

SECTION 10.8

Comments and Responses for Public Hearings

10.8 Comments and Responses for Public Hearings

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P1

EIR/EIS Public Hearing Transcript

La Quinta, CA

April 2, 2002

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IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT
WATER CONSERVATION AND TRANSFER PROJECT
DRAFT EIR/EIS PUBLIC HEARING
LA QUINTA, CALIFORNIA

DATE: TUESDAY, APRIL 2ND, 2002

PLACE: IID BOARD ROOM
81-600 AVENUE 58
LA QUINTA, CALIFORNIA

REPORTER: LANA KIESER, CSR. NO. 12100

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APPEARANCES:

JOAN CARD:

Attorney Advisor,

U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Solicitor

JESSE P. SILVA:

General Manger, Imperial Irrigation District

BILL RINNE:

Deputy Regional Director, U.S. Department of the Interior

Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado Region

CAROL ROBERTS:

Salton Sea Coordinator, Carlsbad office of the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

MICHAEL CONCANNON:

Senior Project Manager, CH2M Hill

1 LA QUINTA, CALIFORNIA

2 APRIL 2ND, 2002

3 5:05 P.M.

4
5 MS. CARD: If everyone would please take their
6 seats. It's time to begin this public hearing. On behalf
7 of the Bureau of Reclamation and the Fish and Wildlife
8 Service, I'd like to welcome each of you here this
9 evening. We are looking forward to receiving your
10 comments on the draft Environmental Impact
11 Report/Environmental Impact Statement, or EIR/EIS, for the
12 Imperial Irrigation District Water Conservation and
13 Transfer Project and draft Habitat Conservation Plan or
14 HCP. These hearings are being held in compliance with
15 National Environmental Policy Act or NEPA.

16 My name is Joan Card, and I'm an attorney for
17 the Department of the Interior's Office of the Solicitor
18 in Phoenix. I will be the presiding officer for tonight's
19 hearing.

20 The purpose of this hearing is to receive public
21 comments, views and suggestions about the EIR/EIS,
22 particularly the adequacy with which the EIR/EIS
23 identifies and describes the potential impacts associated
24 with implementing the Water Conservation and Transfer
25 Project and the HCP.

1 The draft EIR/EIS was filed with the
2 Environmental Protection Agency on January 18th, 2002.
3 Copies were distributed to affected and interested
4 agencies, organizations and individuals and have been
5 available for public review since that date.

6 If you do not already have a copy and would like
7 one, there are a limited number of complete copies of the
8 draft EIR/EIS on compact disc versions, and the printed
9 executive summaries of the document are available at the
10 sign-in desk tonight. If you need a printed copy of the
11 entire document, please leave your name and address at the
12 sign-in desk.

13 I'd like to introduce the people that are here
14 tonight to hear your comments. Sitting next to me is
15 Jessie Silva, general manager for the Imperial Irrigation
16 District. Next to him is Mr. Bill Rinne, the deputy
17 regional director for the Bureau of Reclamation, Lower
18 Colorado Regional Office. Next to him is Carol Roberts,
19 Salton Sea coordinator for the Carlsbad office of the
20 United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

21 There are several staff members and
22 representatives here from IID and it's consulting firm,
23 CH2M Hill. I'll ask these folks to stand now. After the
24 hearing, these people will be available for informal
25 discussion related to the draft EIR/EIS.

1 We understand that IID held a workshop here on
2 February 28th to provide a brief summary of the proposed
3 project and to answer questions regarding the document and
4 its findings. Tonight we are here to listen to your views
5 and opinions.

6 We have a reporter present tonight who will make
7 a verbatim transcript of these proceedings. We also have
8 a Spanish-speaking interpreter here. Anyone who would
9 like to hear the proceedings in Spanish should move up to
10 the interpreter's table up front and put on a headset. A
11 headset will be provided.

