

SECTION 3.4

## **Land Use**

---

## 3.4 Land Use

### 3.4.1 Introduction and Summary

TABLE 3.41  
Summary of Land Use Impacts<sup>1</sup>

<b>Proposed Project: 300 KAFY All Conservation Measures</b>	<b>Alternative 1: No Project</b>	<b>Alternative 2: 130 KAFY On-farm Irrigation System Improvements Only</b>	<b>Alternative 3: 230 KAFY All Conservation Measures</b>	<b>Alternative 4: 300 KAFY Following Only</b>
<b>LOWER COLORADO RIVER</b>				
No impacts.	Continuation of existing conditions.	No impacts.	No impacts.	No impacts.
<b>IID WATER SERVICE AREA AND AAC</b>				
<b>HCP-IID-LU-1: Conversion of agricultural land for HCP (IID Water Service Area Portion). Less than significant impact.</b>	Continuation of existing conditions.	<b>Same as HCP-IID-LU-1.</b>	<b>Same as HCP-IID-LU-1.</b>	<b>Same as HCP-IID-LU-1.</b>
<b>SALTON SEA</b>				
No impacts.	Continuation of existing conditions.	No impacts.	No impacts.	No impacts.
<b>SDCWA SERVICE AREA</b>				
No impacts.	Continuation of existing conditions.	No impacts.	No impacts.	No impacts.

<sup>1</sup> Programmatic level analyses of USFWS' biological conservation measures in LCR subregion. Subsequent environmental documentation will be required if potential impacts are identified.

### 3.4.2 Regulatory Framework

#### 3.4.2.1 Federal Regulations and Standards

The California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan of 1980 (CDCA plan) and as amended in 1999 addresses land use for the 25-million-acre CDCA, which includes more than 12 million acres of public lands. The CDCA plan establishes goals for the protection and use of the public lands within the CDCA through designation of distinct multiple-use classes. The CDCA plan also addresses areas of critical environmental concern (ACECs) and special areas. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), in Section 103(a), defines an ACEC as an area "...within the public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards."

Other areas that possess rare, unique, or unusual qualities of scientific, educational, cultural, or recreational significance are designated as special areas. Through the designation of the multiple-use classes and management programs described above, the goal of the CDCA plan is to “provide for the use of the public lands, and resources of the CDCA, including economic, educational, scientific, and recreational uses, in a manner which enhances wherever possible—and does not diminish, on balance—the environmental, cultural, and aesthetic values of the Desert and its productivity.”

The Salton Sea and IID water service area and AAC geographic subregions are within the CDCA. These areas are designated as "private, state, or other Federally managed lands" and are considered unclassified land within the context of the CDCA plan. In addition, no ACECs or special areas are designated within these geographic subregions.

### 3.4.2.2 State Regulations and Standards

All cities and counties in California are required by the state legislature to adopt general plans (California Government Code §65300 *et seq.*). General plans are required to be comprehensive, long-term guides for the physical development of a county or city and any land outside a city or county boundary that is relevant to its planning decisions.

### 3.4.2.3 Local Regulations and Standards

#### REGIONAL PLANS

**Southern California Association of Governments**. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) conducts regional planning for land use and other activities within the IID water service area in association with local cities and counties of southern California. In 1996, SCAG adopted a Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) to help keep communities informed of other communities' land use decisions and broader regional trends.

The RCPG also compiles several planning documents from participating agencies and sets goals for initiatives related to the well-being of communities. Use of the information in local planning decisions is voluntary. A goal related to water supply notes that the use of reclamation, conservation, and water transfers for ensured supply is necessary to ensure a high standard of living and quality of life for communities in Southern California (SCAG 1996).

In addition to providing information that local communities can voluntarily use for land use decisionmaking, SCAG is the authorized regional agency for intergovernmental review of programs proposed for federal financial assistance and direct development activities. Additionally, SCAG reviews EIRs of projects of regional significance for consistency with regional plans.

**San Diego Association of Governments**. The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) serves as a forum for regional decisionmaking for 18 cities and counties in the San Diego Area. SANDAG's mission is to build consensus, make strategic plans, obtain and allocate resources, and provide information on a broad range of topics pertinent to the region's quality of life. SANDAG facilitates regional planning efforts in the areas of transportation, energy, land use planning, growth, the environment, and economic development.

## LOCAL PLANS

**Lower Colorado River.** Land use and development decisions within county and city jurisdictions along the LCR are guided by their respective general plans. Indian reservation lands are sovereign nations and are not subject to local land use controls (CVWD et al. 2002).

**Imperial County General Plan.** The Land Use Element of the Imperial County General Plan is the primary policy statement for implementing development policies in the unincorporated portions of the county (County of Imperial 1997a). The goals and policies in the Land Use Element promote the economic prominence of agricultural enterprises, determine appropriate urban development centers and encourage their economic development, protect the existing character of rural and recreational communities and areas, and preserve the unique natural and cultural resources of the Imperial Valley (County of Imperial 1997a).

