SALTON SEA AREA STUDY
ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION APPRAISAL REPORT

FINAL DRAFT

A cooperative effort among
the Salton Sea Authority,
the California Department of Water Resources,
and the Bureau of Reclamation

Prepared by
Lower Colorado Region
Bureau of Reclamation

September 1997
OUR MISSION

To manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Location Map</th>
<th>Frontispiece</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>xiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>xiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach</td>
<td>xv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>xvi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter I - Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 Project</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Description of the Area</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 History</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Purpose</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Authority</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Participants</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Expenditures</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Prior Studies and Other Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Studies</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Current Model</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather Stations</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathymetry</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dike Construction Options</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 Report Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter II - Problem Definition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0 Introduction</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Water Quality Problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salinity</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organochlorine Pesticides</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selenium</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eutrophication</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Water Level Problems</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Economic Development Needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Trends/Salinity</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salton Sea Recreation Market</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related Economic Activities</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Environmental Quality Needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluctuations</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Social and Cultural Needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Opportunity</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Enhancement</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alternative 7 - 30 Square Mile (Maximum Pumping) .............................................. 74
  History ............................................................................................................. 74
  Proposal Description ...................................................................................... 74
  Evaluation of Alternative .............................................................................. 74
  O&M Costs ..................................................................................................... 74
  Construction Costs ......................................................................................... 75
  Reason for Elimination .................................................................................. 76

Pump-Out Options .............................................................................................. 77
  Introduction ..................................................................................................... 77
  Alternative 8 - Onshore Evaporation Ponds (Site Unidentified) ................. 79
    History ........................................................................................................... 79
    Proposal Description ..................................................................................... 79
    Evaluation of Alternative ............................................................................. 79
    OME&R Costs ............................................................................................... 79
    Construction Costs ....................................................................................... 80
    Reason for Elimination ................................................................................ 80
  Alternative 9 - Enhanced Evaporation/Solar Pond/Power Generation .......... 82
    History ........................................................................................................... 82
    Proposal Description ..................................................................................... 82
    Evaluation of Alternative ............................................................................. 85
    OME&R Costs ............................................................................................... 85
    Construction Costs ....................................................................................... 86
    Reason for Elimination ................................................................................ 86
  Alternative 10 - Dry Lake Bed Evaporation (Palen, Clark, or Ford Lakes) .... 87
    History ........................................................................................................... 87
    Proposal Description ..................................................................................... 87
    Evaluation of Alternative ............................................................................. 87
    OME&R Costs ............................................................................................... 90
    Construction Costs ....................................................................................... 90
    Reason for Elimination ................................................................................ 90
  Alternative 11 - Pipeline to Pacific Ocean (Camp Pendleton Area) ............ 91
    (Pump-out only/pump-out and replenish) .................................................... 91
    History ........................................................................................................... 91
    Proposal Description ..................................................................................... 91
    Evaluation of Alternative ............................................................................. 91
    OME&R Costs ............................................................................................... 91
    Construction Costs ....................................................................................... 93
    Reason for Elimination ................................................................................ 93
  Alternative 12 - Navigable Waterway/Mexicali Support ......................... 94
    (Pump-out and replenish) ............................................................................ 94
    History ........................................................................................................... 94
    Proposal Description ..................................................................................... 94
    Evaluation of Alternative ............................................................................. 94
    OME&R Costs ............................................................................................... 96
    Construction Costs ....................................................................................... 97
    Reason for Elimination ................................................................................ 97
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construction Costs</th>
<th>140</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 27 - Impoundment/Power Generation/Constructed Wetlands</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OME&amp;R Costs</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Costs</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 28 - Freshwater Shoreline/Pumped Storage/Constructed Wetlands</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OME&amp;R Costs</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Costs</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 29 - Solar Power Generation/Pumped Storage/Constructed Wetlands - Laguna Salada Salt Disposal</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OME&amp;R Costs</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Costs</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal of Inflow Salt</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 30 - Move Yuma Desalting Plant to the Sea</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OME&amp;R Costs</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Costs</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 31 - Poplar Tree Constructed Wetlands</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 32 - Special Pretreatment Reservoirs</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 - United States Filter Corporation</td>
<td>(New River Desalting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34 - Groundwater Pumping (Selenium Management)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - Freshwater Blending (Calexico)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 - Replenishment by Colorado River Surplus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 - Venturi Air Pump</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 - Foraminifera Studies (Research Proposal)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39 - Potential Use of Study Ponds (Research Proposal)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - Injection Well Salt Disposal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Water Imports**