12 I want to emphasize that we are having this
13 hearing to obtain your views only. To do this, the
14 following guidelines should be observed. First, please
15 confine your statements to your views on the alternatives
16 and the adequacy of the draft EIR/EIS and the draft HCP.

17 Second, this hearing is designed for you to
18 provide views and information to the Bureau of Reclamation
19 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. No discussion or
20 debate on the record will be allowed. If you have any
21 questions about the draft EIR/EIS, please remember that
22 the project staff from IID, the Bureau of Reclamation, the
23 Fish and Wildlife Service and CH2M Hill will be available
24 after the hearing is adjourned.

25 Third, while in this session, all spoken

1 statements will be reported by the reporter and no one
2 will be recognized to speak other than those who wish to
3 present statements. Only one person may speak at a time.
4 Please speak clearly for the benefit of the reporter and
5 the translator. Also, clapping, booing or other such
6 outbursts are not appropriate and will not be reflected in
7 the record.

8 Statements made at this meeting as well as all
9 written comments received on or before April 26th, 2002,
10 will be carefully considered by the Bureau of Reclamation
11 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in finalizing the
12 EIR/EIS and making a Record of Decision or issuing an
13 incidental take permit pursuant to Section 10 of the
14 Endangered Species Act.

15 Fourth, each statement will be limited to five
16 minutes, not including time used for translating into
17 English. Speakers are not allowed to reserve any extra
18 time for another speaker. Mr. Bruce Ellis, sitting next
19 to Ms. Roberts, will serve as a timer. He will raise a
20 white card when you have 30 seconds remaining. He will
21 raise an orange card when 10 seconds are remaining. I
22 will stop your presentation when your time is up.

23 We intend to proceed first with those
24 participants who have already submitted a speaker card.
25 Speakers not present when initially called, will be called

1 at the end of the list. If time permits, others will be
2 given an opportunity to speak following the registered
3 speakers, and additional comments may be received from the
4 previous speakers. If you would like the assistance of an
5 interpreter, please indicate this on the speaker card or
6 let me know before you begin.

7 It would be most helpful to the reporter if we
8 can obtain a copy of any prepared statement that you may
9 be reading from. Please be sure that any written
10 statement that you submit includes your name, address and
11 the organization you represent, if any.

12 When you're called upon to speak, please hand me
13 a copy of your statement, if you have one. Then please
14 clearly pronounce your name and identify any organization
15 that you are representing before beginning your
16 statement. If you have not filled out a speaker card,
17 please spell your name slowly for the record.

18 At this point we'll proceed to give everyone who
19 wants to speak that opportunity. To minimize delays, I
20 will announce the current speaker as well as the two
21 speakers to follow. Once your name is called, please move
22 up towards the microphone and be ready to speak when it is
23 your turn.

24 It looks like we have a number of speaker cards.
25 Anybody else have any other cards? Okay. So we have

1 Mark Nichols, and then we'll hear from Sergio Nunez. I
2 have two speaker cards for Mark Nichols. I assume there's
3 only one.

4 MR. NICHOLS: There was only one that I put in
5 there, so I'm not sure.

6 MS. CARD: So Mark Nichols, Sergio Nunez and Chuck
7 Friedly. Okay.

8 MR. NICHOLS: Okay. Well, thank you. I did have
9 some statements or some notes that were prepared for me by
10 somebody, but I apologize, because I rarely read from the
11 notes, but I use them to work off of. I want to start by
12 thanking you for having the opportunity, Madame Chair, and
13 other members of the task force today for taking the
14 testimony.

15 My name is Mark Nichols, and I'm the chief
16 executive officer for the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians,
17 a federally-recognized tribe in the Coachella Valley. We
18 have a piece of property that's a square mile,
19 approximately three miles or so from the shoreline, and we
20 have no direct economic interest for property on the
21 shoreline itself.