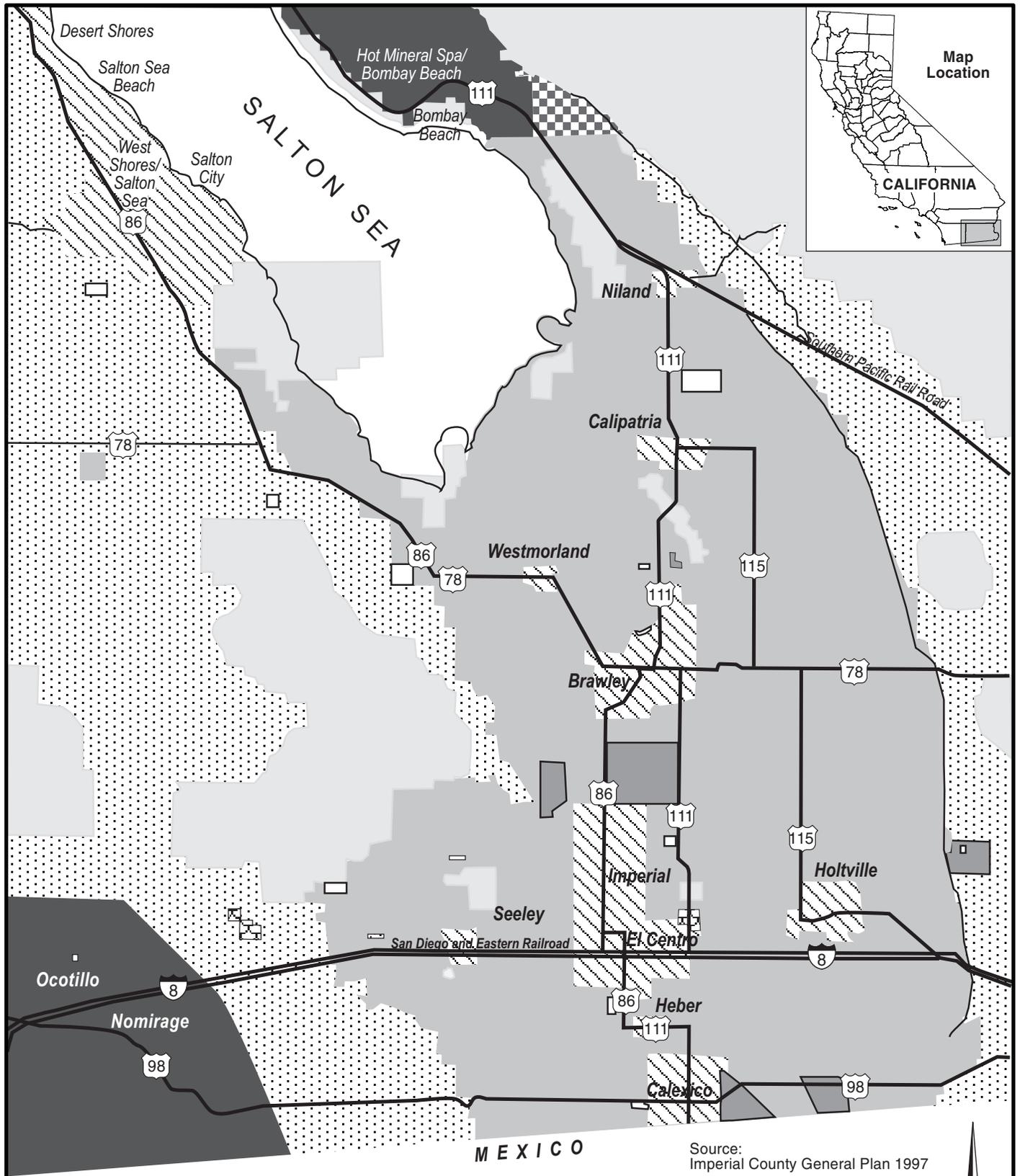
**Land Use Classifications.** The Imperial County General Plan includes nine land use classifications that group similar types of land uses (see Figure 3.4-1):

- Classification I: Agriculture
- Classification II: Community Area
- Classification III: Government/Special Public
- Classification IV: Industry Area
- Classification V: Recreation/Open Space
- Classification VI: Rural Residential
- Classification VII: Special Purpose Facility
- Classification VIII: Specific Plan
- Classification VIII: Urban Area

The plan also specifies permitted uses and standards for each classification.

**Salton Sea.** The Imperial County General Plan sets forth land use and planning guidance for the portion of the Salton Sea located in Imperial County (i.e., the southern two-thirds of the Sea). This plan is described above, under the LCR local plans. As shown in Figure 3.4-1, the area surrounding the southern two-thirds of the Salton Sea contains the following land use classifications: Agricultural, Urban Area, Community Area, and Rural Residential (County of Imperial 1997a).

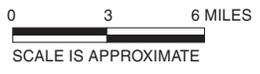
**Riverside County Comprehensive General Plan and Eastern Coachella Valley Plan.** Both the Riverside County Comprehensive General Plan (Riverside County 1984) and the Eastern Coachella Valley Plan (ECVP; Riverside County 1985) apply to the northern third of the Salton Sea and its surrounding area (i.e., the portion of the Salton Sea located within the jurisdiction of Riverside County). The Riverside County Comprehensive General Plan is the primary policy statement of goals and policies for guiding land use and development in the county through 2010.



**LEGEND**

COMMUNITY AREA	URBAN AREA
SPECIFIC PLAN AREA	INDUSTRY
AGRICULTURE	RECREATION/OPEN SPACE
GOVERNMENT/SPECIAL PUBLIC	RURAL/RESIDENTIAL
SPECIAL PURPOSE FACILITY	

Source: Imperial County General Plan 1997



**Figure 3.4-1**  
**General Plan Designations in the Imperial Valley**  
**and the Southern Portion of the Salton Sea**  
 IID Water Conservation and Transfer Project Final EIR/EIS

The Riverside County Comprehensive General Plan Land Use Element describes and implements the Land Use Determination System, which contains policies, procedures, and standards that describe the general distribution and general location and extent of land uses in the county (Riverside County 1984). The Land Use Determination System contains the following land use categories:

- Category I: Heavy Urban
- Category II: Urban
- Category III: Rural
- Category IV: Outlying Area
- Category V: Planned Community

The northern third of the Salton Sea and its surrounding area are located in the Lower Coachella Valley Planning Area. The predominant land use within this area is agriculture, including both dry farming and citriculture. A large portion of the Lower Coachella Valley Land Use Planning Area is vacant, nonirrigated desert (Riverside County 1984).

