being blown from Salton Sea playa (which is not necessarily local as it is located more than one hundred miles away from the Salton Sea).

As a special needs teacher who has been serving the communities surrounding the Salton Sea, I am alarmed at what the studies have expressed concerning the future of the Salton Sea. By 2020, the residents, community members, teachers, school administrators and the many workers that labor nearby the sea will be seeing increasing dust due to the largest water transfer in U.S. history. I would like to know, as a teacher who plans to retire teaching within twenty years serving for the Coachella Valley Unified School District, what health concerns will my students, their parents and myself will be subjected to after Salton Sea playa is exposed because of this water transfer? From what I understand, we will see more asthma rates, respiratory and heart diseases.

One of the questions posed in the "Notice of Public Workshop" was "How can the State Water Board promote implementation of a reasonable and sustainable plan to address the air, wildlife, and water quality problems at the Salton Sea? "

The only way to prevent the exposure of playa and to limit the amount of pesticide-laden dust from being strewn by winds into the air and breathed into our lungs is to transfer water from the nearest water source and prevent the sea from drying. I have been reading recommendation from the Ecomedia Compass and their plan makes sense. Use the current New River route and use this to install a pipeline from the Sea of Cortez. This would be the only viable option to prevent thousands of birds from dying and thousands more residents from suffering from asthma and respiratory diseases. Spraying water on exposed playa periodically will only be a waste of time.

Many livelihoods and people's health are at risk because of this water transfer. This should be a state and national priority and instead of spending money on prisons and bullet trains, we need to use money to begin building this pipeline before this area becomes inhabitable to humans and other species of animals. It would not make sense to ignore millions of lives and ignore this important ecosystem and home we call the Salton Sea Basin. Thank you and I look forward to hearing more proactive approaches to informing the surrounding communities about the future of the Salton Sea.