22 Ours is really one of a custodial and a trustee
23 relationship to the area in general on how we approach
24 this problem, and also as a member of the Coachella Valley
25 Association of Governments or that body of governments

Response to Comment P1-1

In response to comments, the text of Sections 3.9 and 3.15 have been revised. The changes are indicated in Sections 3.9 and 3.15 of this Final EIR/EIS.

Response to Comment P1-2

Without a specific reference to a part of the Draft EIR/EIS, this comment is too general to respond to. Comment noted. Also refer to the Master Response on *Biology - Approach to Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy* in Section 9 of this Final EIR/EIS.

Response to Comment P1-3

See response to Comment P1-2.

Response to Comment P1-4

SWRCB has considered the issue of whether the public trust doctrine requires that agricultural drainage water be supplied to the Salton Sea: "The public trust doctrine is based upon the state's ownership of navigable waterways and underlying lands as trustee for the benefit of the people. (Citation omitted.) Upon its admission to the Union in 1850, California acquired title as trustee to navigable waterways and underlying lands. (Citation omitted.) No such title or public trust easement was acquired to the property underlying the present Salton Sea since the Sea was not created until 1905. Therefore, regardless of the extent to which the public trust doctrine may or may not apply to an artificial body of water, it is apparent that the doctrine does not justify continued inundation of property to which no public trust easement attaches." SWRCB Order 84-12, footnote 1.

1 that are administrating the upper Coachella Valley for the
2 sake of the citizens.

3 We are here basically because of our deep
4 concern on public health issues that have ranged locally,
5 statewide and in other parts of even the globe, as they
6 relate to indigenous people. We believe that it is
7 important for us to maintain a strong ecosystem, and that
8 this ecosystem, of course, includes human life as well.
9 Oftentimes, it's sort of left out of the equation.

10 We believe that the issues that have surrounded
11 and revolved around the Salton Sea have come to be defined
12 as those of pollution. That, in fact, the most imminent
13 threat that there is for the Salton Sea are these
14 transfers themselves, and that the appropriate tactic is
15 to, first of all, be sure that we are not exasperating the
16 issue. After all, the Sea has survived for many decades,
17 and we would argue, literally for thousands of years if
18 you look at the multiple stands of water.

19 Our relationship to the body of water is one of
20 continuity, and it is not necessarily looked at as it
21 relates to an agricultural repository for water. We
22 believe that by transferring the water, we are in essence
23 contravening a public trust doctrine, and that the water
24 in the Sea has become a natural resource for the state of
25 California, certainly for us locally, and for that matter

P1-1

P1-2

P1-3

P1-4

Response to Comment P1-5

In the absence of the Proposed Project, the shoreline of the Salton Sea is projected to decline. Water conservation and transfer under the Proposed Project would accelerate the rate of decline and result in a lower shoreline at equilibrium. As explained under Impact BR - 49, shoreline habitat would continue to be available for birds at lower surface elevations, and analysis of available bathymetric data suggests that the amount of shallow water habitat could increase. As a result, adverse impacts to birds from a decline in the water surface elevation are not expected.

The Salton Sea model developed by Reclamation was used to project salinity in the Salton Sea under the Project Alternatives and Baseline condition. This model took into consideration factors influencing evaporative losses (including weather conditions and the size of the Salton Sea) in predicting salinity.

The HCP-SS in the HCP would avoid significant impacts to biological resources from the Proposed Project by offsetting project-related reductions in inflow to the Salton Sea. This strategy would avoid the acceleration in salinization attributable to the Proposed Project and resultant responses of biological resources until the point at which fish would no longer be supported under the baseline. See Master Response for *Biology—Approach to the Salton Sea Conservation Strategy* in Section 9 of this Final EIR/EIS.

Response to Comment P1-6

Please refer to the Master Response on *Air Quality—Salton Sea Air Quality Monitoring and Mitigation Plan* in Section 9 of this Final EIR/EIS.

1 at an international magnitude because of the use of the
2 area by the wildlife and birds, particularly in their
3 migratory patterns.