As shown in Figure 3.4-2, the northern third of the Salton Sea and surrounding area contains the following “Open Space and Conservation” classifications: Water Resources, Agriculture, and Parks/Forests. The area also contains the following land use classifications: Urban Residential and Commercial. The permitted uses and applicable policies for each classification are specified in the Riverside County Comprehensive General Plan and the ECVF.

### 3.4.3 Existing Setting

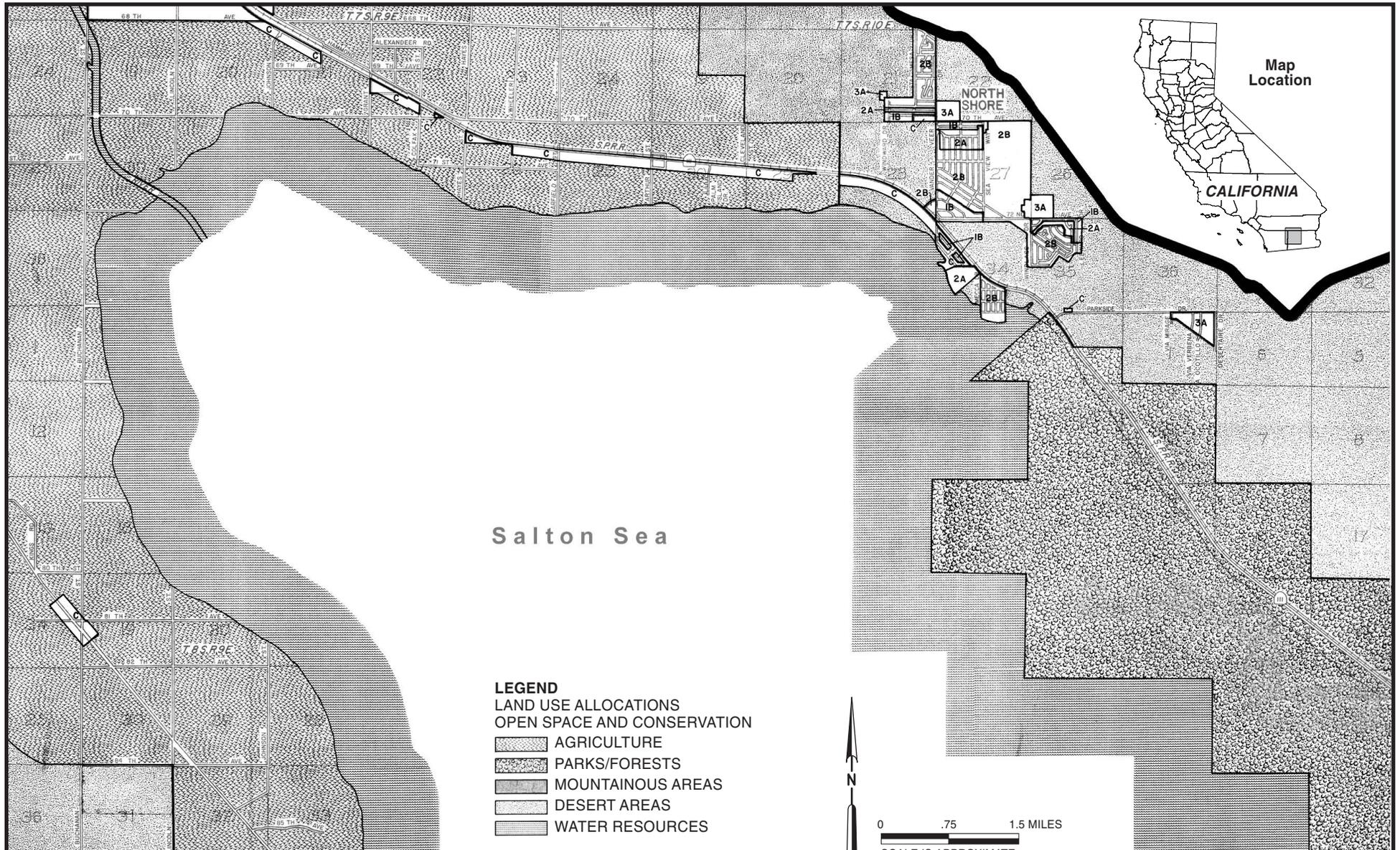
#### 3.4.3.1 Lower Colorado River

The LCR geographic subregion is located within San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial Counties in California. The majority of the subregion is undeveloped, with scattered suburban and rural development (CVWD et al. 2002). Population along the LCR exists in small clusters within the town sites of Palo Verde and Winterhaven. Flood control facilities located along the LCR include Laguna Dam, Imperial Dam, Senator Wash Dam, and Parker Dam (see Section 3.12 for further discussion of public facilities along the LCR). The LCR also supports water-related recreational resources and wildlife habitat for many native and migratory fish species. Recreation and wildlife habitat along the LCR are further discussed in Sections 3.6 and 3.2, respectively.

Land uses within the LCR geographic subregion are controlled by a number of jurisdictions, among them several Indian reservations (including the Fort Mohave Indian Reservation, Chemehuevi Indian Reservation, Colorado River Indian Reservation, and Yuma Project Reservation Division); BLM; the Counties of San Bernardino, Riverside, and Imperial in California; and several municipalities in California, including the cities of Needles and Blythe (CVWD et al. 2002).

#### 3.4.3.2 IID Water Service Area and AAC

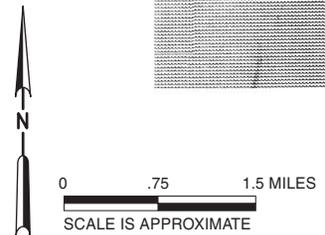
The IID water service area is and historically has been a predominantly agricultural area. Table 3.4-2 shows the existing land uses in the IID water service area in 2000.



