

Southwest High School



March 8, 2015

Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Board:

My name is Martha Delgado, I am a senior at Southwest High School. I am a citizen who is concerned about what the Imperial Irrigation District and the state of California is doing and what they might potentially do about the Salton Sea.

On July 1st, at the Bill Condit Auditorium in El Centro, CA, the issue of the water level of the Salton Sea receding was discussed. Air pollution reported that receding waters would uncover ground that contains toxic materials. This material would then be blown into dust storms caused by wind. These dust storms would and according to Air Pollution, already have been causing lung cancer and asthma. However, Air Pollution admitted that they “do not have the data to link lung cancer to the dust.” Air Pollution should not be claiming that dust from the Salton Sea is causing lung cancer when they have no evidence to support it. Mexicali on the other hand, is a city of 1 million people, as IID Director Matt Dessert pointed out. Mexico has very little pollution laws, people simply burn their garbage which releases toxic chemicals into the air. One can see the smog of polluted air drifting across the border every morning much more than dust from the Salton Sea.

Several speakers also expressed their concern that we should do something about the Salton Sea’s water level in order to save the wild life. This is not a valid reason because the Salton Sea was formed when a canal that brought water to the Imperial Valley overflowed. This makes it a manmade body of water. Therefore, the current habitat should never have been there in the first place.

The only solution to the “problem” at the Salton Sea that was presented during the meeting is to raise the water level. Not a bright idea considering that the water comes from farmers who grow the food on our plates and the fact that California is in a drought. Would pouring Colorado River water in the Salton Sea be a reasonable and beneficial use? From what I have heard from my research, sources, and knowledge as a resident of Imperial Valley, the answer is no.

I believe that the Salton Sea poses no danger to our health if it is allowed to dry up. But if we really must do something, it was suggested that we develop the exposed areas of the lakebed with geothermal plants. This would bring jobs to Imperial Valley as well as providing energy. That is the only solution that I can support in good conscience, although it is a solution to a problem that I believe does not exist. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely,

Martha Delgado

cc: Stephen W. Benson, Board President, Imperial Irrigation District
Ryan E. Kelley, Chairman of the Board, County of Imperial