

COLORADO RIVER BASIN REGION PESTICIDE STUDY IN WATER AND FISH TISSUES WITHIN THE SALTON SEA TRANSBOUNDARY WATERSHED

What is it?

The Colorado River Basin Regional Water Board, in coordination with the Department of Fish and Game, initiated a fish tissue monitoring study in 2011. The study looks at legacy pesticide concentrations in both water and fish tissues along agricultural drains and rivers within the Salton Sea transboundary watershed that discharge into the Salton Sea.

Why is it important?

Historical data from sampling agricultural drains within the Colorado River Basin region has shown exceedances of pesticides, including those considered “legacy” pesticides, or those pesticides that have been banned and are no longer in use. These pesticides are detrimental to human health and wildlife, and they accumulate in both sediments and in fish tissues.

How will this information be used?

The information is needed to better understand the fate and transport of pesticides within the Salton Sea drainage shed. It will demonstrate whether or not current beneficial use designations are being supported, as well as indicate the level of risk that exists to human health. The public consumes an unknown quantity of fish from the Salton Sea each year, and we suspect that fish caught directly from the drains are being consumed as well, based upon observations of field crews who have witnessed people fishing in the drains; the information gathered will assist in the development of fish consumption advisories and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for pesticides in the Salton Sea transboundary watershed.

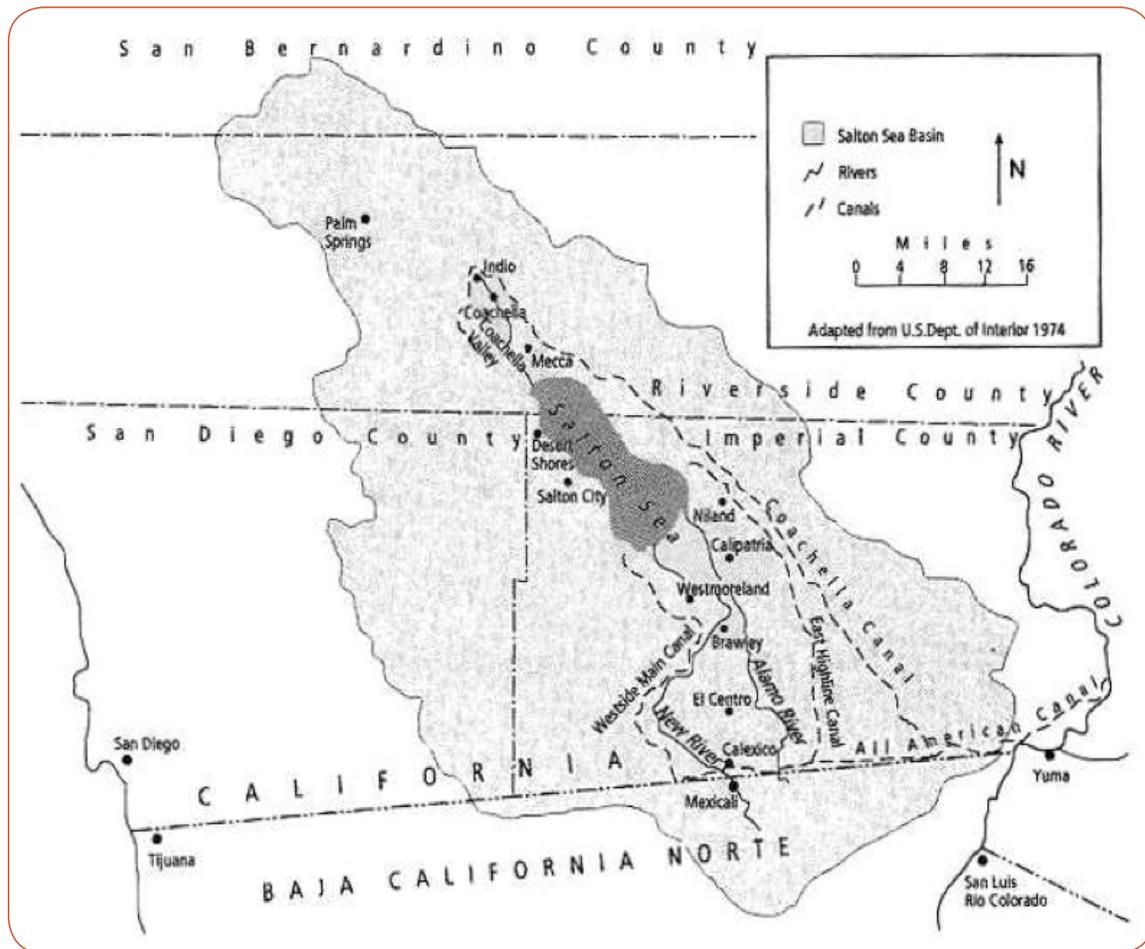


Figure 1: Map of the New River within the Salton Sea Transboundary Watershed (Cohen et al. 1999)