Salton Sea

- LEGEND**  
 LAND USE ALLOCATIONS  
 OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION
- AGRICULTURE
  - PARKS/FORESTS
  - MOUNTAINOUS AREAS
  - DESERT AREAS
  - WATER RESOURCES

- LAND USE CATEGORIES
- 1B 8-14 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE
  - 2A 5-8 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE
  - 2B 2-5 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE
  - 3A 1-2 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE
  - C COMMERCIAL



Source:  
 Eastern Coachella Valley Plan 1985

**Figure 3.4-2**  
**General Plan Designations**  
 in the Northern Portion of the Salton Sea  
 IID Water Conservation and Transfer Project Final EIR/EIS

TABLE 3.4-2  
Existing Land Uses within IID Boundaries, 2000

Land Use	Acreage in 2000
Net Irrigated Area (includes cropland and reclaimed land)	462,137 acres
Area Farmable but not Farmed During the Year (fallowed land)	16,863 acres
<b>Total Area Farmable</b>	<b>479,000 acres</b>
Area of Farms in Homes, Feedlots, Corrals, Cotton Gins, Experimental Farms, and Industrial Areas	16,346 acres
Area in Cities, Towns, Airports, Cemeteries, Fairgrounds, Golf Courses, Recreational Parks, Lakes, and Rural Schools	26,013 acres
<b>Total Area Receiving Water</b>	<b>521,359 acres</b>
Area in Drains, Canals, Reservoirs, Rivers, Railroads, and Roads	73,650 acres
Area below -230 Salton Sea Reserve Boundary and Area Covered by Salton Sea, Less Area Receiving Water	40,150 acres
Area in Imperial Unit not Entitled to Water	63,933 acres
Undeveloped area of Imperial, West Mesa, East Mesa and Pilot Knob Units	277,629 acres
<b>Total Acreage Included – All Units</b>	<b>976,721 acres</b>
<b>Acreage Not Included – All Units<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>84,916 acres</b>
<b>Total Gross Acreage Within IID Boundaries</b>	<b>1,061,637 acres</b>

Source: IID 2000b

<sup>1</sup>Acreage within IID boundaries that is not included in IID

The majority of the land in the IID water service area is irrigated and farmable area. The developed area includes incorporated cities, unincorporated communities, and supporting facilities. The seven incorporated cities within the IID water service area are Calexico, Brawley, Calipatria, El Centro, Holtville, Imperial, and Westmorland. These areas contain approximately 75 percent of Imperial County’s population and are characterized by a full range of urban services – in particular, public water and sewer systems – as well as relatively broad range of residential, commercial, and industrial uses (County of Imperial 1997a). Agriculture-related communities in the IID water service area include the towns of Heber, Niland, and Seeley.

Most of the IID water service area is zoned for general agriculture. The unincorporated urban areas are zoned for residential, commercial, manufacturing, government, and open space/preservation land uses. Most of the area in the northernmost portion of the IID water service area, along the southern shore of the Salton Sea, is zoned “Open Space/ Preservation” (Zone S-1). According to Imperial County’s Title 9 Land Use Ordinance (County of Imperial 1998), “the purpose of the S-1 Zone is to designate areas that recognize the unique Open Space and Recreational character of Imperial County, including the deserts, mountain, and water front areas. Primarily the S-1 Zone is characterized by low-intensity human utilization and small-scale recreation related uses.”

As shown in Figure 3.4-3, land ownership by parcel in the IID water service area is in a checkerboard pattern. Landowners generally include Native American tribes, local municipalities, DPR, USFWS, BLM, NPS, CDFG, and the US military.

### 3.4.3.3 Salton Sea

The Salton Sea is located in both Riverside and Imperial Counties. One of the major functions of the Salton Sea is to serve as a sump for agricultural wastewater for the Imperial and Coachella Valleys. Executive Order of Withdrawal (Public Water Reserve No. 114, California No. 26), signed in 1928, designated lands within the Salton Basin below elevation 220 feet below msl as storage for wastes and seepage from irrigated lands in the Imperial Valley. The Sea is also a recreational resource for the region and state of California and a biological resource for fish and wildlife.