4 It's been well-documented that the state of
5 California has had a tremendous loss of its wetlands, and
6 this is a critical element within that fly-way zone. We
7 are not supportive of the water transfer if it, in fact,
8 changes the shoreline for the lake -- or the Sea. That's
9 consistent with a resolution that was adopted by CVAG, the
10 Coachella Valley Association of Governments, as well as
11 ourselves. We believe that any transfer needs to mitigate
12 and/or address maintaining its shoreline.

13 We believe that not only will this upset the
14 important areas for the bird life, but that there is an
15 unquantifiable impact potentially on the fisheries as a
16 result of having a decrease in water levels, and by a
17 potential increase in the temperature of the water.
18 Therefore, putting it potentially into a situation where
19 you have even accelerated evaporation.

20 There are a lot of arguments on that issue on
21 both sides, but we don't think that that has been resolved
22 to a point to where it would be intelligent for us as, if
23 you will, a species, for that matter, to take a gamble on
24 what that modeling might look like at this early stage.

25 We also believe that as a result of exposing

P1-4

P1-5

P1-6

Response to Comment P1-7

In accordance with CEQA and NEPA guidelines, the Project has conducted several public involvement activities to solicit input from federal, state, and regional local agencies, as well as the general public, on the scope of the Project, potential impacts, and adequacy of the environmental document. See Section 1.8.2 in Chapter 1 of the Draft EIR/EIS.

Response to Comment P1-8

Comment noted. The environmental document was made available to the public for review at several libraries in the Proposed Project region of influence. The document was also made available electronically on the Project website at <http://www.is.ch2m.com/iidweb> and on CD-ROM.

1 shoreline, that we will also increase the amount of
2 particulates that will become airborne. We know that
3 there are multiple cases of asthma already in the Imperial
4 Valley, and we would be subjecting the human population to
5 a tremendous potential health hazard as well, in the event
6 that there are these transfers.

P1-6

7 So we, again, believe that there should be a
8 process of intense -- basically, it takes more
9 stakeholders beyond the confines of both the Water
10 District and the agricultural community, but include, as
11 well, the business community, the general citizenship in
12 the area and, as well, some additional Mexican testimony
13 in relation to their views on the water transfer.

P1-7

14 I want to thank you very much. We will be
15 providing you with some written comments that are more
16 in-depth. Thank you very much.

17 MS. CARD: Thank you, Mr. Nichols. Sergio Nunez?

18 MR. NUNEZ: Hello, my name is Sergio Nunez and I'm a
19 resident of the local Indio area. First of all, I'd like
20 to say that I did not receive the CD until Monday, so we
21 have not had an opportunity to go through this material.
22 Furthermore, I believe the reports should have been
23 submitted at our local libraries, such as Palm Springs.

P1-8

24 The CD does not to interact with my computer and
25 the screen is not the same to interact with material as to

Response to Comment P1-9

Without a specific reference to a part of the Draft EIR/EIS, this comment is too general to respond to. Comment noted.

P1-8

1 the text, as to try to understand it and go through it
2 quicker.

P1-9

3 Furthermore, I believe that the community does
4 not support the water transfer because the water
5 transfer -- we need that water here for future growth and
6 for development of our future, same as Imperial. How can
7 a competing region, a coastal region, take away our most
8 important resource, being water, from our region? How can
9 we surrender that?

10 So to start off with (reading), "The United
11 Nations Security Council's adopted declarations from the
12 Millenium Summit can offer us some guidance. The UN
13 reaffirmed us to give equal priority to the maintenance of
14 international peace and security in every region of the
15 world, and to pay special attention to the promotion of
16 durable peace and sustainable development (post-conflict
17 peace-building.)

18 "The competition for limited resources, water,
19 and rapid population growth are the root cause of regional
20 conflict which threaten global peace and sustainable
21 development. The Security Council strongly encourages for
22 the development of comprehensive and integrated strategies
23 to address the root causes of conflict, including their
24 economic and social dimensions."

