

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
BOARD MEETING SESSION – DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS
MAY 16-17, 2023**

ITEM 3

SUBJECT

ANNUAL PUBLIC WORKSHOP ON THE STATUS OF PHASE 1 OF THE SALTON SEA MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.

DISCUSSION

[Water Rights Order \(WRO\) 2017-0134](#) requires that the State Water Board hold a public meeting each year during Phase 1 of the Salton Sea Management Program (SSMP) to receive oral and written comment on the status of Salton Sea restoration from California Natural Resources Agency. The purpose of the May 16-17 workshop is for the State Water Board to hold the State Water Board's fifth annual workshop to receive information related to the progress of Phase 1 of the Salton Sea Management Program from CNRA and to receive written and oral comments from the public.

BACKGROUND

On October 28, 2002, the State Water Board issued [Order WRO 2002-0013](#) which approved the long-term transfer of water from the Imperial Irrigation District to the San Diego County Water Authority, the Coachella Valley Water District, and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. On December 20, 2002, the State Water Board issued [Order WRO 2002-0016](#), which revised Order WRO 2002-0013. On November 18, 2014, the Imperial Irrigation District filed a Petition for Change seeking modification of [Revised Order WRO 2002-0013](#). In May 2015, Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. established the Salton Sea Task Force to identify realistic short- and medium-term goals to respond to potential air quality and ecological impacts resulting from scheduled reduced flows of fresh water to the Salton Sea. As a part of the Salton Sea Task Force, the State Water Board regularly monitors and assesses progress on the implementation of the Salton Sea Task Force's SSMP, including workshops that were held on March 18, 2015, January 5, 2016, April 19, 2016, November 15, 2016, and September 7, 2017.

On November 7, 2017, the State Water Board adopted Order WRO 2017-0134, amending revised Order WRO 2002-0013 to incorporate additional conditions that set forth specific restoration milestones to address public health and environmental concerns within Phase 1 of the SSMP (see Table 1). Order WRO 2017-0134 also requires the State Water Board hold an annual public workshop on the progress of Phase 1 of the Salton Sea Management Program. The State Water Board has held four annual workshops thus far, on March 19, 2019, August 19, 2020, April 7, 2021, and April 20, 2022.

Per Order WRO 2017-0134, a report from state agencies, due in the 1st quarter of each year, will identify: (i) completed projects and milestones achieved in the prior year; (ii) amount of acreage of completed projects that provide dust suppression and habitat restoration, broken down by habitat type; (iii) upcoming projects to be completed and milestones to be achieved prior to the next annual progress report; (iv) the status of financial resources and permits that have not been secured for future projects; (v) any anticipated departures from the dates and acreages identified in condition 24 of the order, and; (vi) progress toward development of the long-range plan described in condition 26 of the order. The annual report was submitted to the State Water Board and released to the public on March 22, 2023. The report can be accessed online in English and in Spanish at <https://saltonsea.ca.gov/>. Information submitted in this report will be presented at the workshop.

Table 1: Specific restoration milestones to address public health and environmental concerns within phase 1 of the SSMP.

Year	Total number of acres of habitat and dust-suppression projects that shall be completed each year (annual milestones).	Cumulative acreage by the end of each year.
2018	500	500
2019	1,300	1,800
2020	1,700	3,500
2021	3,500	7,000
2022	1,750	8,750
2023	2,750	11,500
2024	2,700	14,200
2025	3,400	17,600
2026	4,000	21,600
2027	4,000	25,600
2028	4,200	29,800

For more information about the background and history of the State Water Board's involvement with the Salton Sea, please visit the State Water Board's web page at: waterboards.ca.gov/salton_sea/.

Additional information on the Salton Sea Management Program is available on the California Natural Resources Agency's web page at: <https://saltonseaca.gov/>.

POLICY ISSUE

None. This is a workshop only and no decisions will be made.

FISCAL IMPACT

None. This is a workshop only and no decisions will be made.

REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT

None. This is a workshop only and no decisions will be made.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

None. This is a workshop only and no decisions will be made.