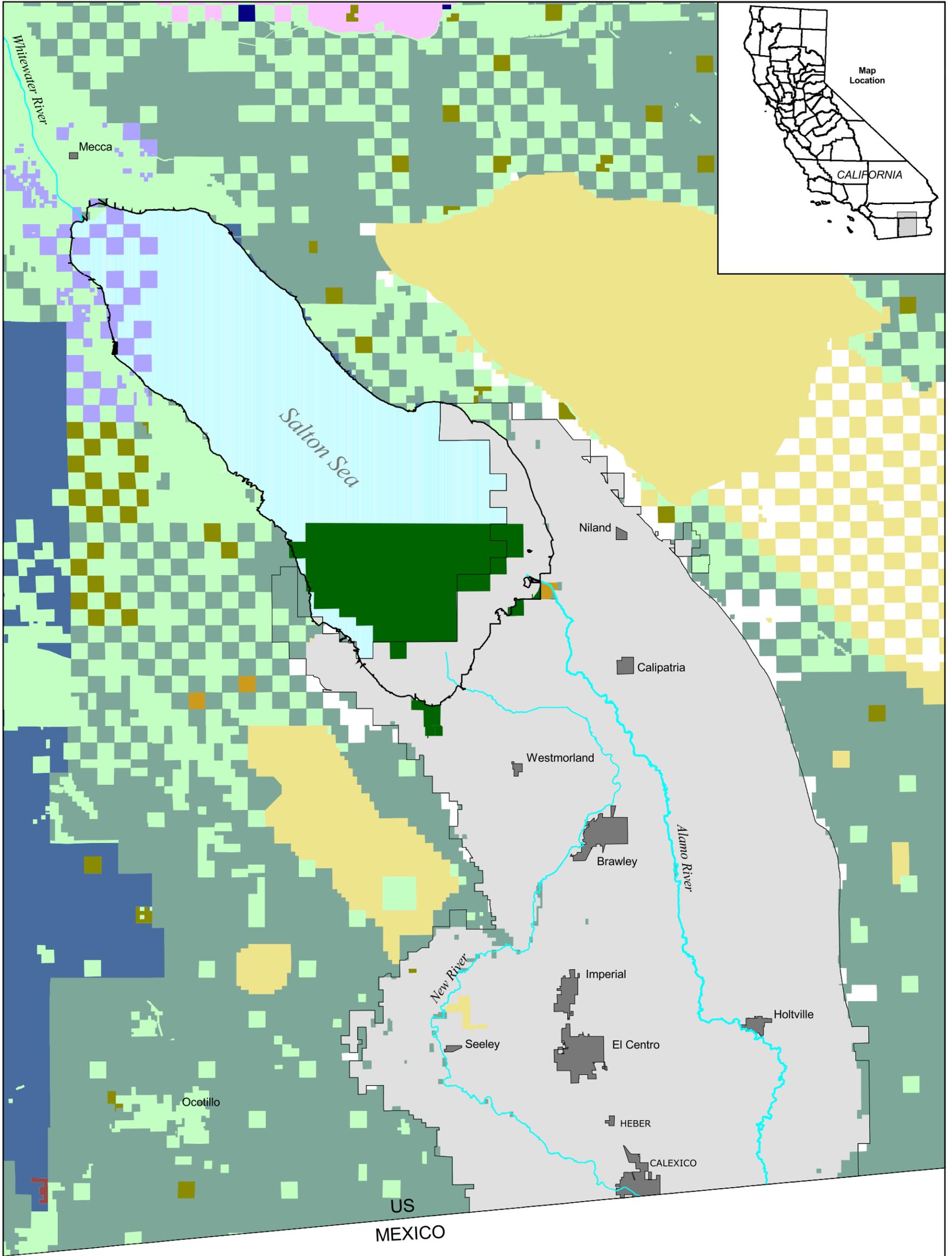
Urban land uses surrounding the Salton Sea consist primarily of unincorporated communities adjacent to the Sea or in the Coachella and Imperial Valleys (Salton Sea Authority [SSA] and Reclamation 2000). Mecca and North Shore are unincorporated communities located on the north side of the Salton Sea in Riverside County. Mecca and North Shore consist of scattered single-family homes, recreational vehicle (RV) parks, beaches, a marina, and scattered commercial uses (SSA and Reclamation 2000).

The West Shores/Salton City area in Imperial County extends along the western shore from the northern Imperial County line to the Salton Sea Test Base. Within this area are several unincorporated communities, such as Salton City, Vista Del Mar, Salton Sea Beach, and Desert Shores. These communities consist mostly of single-family homes, RV and trailer parks, marinas, and community services. Although a significant amount of the land area is subdivided, most of the residential lots are undeveloped (SSA and Reclamation 2000).

Hot Mineral Spa/Bombay Beach is an unincorporated community that extends along the east shore of the Sea, from the northern Imperial County line to Bombay Beach. Most urban land uses in this area are single-family homes and RV parks. Recreational facilities include a marina, campground, and mineral spas (SSA and Reclamation 2000). Commercial uses in the Salton Sea geographic subregion mostly provide services for tourists and area residents. Industrial uses mostly consist of geothermal power production.

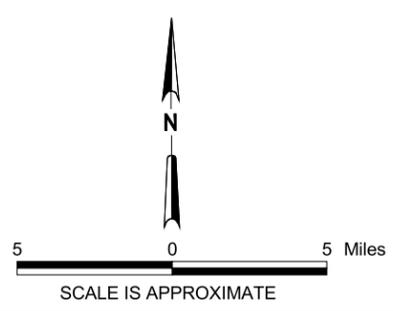
As shown in Figure 3.4-3, the area within and surrounding the Salton Sea is owned by diverse private and public entities. Most of this land is privately held and is urban commercial, agricultural, or desert land. Federal, state, and local agencies administer the balance of the geographic subregion. In addition, formation of the Sea resulted in the inundation of approximately 190,000 acres of public and private lands. Inundated lands have a checkerboard pattern of ownership (SSA and Reclamation 2000).

The United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is the principal federal landholder, administering approximately 68,000 dry-land acres. Military land withdrawals comprise approximately 7,945 dry-land acres and 13,642 in-Sea acres. The USFWS administers approximately 53,000 acres in and around the Salton Sea. The majority of inundated lands are federal lands administered by BLM or withdrawn by Reclamation. Additional inundated lands are public lands held as public water reserves (SSA and Reclamation 2000).



- TRIBAL LAND
- BLM
- CITY / COUNTY PARK
- CDFG
- MILITARY
- NPS
- CA DEPT P&R
- SLC LAND IN NPS
- SLC
- USFWS
- PRIVATE LAND
- SALTON SEA
- IMPERIAL VALLEY
- URBAN AREA
- RIVER

Sources:  
 University of Redlands, 1999;  
 DOI 1999; and Reclamation, 1999



**Figure 3.4-3**  
**Land Ownership by Parcel**  
**in the Imperial Valley and**  
**Salton Sea**  
 IID Water Conservation and  
 Transfer Project Final EIR/EIS

Privately owned lands comprise the majority of the area around the Sea (approximately 220,000 acres). These lands are owned by numerous individual entities, including IID and the Torres Martinez band of the Cahuilla Desert Indian Tribe. The Torres Martinez Tribe holds approximately 13,000 acres of land north and west of the Sea. These holdings are interspersed with private holdings and BLM land and are held in trust by the US Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The Sea also submerges approximately 10,000 acres of tribal lands. IID and other private entities also own substantial areas of inundated land (SSA and Reclamation 2000).