25 What I'm talking about here is the Colorado

Response to Comment P1-10

Comment noted.

P1-9

1 Delta, the Salton Sea. We need this water to develop a
2 comprehensive strategy to address both issues. I believe
3 they can be done with one simple solution, but do our
4 leaders have that vision? Can they put aside their
5 self-interest for the benefit of all of us, the public?

6 So I think now with the -- September 11th, I
7 was in Mexicali at the Colorado Delta Symposium, and I've
8 been talking these words way before September 11th, and it
9 really hurt. I don't know. How can people start
10 listening?

P1-10

11 I ran for office here. 7280 voters here in the
12 Valley feel the same way that I feel, and that's why they
13 put their votes to me. I ran for the local water
14 district. I ran for the local college district also in
15 2001. There is a concern here in the valley about this
16 water transfer. And I'll put that -- that's the end of
17 that. Thank you very much.

18 MS. CARD: Thank you, Mr. Nunez. Chuck Friedly.

19 MR. FRIEDLY: Chuck Friedly from Desert Shores. I'm
20 a property owner. I would almost like to reserve time a
21 little later after I hear more comments, because I really
22 wasn't ready for this meeting today. I just heard about
23 it when I was in town today.

24 I'm a property owner. I built my own house at
25 Desert Shores. I have sunk my life savings into this

Response to Comment P1-11

Please refer to the Master Response on *Air Quality—Salton Sea Air Quality Monitoring and Mitigation Plan* in Section 9 of this Final EIR/EIS.

Response to Comment P1-12

Comment noted.

Response to Comment P1-13

The second implementation scenario for the Proposed Project (QSA Implementation) includes the more restrictive limit on IID's future diversions of Colorado River water on IID's Priority 3 diversions. Under the maximum transfers provided for under the QSA, IID would retain the ability to divert in excess of 2.6 MAFY of Colorado River water for agricultural, industrial, and domestic use within the IID water service area. In addition, at the end of the initial 45-year term, the IID/SDCWA Transfer Agreement potentially allows IID to reclaim up to 34 KAFY of transfer water for M&I use within the Imperial Valley. This amount is twice the expected growth in M&I use within the IID water service area over the next 45 years. Therefore, the Proposed Project and Alternatives described in the Draft EIR/EIS can be implemented without compromising the Imperial Valley's urban water supply. IID will continue to make water deliveries reasonably required for municipal and industrial beneficial uses, including current use and expected growth in these sectors.

Response to Comment P1-14

Please refer to the Master Response on *Air Quality—Salton Sea Air Quality Monitoring and Mitigation Plan* in Section 9 of this Final EIR/EIS.

1 property. It is a 200-foot waterfront property that I
2 live on, and that the wife and I have built from scratch.

P1-11

3 We don't want this water transfer to go through
4 because if they do, we're going to have a dust bowl just
5 like the (inaudible) area. We don't need that chemical
6 reaction running around in the air.

P1-12

7 We have the birds, which is the wildlife, and we
8 love the birds. Our favorite ones there are the white and
9 brown pelicans. The brown one is an endangered species.
10 I wake up every morning and I see birds and pelicans in my
11 backyard, right out my kitchen window.

P1-13

12 Also, it would hurt economically the area if we
13 lose our water, because now I've just heard that the
14 dairymen are thinking about going to the Imperial Valley.
15 They're going to need water. I was affiliated with the
16 dairies before in Artesia. They got pushed out. Now
17 they're being pushed out of Chino, and they'll have to go
18 to the San Joaquin Valley. This is where they grow the
19 product -- the alfalfa and the hay, and they need that
20 resource down here. We don't need the water to leave our
21 area.

P1-14

22 If they have to do it, we want something in
23 return from San Diego, like either reclaimed water to save
24 the Sea. We've got to have it or it will dry up and we'll
25 have a dust bowl. We don't need that. Thank you.

