



Members of the Board,

My name is Drew Story, and I am an environmental engineering doctoral candidate at UC Riverside. I, along with 8 of my colleagues, have spent the last 16 months attempting to educate and engage with the general public on the issues of the Salton Sea via an online blog (www.SaltonSeaSense.com). In that time, we have shared a great deal about the Sea's historical and present condition, and have tried to use our scientific knowledge to portray the Sea's complexities on our blog. Topics such as the ecological values, the public health concerns, the renewable energy potential, and water quality are a few examples of items we regularly discuss. We believe a well-informed public and government are absolutely crucial to avoiding the potentially disastrous conditions of the Sea if left to its own devices.

On behalf of the Salton Sea Sense team, I want to thank you for your continued and concentrated efforts towards remediation of the Sea. We believe the public health concerns are the foremost priority, and keeping water on the emissive playa is paramount to protecting the public. This is especially important from an environmental justice perspective, as the predominantly Hispanic and low-income populations surrounding the Salton Sea are already disproportionately affected by both economic instability and health hazards. We also believe protecting the natural ecosystems is crucial given the already dire conditions of much of the Pacific Flyway.

To that end, we are grateful for projects like the Red Hill Bay Restoration Project and we think comprehensively vetted plans like the IID's SSRREI proposal are more of what the Salton Sea needs; efforts that have immediate impacts while also considering longer term development and continued improvements. We expect you will hear a large amount of passionate messages during this workshop from members of the public who think they have the best solution or technology for saving the Salton Sea. And while the allure of grand and intuitive "solutions" can be mesmerizing, we urge you to remain focused on reasonable and short-term efforts to preserve and protect the Salton Sea. It, and millions of southern Californians, depend on your immediate actions.

Please let us know how we can be of any service to the Board or the Salton Sea.

Respectfully,

Drew Story
Editor in Chief, Salton Sea Sense