### 3.4.4 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

#### 3.4.4.1 Methodology

All alternatives were compared against existing land use to assess consistency with general land use patterns. Additionally, the Proposed Project and Alternatives were compared with the existing land use plans, policies, and controls outlined above in Section 3.4.3 to identify any potential inconsistencies. Because the construction aspects of the Proposed Project and Alternatives are consistent with existing on-farm operations in the Imperial Valley, use of land during construction has not been analyzed.

**Subregions Excluded From Impact Analysis.** It is assumed that within the SDCWA service area, no land use impacts would occur because no new facilities would be constructed and the transfer would not conflict with any land use plans or affect zoning.

#### 3.4.4.2 Significance Criteria

The Proposed Project and/or Alternatives would have a significant impact on land use if they:

- Physically divide an established community.
- Conflict with any applicable land use plan or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.
- Conflict with any applicable HCP or natural community conservation plan.

#### 3.4.4.3 Proposed Project

##### LOWER COLORADO RIVER

##### Water Conservation and Transfer

No land use impacts would occur in the LCR subregion as a result of the water conservation and transfer.

##### Biological Conservation Measures in USFWS' Biological Opinion

Implementation of the biological conservation measures, although they would increase habitat for the listed species, may also result in temporary impacts on vegetation, fish, and wildlife species through physical activities such as dredging, removal of salt cedar by mechanical or other means, and conversion of agricultural lands to native habitat. These impacts are addressed at a general level in the IA EIS because specific areas where these conservation measures would occur have not been identified. Site-specific studies and

subsequent environmental documentation would be conducted as needed and mitigation measures identified prior to the actual implementation of the conservation measures (Reclamation 2001c).

*Impacts resulting from implementation of the biological conservation measures would be the same for Alternatives 2, 3, and 4; therefore, they are not discussed under each Alternative.*

## **IID WATER SERVICE AREA AND AAC**

### **Water Conservation and Transfer**

**Use of Agricultural Land for Conservation via On-farm Irrigation and Water Delivery System Measures.** The Proposed Project would be consistent with adopted land use plans and policies. The Project would maintain agricultural land use in the region, a goal of both the Land Use and Agricultural Elements of the Imperial County General Plan (Goal 1 of both elements). One objective of the Proposed Project for IID is to protect its historic Colorado River water rights, which provide the essential resource required for agricultural production. Changes in land use within these areas, such as temporary construction of conservation facilities within the IID water service area, would not conflict with the management and protection goals of the CDCA plan. Construction of some water conservation measures, such as reservoir and lateral interceptors, might require conversion of some farmland to accommodate the facilities, but the amount of agricultural land required would be minimal. Agricultural zoning would be maintained.

**Use of Agricultural Land for Conservation via Fallowing.** Under the Proposed Project, fallowing could be implemented as a conservation measure to create water for transfer. If fallowing were the sole conservation measure implemented, up to 50,000 acres could be fallowed to conserve water for transfer. If fallowing were implemented in combination with other conservation measures, the acreage fallowed would be less, in proportion to the amount of water conserved by this method.

Fallowed acreage is not expected to be permanently taken out of production and could be rotated back into production; however, non-rotational fallowing of agricultural land could be used to conserve water for transfer. Regardless of the specific fallowing method, no land use impacts would occur because the Proposed Project would not change agricultural zoning and, therefore, it would not conflict with an adopted, local land use plan. Fallowing land would also not divide an established community because fallowed land is consistent with surrounding agricultural land uses. Agricultural impacts associated with fallowing are also discussed in Section 3.5, Agricultural Resources.

### **Inadvertent Overrun and Payback Policy (IOP)**

**Conversion of Agricultural Land for IOP Payback.** Conservation of 59 KAFY for the IOP can be accomplished via fallowing or other conservation measures. This conservation would be in addition to the (up to) 300 KAFY proposed for transfer under the Project. If fallowing were the sole conservation measure implemented, about 9,800 acres would be required in addition to the maximum of 50,000 acres required for conservation for transfer. As described above, fallowed acreage is not expected to be permanently taken out of production and could be rotated back into production; however, non-rotational fallowing of agricultural land could be used to conserve water for transfer. Regardless of the specific fallowing method, no land use impacts would occur because the Proposed Project would

not change agricultural zoning and, therefore, it would not conflict with an adopted, local land use plan. Fallowing land would also not divide an established community because fallowed land is consistent with surrounding agricultural land uses.

*Impacts resulting from the implementation of the IOP would be the same for Alternatives 2, 3, and 4; therefore, they are not discussed under each Alternative.*

#### **Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP-IID) (IID Water Service Area Portion)**

##### **Impact HCP-IID-LU-1: Conversion of Agricultural Land for HCP (IID Water Service Area Portion).**

The Proposed HCP includes provisions for creating new drainage canals, managed marsh habitat, and native forest habitat. These activities could potentially involve up to approximately 700 acres for the term of the Project. If these HCP components were located on federal property, no change in land use or zoning would need to occur. However, if the components were located on existing farmland, the zoning may need to change to Recreational/Open Space. This change would represent a less than significant land use impact because a managed marsh is by and large consistent with agricultural land uses. (Less than significant impact.)

*Impacts resulting from the implementation of HCP-IID component would be the same for Alternatives 2, 3, and 4; therefore, they are not discussed under those Alternatives.*

#### **Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy (HCP-SS)**

**Conversion of Agricultural Land for HCP.** Up to 30,500 acres would need to be fallowed to implement the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy if fallowing within the IID water service area is used as the sole measure to provide mitigation water. In addition to or in lieu of fallowing, other conservation measures could be implemented to conserve water for mitigation.