1 MS. CARD: Thank you, Mr. Friedly. Are there anymore
2 speaker cards?

3 Well, we do have an announcement. It has come
4 to our attention that the diskettes that we have here
5 tonight may be defective. If you find out yours is
6 defective, please call Sandy Eto, E-T-O, at 602-216-3857,
7 and the Bureau of Reclamation will provide another copy to
8 you. Please make sure your address is provided if you
9 leave her a message.

10 We have no speaker cards at this time. What
11 we'd like to do, then, is go off the record and provide
12 folks an opportunity to mill around with the staff of the
13 Bureau of Reclamation, the Fish and Wildlife Service and
14 the Imperial Irrigation District. Then after a 15-,
15 20-minute break, we'll go back on the record if folks have
16 additional comments for the record.

17 (Off the record.)

18 MS. CARD: We'd like to go back on the record now.
19 It's 5:50 p.m.

20 We have another speaker. Shirley Lee Palmer,
21 representing DISA. Mrs. Palmer, if you could tell us who
22 you're representing.

23 MS. PALMER: Good evening to the panel. Good
24 evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Shirley Lee
25 Palmer. I live in Desert Shores, California, and I'm

Response to Comment P1-15

Please refer to the Master Response on *Air Quality—Salton Sea Air Quality Monitoring and Mitigation Plan* in Section 9 of this Final EIR/EIS.

Response to Comment P1-16

Refer to the Master Response on *Socioeconomics—Property Values and Fiscal Impact Estimates* in Section 9 of this Final EIR/EIS.

1 representing the Desert Shores Improvement Association,
2 of which I'm the president.

3 I have lived around the Salton Sea for 40
4 years. I have watched it when it flooded and IID was
5 sued, to their demise. I have been all around the world.
6 I've lived in many places, but I'm here because of the
7 Salton Sea. I have businesses around the Sea.

8 This last three weeks I have done research in
9 the county libraries regarding the winds of the Salton
10 Sea. I understand that the science people can't take this
11 as fact. They have to have the actual recordings from
12 their instruments from the different agencies that keep
13 the wind miles per hour, but in my reading of the articles
14 in the paper, there were winds up to 165 miles an hour.
15 Of all the storms that I read about, the winds were at
16 least 85 miles an hour.

17 We have Borregos all the time. I don't know if
18 you're from this area or not, but if you are, sometimes
19 the winds blow for days and days and days. If the seabed
20 is exposed, life will be unbearable when the winds blow.

21 I live in Imperial County, Desert Shores, and it
22 is beautiful. The Salton Sea brings many visitors to my
23 town, to my businesses, and if the Sea goes, my business
24 will go. My life will go. I don't want to move. I love
25 the Salton Sea.

P1-15

P1-16

P1-17

1 I'm here to tell you that in the three weeks
2 that I've been going around the Sea and to the library,
3 Mrs. and Mrs. LaRue from Salton Sea Beach, Jim Johnson and
4 I have talked to over 1000 people. They do not want a
5 transfer of water.

P1-18

6 I understand that maybe a transfer of some sort
7 has to be made. Everybody feels that a three-foot
8 lowering of the sea would not be bad, but anything else
9 would not be acceptable to us. I know that you have to --
10 that the birds are the main issue to everyone, to all the
11 environmentalists, but you've got to consider people and
12 their quality of life, and even their being able to live.

P1-19

13 The people in my town are senior citizens.
14 They're too old. They don't want to move. They moved
15 there because they worked hard all their life and they've
16 come there to enjoy the Salton Sea. It is beautiful. I
17 cannot tell you of the tranquility, the marvelous sunsets
18 and sunrises. The summertime heat is horrible, but if you
19 live in a house with air-conditioning, it's not so bad.

P1-20

20 Please really, really take into issue the
21 people. We don't want to lose the Sea, and we ask you to
22 not take our water. Thank you.

23 MS. CARD: Thank you, Ms. Palmer.

24 Any other speaker cards? Anyone who would like
25 to step forward and speak, including those who have

Response to Comment P1-17

Comment noted.

