



Dear California Water Board Members,

In 2014 I rediscovered the Salton Sea and ever since then I've called it my home. It is now where I live, where I work and most of all, it is the place that I and so many others love. A place we want to help and want to see shining with all its possibilities.

These possibilities cannot be realized without teamwork and I want to congratulate everyone's efforts in moving forward with short-term management plans at the Sea. Current wetland habitat, air quality, dust mitigation and vegetation enhancement projects are an excellent step towards restoration but are not enough. I also want to remind everyone that the future of the Salton Sea and its communities **DEPENDS MOST ON LONG-TERM RESTORATION PLANS**. Please do not for a second forget the urgency behind restoration and the danger behind the consequences of failing to plan for the lasting effects following the Quantification Settlement Agreement.

As a field biologist working on various shovel-ready projects at the Sea these consequences are all too real; at times working in severe wind and dust storms that significantly reduce visibility and make it very difficult to breathe. I have witnessed firsthand the amount of time, work and funding required to execute just the short-term goals and I can tell you the funding currently allocated for the Salton Sea is simply not enough. Keep in mind that over 70 BILLION DOLLARS is being spent on a high-speed train and a new football stadium in Los Angeles estimated to be the world's most expensive sports arena. Yet when it comes to the health of millions of families, billions of animals, and the future of our regional economy and environment, not even one percent of that amount is willing to be spent.

In addition to more aggressive funding let's not deny the root problem at the Sea, WATER. Fresh water resources which California, Mexico and so many other states depend on are no longer enough to sustain growing populations and maintain critical wildlife habitat. We must look to ocean water for our future source of fresh water. Please do not forget that 97% of the world's water is ocean water and importing it to secure new water for the region is necessary. The Middle East is currently applying this concept to save the Dead Sea by importing ocean water from the Red Sea. A similar SEA-TO-SEA SOLUTION is exactly what we need. If they can do it, why can't we?

Every person I meet knows the best way to help the Sea is to just add water. Every person I talk to wants to see it restored and believes in its potential. The potential to become a mecca for recreation, renewable energy, new water and wetland habitat all of which would benefit so many in the long run. While meeting and interviewing people in Northern Mexico like the Cucapah community, one of the primary property owners between the Sea of Cortez and California, I've found that they too believe sharing water across borders would help not only the Salton Sea but also their communities. They not only believe it, they welcome the opportunity to work with California in replenishing both regions. Please do not forget that **MEXICO IS OUR ALLY**. By working together we can replenish both regions.

We cannot afford to simply accept the ongoing demise of the Salton Sea by not planning for its future. The resources, people and funding needed to restore the Sea are out there. You just have to look to your neighbor across the border, to your fellow constituent working hard to get the message across, to a group of passionate citizens yelling "Save Our Sea!"

Sincerely,

Giovanni Arechavaleta  
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