Fallowed acreage is not expected to be permanently taken out of production and could be rotated back into production; however, non-rotational fallowing of agricultural land could be used to conserve water for transfer. Regardless of the specific fallowing method, no land use impacts would occur because the Proposed Project would not change agricultural zoning and, therefore, it would not conflict with an adopted, local land use plan. Fallowing land would also not divide an established community because fallowed land is consistent with surrounding agricultural land uses.

Table 2-7 in Section 2 shows the total number of acres that could be fallowed under the Proposed Project and Alternatives, if fallowing within the IID water service area is used as the sole method for providing water for IOP payback and for mitigation water associated with the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy. As reflected in that table, under the Proposed Project, up to 90,300 acres could be fallowed, if fallowing was the sole method used for generating water for conservation and transfer, IOP payback, and mitigation water for the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy.

## **SALTON SEA**

### **Water Conservation and Transfer**

**Conversion of Land Use from Decline in Salton Sea Elevation.** Existing land use around the Sea is designated as open space, agricultural, or rural residential. Some of the lands surrounding the Sea are specifically designated for recreational purposes (such as fishing and

birdwatching). Over the term of the Proposed Project, these activities may decline (as compared to the Baseline) as water quality in the Sea changes and the shoreline recedes. Table 3.4-3 shows the anticipated decline in elevation and surface area for the Baseline, Proposed Project, and Alternatives. These fluctuations in elevation would expose areas of the Seabed in the north and south shores. Figure 3.4-4 illustrates the extent of receding shoreline resulting from full-term implementation of the Proposed Project, including implementation of the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy. No conflicts with adopted land use plans would occur as a result of the decline in the Sea's elevation because the Proposed Project does not include the rezoning of the exposed Seabed. Also, the exposed Seabed would remain a recreational amenity.

TABLE 3.4-3

Projected Surface Area and Elevation of the Salton Sea for the Baseline and Alternatives

Project Year	Proposed Project		Baseline and Alternative 1 No Project		Alternative 2 130 KAFY On-farm Irrigation System Improvements Only		Alternative 3 230 KAFY All Conservation Measures		Alternative 4 300 KAFY Following Only	
	Elevation (ft msl)	Surface Area (K acres/sq miles)	Elevation (ft msl)	Surface Area (K acres/sq miles)	Elevation (ft msl)	Surface Area (K acres/sq miles)	Elevation (ft msl)	Surface Area (K acres/sq miles)	Elevation (ft msl)	Surface Area (K acres/sq miles)
2002	-228	233/364	-228	233/364	-228	233/364	-228	233/364	-228	233/364
2077	-250	167/261	-235	217/339	-242	195/305	-247	178/278	-241	201/314

Source: Reclamation 2001b

### Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy (HCP-SS)

Under the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy evaluated in this Final EIR/EIS (which assumes only following within the IID water service area is used to conserve water for transfer and additional following is used to develop mitigation water), environmental impacts to the Salton Sea caused by other components of the Proposed Project would be offset, and thus land-use impacts of exposed shoreline caused by the Project would be avoided. The actions to implement the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy will be conducted within the IID water service area subregion. Therefore, no land use impacts in the Salton Sea subregion would occur resulting from implementation of the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy. Table 3.4-4 shows the anticipated decline in elevation and surface area for the Baseline, Proposed Project, and Alternatives with implementation of the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy.

#### 3.4.4.4 Alternative 1: No Project Alternative

##### LOWER COLORADO RIVER

The No Project Alternative would maintain current land uses in the LCR subregion over the projected period of analysis, thereby avoiding conflicts with adopted, local land use plans. No water conservation and transfer, biological conservation measures, or IOP would be implemented.

TABLE 3.4.4

Projected Surface Area and Elevation of the Salton Sea for the Baseline and Alternatives (with implementation of the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy)

Project Year	Proposed Project: 300 KAFY All Conservation Measures		Baseline and Alternative 1: No Project		Alternative 2: 130 KAFY On-farm Irrigation System Improvements Only		Alternative 3: 230 KAFY All Conservation Measures		Alternative 4: 300 KAFY Fallowing Only	
	Elevation (ft msl)	Surface Area (K acres/ sq miles)	Elevation (ft msl)	Surface Area (K acres/ sq miles)	Elevation (ft msl)	Surface Area (K acres/ sq miles)	Elevation (ft msl)	Surface Area (K acres/ sq miles)	Elevation (ft msl)	Surface Area (K acres/ sq miles)
2002	-228	233/364	-228	233/364	-228	233/364	-228	233/364	-228	233/364
2077	-250	169/264	-235	217/339	-242	195/305	-246	178/278	-240	201/314

Source: Reclamation 2001b

Note: Elevations rounded to the nearest foot. Acres rounded to the nearest thousand acres. Square miles rounded to the nearest mile.

## IID WATER SERVICE AREA AND AAC

The No Project Alternative would maintain current land use practices in the IID water service area subregion, thereby avoiding conflicts with adopted, local land use plans.

## SALTON SEA

In the Salton Sea subregion, the Sea's water elevation would decline as shown in Table 3.4-3 above. The decline may affect recreational land uses currently occurring in the subregion.

### 3.4.4.5 Alternative 2 (A2): Water Conservation and Transfer of Up to 130 KAFY to SDCWA (On-farm Irrigation System Improvements as Exclusive Conservation Measure)

## IID WATER SERVICE AREA AND AAC

### Water Conservation and Transfer

Water conservation and transfer for Alternative 2 would not result in any impacts to land use. On-farm irrigation system improvements would be implemented to conserve up to 130 KAFY. No conflicts with adopted, local land use plans would occur and the conservation facilities would not divide any established communities.

### Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy (HCP-SS)

Conversion of Agricultural Land for HCP. Mitigation water for the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy could be generated via fallowing within the IID water service area, but other sources of water could be used as described in Section 2.2.6.7. If fallowing within the IID water service area is used, up to 40,600 acres would be required to meet the obligations of the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy.