Response to Comment P1-18

Comment noted. Potential impacts to sensitive receptors, including humans, as a result of Salton Sea shoreline receding are addressed in Section 3.7 of the Draft EIR/EIS.

Response to Comment P1-19

Comment noted.

Response to Comment P1-20

Comment noted.

Response to Comment P1-21

Please refer to the Master Response on *Air Quality—Salton Sea Air Quality Monitoring and Mitigation Plan* in Section 9 of this Final EIR/EIS.

Response to Comment P1-22

Comment noted.

1 already made a statement? We'll open back up for an
2 additional five minutes.

3 MR. NICHOLS: Hello, again. For the record, I'm Mark
4 Nichols with the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians. It's
5 great to be able to have a few more minutes.

6 It's interesting when people talk about "three
7 feet." I just heard the words "three feet wouldn't be too
8 bad" and somebody saying "I know that some of this has to
9 happen." I mean, there's sort of a presumption that this
10 has to happen out there in people's minds. Unfortunately,
11 though, I think the majority of people that aren't quote
12 "in the business" in some fashion or form are not
13 supportive of this transfer.

14 It's my understanding that a reduction of three
15 feet, or at least five feet, would basically reveal about
16 74,000 acres of shoreline that's currently covered. So
17 I'm not sure that people understand that a mere three feet
18 might expose 35,000 acres of shoreline. So that's very
19 significant.

20 Once that dust blows over the residents that
21 live locally, it's going to predominantly blow over the
22 agricultural workers and people that are probably the
23 least protected and have the least amount of opportunity
24 to represent their own interests.

25 To the south of us, and occasionally we in the

P1-21

P1-22

Response to Comment P1-23

Comment noted.

Response to Comment P1-24

Comment noted.

Response to Comment P1-25

The EIR/EIS presents the type and magnitude of estimated third-party socioeconomic impacts associated with the Proposed Project and each alternative evaluated in the EIR/EIS. As described in the Draft EIR/EIS, depending on the eventual implementation of the water conservation program, there could either be beneficial or adverse impacts to the regional economy. If water is conserved using on-farm and water delivery system improvements, it is anticipated that there would be beneficial effects to regional employment; therefore, there would not be any adverse effects to mitigate. If fallowing is used to conserve all or a portion of the water to be transferred, there would be adverse effects to the regional economy and farm workers as identified in the Draft EIR/EIS.

The IID Board will consider whether to implement socioeconomic mitigation measures when it considers whether to approve the Proposed Project or an alternative to the Proposed Project.

P1-22

1 Palm Springs area and in the Palm Desert area will also
2 feel the effects, and those will be devastating to us from
3 an economic standpoint.

P1-23

4 I wanted to sort of close the floor with our
5 comments to suggest that, you know, we've talked about
6 this in terms of it being a -- I guess, a scientific
7 problem, a development problem, a transfer problem. We
8 think this needs to be in the form of and only framed from
9 the perspective of initially a moral decision.

P1-24

10 As we look back on what we've done through our
11 lives and in maybe our children's lives and so forth,
12 we're going to sort of ultimately be judged not only by
13 what we did in terms of sticks and bricks, but what were
14 the ethics.

P1-25

15 If, in fact, the water belongs to the property,
16 we believe that it was for purposes of farming, and that
17 to the extent that the water transfer has to transfer
18 out -- and we say that these opportunities or options for
19 retransferring water back into the area, one being pipe in
20 or pipe out, or even the grander scheme of a canal or,
21 say, paying some farmers for not farming so that we could
22 have access to that, or paying Coachella Valley for its
23 allocation, whatever it is, these are all too expensive.

24 I have yet to see calculations of what these
25 transfers are going to generate. I think there should be

1 public disclosure of how much money will be generated over
2 the life of these transfers and how many billions of
3 dollars are going to flow from them, to who are they going
4 to flow and at what points, so that we can see, basically,
5 who loses and who wins from this transfer.

6 If we look at a 2-billion-dollar solution, it
7 may seem absolutely ridiculous at 2 billion, but if you
8 look at it in light of a potential 30-billion-dollar
9 revenue stream of basically new money that's generated, it
10 really starts to become more palatable.

11 I would strongly encourage, and I believe our
12 view is that there's no reason to stop transfers, but if
13 transfers are undertaken, let those people who are going
14 to benefit from the transfers pay to mitigate, and
15 mitigate appropriately, what those transfers are.

16 It's basically pretty simple, a hundred thousand
17 acre feet of water has to flow back into the Sea to remain
18 stable. So whatever solution is out there, there's plenty
19 of money if we start getting -- you know, how much money
20 is going to be generated to do this solution properly.

21 So I wanted to add those additional comments,
22 and I thank you.

23 MS. CARD: Thank you.

24 Would anyone else like to step forward and make
25 a comment? Those who have already presented statements

Response to Comment P1-26

Please refer to the Master Response on *Air Quality—Salton Sea Air Quality Monitoring and Mitigation Plan* in Section 9 of the Final EIR/EIS. With regard to the comment on odors at the Salton Sea, as described in Section 3.11, Aesthetics, in the Draft EIR/EIS, the effect of the Proposed Project or Alternatives would be less than significant because there will be ongoing objectionable odor episodes at the Salton Sea under Baseline conditions.

Response to Comment P1-27

Socioeconomic impacts to property values around the Salton Sea, which would result from the Proposed Project and Alternatives, are identified in the Master Response on *Socioeconomics—Property Values and Fiscal Impact Estimates* in Section 9 in the Final EIR/EIS.

The HCP was developed specifically to reduce the impact of the conservation program on biological resources. With implementation of the HCP-SS (see Master Response on *Biology—Approach to Salton Sea Habitat Conservation Strategy* in Section 9 of this Final EIR/EIS), water will be provided to affect inflow reductions to the Salton Sea caused by the Project at least until year 2030.

P1-26

1 are free to step forward also.

2 MR. FRIEDLY: Chuck Friedly, again. When we had this
3 rather foul odor at the Sea here some time ago, Moreno
4 Valley did not like the smell. That was in publication.
5 Also, Yuma, Arizona had that in publication. So, you
6 know, the odors and the particles are going to fly. If
7 it's not locally, they're going to fly elsewhere, too. So
8 that's something to think about, too.

P1-27

9 We want to save the Sea because -- like I say,
10 if we have to do some fallowing, if the farmers have to,
11 we can live with that, but give us something in return.
12 We've got to have water in order to maintain our levels.
13 We can probably drop within five or three feet, but not
14 any more than that, as some have suggested that we do.
15 We've heard clear up to 35 feet, and we cannot have that.
16 That will kill everybody around the Sea. Thank you.

17 MS. CARD: Thank you.

18 Would anyone else like to make a statement?
19 Well, it appears that there are no other folks who would
20 like to put a statement on the record. In that event, at
21 about 6:02, we'll adjourn.

22 Thank you all for coming tonight.

23 (Whereupon the proceedings were adjourned at 6:02 p.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

I, LANA KIESER, C.S.R. 12100,
Certified Shorthand Reporter for the state of California
do hereby certify.

That said proceedings were taken before me at
the time and place therein stated and was thereafter
transcribed into print under my direction and supervision,
and I hereby certify the foregoing proceedings are a true
and correct transcript of my shorthand notes.

I further certify that I am in no way
interested in the event of these proceedings, and that I
am not related to any of the parties hereto.

WITNESS my hand this ___ day _____, 2002.

LANA KIESER
C.S.R. NO. 12100

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EIR/EIS Public Hearing Transcript

San Diego, CA

April 4, 2002

IID Water Conservation and Transfer Project Draft

EIR/EIS Public Hearing

San Diego, California

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Reported by: Denise R. Redfield, CSR No. 11932, RPR