Fallowed acreage is not expected to be permanently taken out of production and could be rotated back into production; however, non-rotational fallowing of agricultural land could be used to conserve water for transfer. No land-use impacts would occur because the use of fallowing to implement the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy would not change

agricultural zoning, and, therefore, it would not conflict with an adopted, local land-use plan. Fallowing land would also not divide an established community because fallowed land is consistent with surrounding agricultural land uses.

## **SALTON SEA**

### **Water Conservation and Transfer**

Conversion of Land Use from Decline in Salton Sea Elevation. Table 3.4-3 shows the decline of the Sea's elevation under this Alternative as compared to the Baseline. These fluctuations in elevation would expose areas of the Seabed in the north and south shores. Figure 3.4-4 illustrates the extent of receding shoreline resulting from full-term implementation of the Proposed Project, including implementation of the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy. No conflicts with adopted land use plans would occur as a result of the decline in the Sea's elevation because the Proposed Project does not include the rezoning of the exposed Seabed. Also, the exposed Seabed would remain a recreational amenity.

#### **3.4.4.6 Alternative 3 (A3): Water Conservation and Transfer of Up To 230 KAFY to SDCWA, CVWD, and/or MWD (All Conservation Measures)**

## **IID WATER SERVICE AREA AND AAC**

### **Water Conservation and Transfer**

Conversion of Agricultural Land for Conservation: As with the Proposed Project, fallowing could constitute between none and all of the conservation implemented for transfer. If fallowing within the IID water service area is used to develop the water to be conserved and transferred, up to 38,300 acres would be required. If the maximum amount of fallowing were implemented, there would be no impact to land use as there would be no conflict with adopted plans and policies.

### **Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy (HCP-SS)**

Conversion of Agricultural Land for HCP. Mitigation water for the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy could be generated via fallowing within the IID water service area, but other sources of water could be used as described in Section 2.2.6.7. If fallowing is used to provide mitigation water, then under Alternative 3, up to 67,300 acres could be fallowed to implement the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy if on-farm or system-based conservation measures are used to conserve water for transfer. If fallowing within the IID water service area is used to conserve water for transfer, then an additional 25,100 acres would be required to be fallowed to meet the obligations of the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy.

Fallowed acreage for implementation of the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy is not expected to be permanently taken out of production and could be rotated back into production; however, non-rotational fallowing of agricultural land could be used to conserve water for transfer. No land use impacts would occur because the use of fallowing to implement the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy would not change agricultural zoning, and, therefore, it would not conflict with an adopted, local land use plan. Fallowing land would also not divide an established community because fallowed land is consistent with surrounding agricultural land uses.

## SALTON SEA

### Water Conservation and Transfer

Conversion of Land Use from Decline in Salton Sea Elevation. Table 3.4-3 shows the decline of the Sea's elevation under this Alternative as compared to the Baseline. These fluctuations in elevation would expose areas of the Seabed in the north and south shores. Figure 3.4-4 illustrates the extent of receding shoreline resulting from full-term implementation of the Proposed Project, including implementation of the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy. No conflicts with adopted land use plans would occur as a result of the decline in the Sea's elevation because the Proposed Project does not include the rezoning of the exposed Seabed. Also, the exposed Seabed would remain a recreational amenity.

#### 3.4.4.7 Alternative 4 (A4): Water Conservation and Transfer of Up To 300 KAFY to SDCWA, CVWD, and/or MWD (Fallowing As Exclusive Conservation Measure)

### IID WATER SERVICE AREA

#### Water Conservation and Transfer

Conversion of Agricultural Land for Conservation. Alternative 4 would remove up to 50,000 acres of land from active agricultural production to generate water for transfer. As described under the Proposed Project, fallowed acreage is not expected to be permanently taken out of production and could be rotated back into production; however, non-rotational fallowing of agricultural land could be used to conserve water for transfer. Regardless of the specific fallowing method, no land use impacts would occur because the Proposed Project would not change agricultural zoning and, therefore, it would not conflict with an adopted, local land use plan. Fallowing land would also not divide an established community because fallowed land is consistent with surrounding agricultural land uses. Agricultural impacts associated with fallowing are also discussed in Section 3.5, Agricultural Resources.

#### Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy (HCP-SS)

Conversion of Agricultural Land for HCP. Mitigation water for the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy could be generated via fallowing within the IID water service area, but other sources of water could be used as described in Section 2.2.6.7. If fallowing is used to provide mitigation water, up to 30,500 acres could be fallowed to implement the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy. This would result in up to 90,300 acres being fallowed, if fallowing within the IID water service area were the sole method used for generating water for conservation and transfer, IOP payback, and mitigation water for the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy.

Fallowed acreage is not expected to be permanently taken out of production and could be rotated back into production; however, permanent fallowing of agricultural land could be used to conserve water for transfer. No land-use impacts would occur because the use of fallowing to implement the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy would not change agricultural zoning, and, therefore, it would not conflict with an adopted, local land-use plan. Fallowing land would also not divide an established community because fallowed land is consistent with surrounding agricultural land uses.

## SALTON SEA

### Water Conservation and Transfer

Conversion of Land Use from Decline in Salton Sea Elevation. Table 3.4-3 shows the decline of the Sea's elevation under this Alternative as compared to the Baseline. These fluctuations in elevation would expose areas of the Seabed in the north and south shores. Figure 3.4-4 illustrates the extent of receding shoreline resulting from full-term implementation of the Proposed Project, including implementation of the Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy). No conflicts with adopted land use plans would occur as a result of the decline in the Sea's elevation because the Proposed Project does not include the rezoning of the exposed Seabed. Also, the exposed Seabed would remain a recreational amenity.