- Introduction                                                                 | 164  |
- Alternative 35 - Freshwater Blending (Calexico)                             | 166  |
- Alternative 36 - Replenishment by Colorado River Surplus                     | 168  |
- Other Options                                                               | 169  |
- Introduction                                                               | 170  |
- Alternative 37 - Venturi Air Pump                                           | 171  |
- Alternative 38 - Foraminifera Studies (Research Proposal)                   | 173  |
- Alternative 39 - Potential Use of Study Ponds (Research Proposal)           | 174  |
- Alternative 40 - Injection Well Salt Disposal                               | 177  |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative 41 - Air Diffusion/Ultraviolet Ozone System</th>
<th>180</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 42 - Surface Aeration</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 43 - Gravel Berm</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 44 - Sea Water Filtration</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 45 - Enzyme-Activated Removal</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 46 - Power/Freshwater Cogeneration</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O&amp;M Costs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 47 - Water Conservation</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative 48 - Drainage Water Reuse or Blending</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Description</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Alternative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for Elimination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tables
Table 1, Categories of Alternatives ........................................... xiv
Table 2, Evaluation Criteria and Weighted Values ...................... xvi
Table 3, Elimination Summary ................................................. xvii
Table 4, Construction Costs Ratings ...................................... xx
Table 5, Fiscal Year 1994 Expenditures .................................... 6
Table 6, The Salton Sea Recreation Market .............................. 16
Table 7, Evaluation Parameters ............................................. 24
Table 8, Example PCM .......................................................... 25
Table 9, Example Analysis Matrix .......................................... 26
Table 10, Evaluation Criteria ................................................ 29
Table 11, Full Elimination Summary ....................................... 34
Table 12, Alternative Description Organization ....................... 37
Table 13, Elimination Summary .............................................. 70
Table 14, 400,000 AF to Evaporation Ponds ............................ 81
Table 15, 100,000 AF to 400,000 AF to Gulf of California ...... 127
Table 16, Pump to Enhanced Evaporation System ..................... 144

Figures
Figure 1, Analysis Matrix ................................................... xviii
Figure 2, Strength Graph of Evaluated Alternatives ................. xix
Figure 3, Historical Salinity and Elevation Through Time .......... 12
Figure 4, Analysis Matrix ................................................... 212

Photographs
Photo 1, Salton Sea Authority Board of Directors .................... 5
Photo 2, CIMIS Station at Salton City ..................................... 7
Photo 3, Environmental Factors Contribute to High Fish Mortality Events ..... 14

Illustrations
Illustration 1, Typical Dike Cross Section ............................. 41
Illustration 2, Typical Dike Section, Dumped Embankment .......... 51
Illustration 3, Typical Dike Section, Dumped Embankment .......... 52
Illustration 4, Section Through Inlet Structure .......................... 53
Illustration 5, Phased Impoundment ...................................... 65
Illustration 6, The Solar Pond Power Plant .............................. 83
Illustration 7, Enhanced Evaporation/Solar Pond/Power Generation .... 84
Illustration 8, Project Area .................................................. 88
Illustration 9, Pump-out Dry Lake Bed Evaporation .................. 89
Illustration 10, Pump-out Pipeline to Pacific Ocean .................... 92
Illustration 11, Conceptual Pipeline ...................................... 95
Illustration 12, Plastic Curtain ............................................. 99
Illustration 13, Diked Impoundment, One-Half of the Sea ........... 100
Illustration 14, Diked Impoundment, Construction of Lake(s) Within the Sea .... 103
Illustration 15, Pump-out to Base of Chocolate Mountains ........... 106
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illustration</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 16, Pump-out Solar Pond/Diked Impoundment</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 17, Cascade 9 Series</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 18, Desalination Chamber</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 19, Aeroelectric Power System Surrounded by Dew Irrigated Area</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 20, Conceptual Salton Sea Fish Farm</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 21, Pump-out to Gulf of California</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 22, Pump-out and Replenish</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 23, Pumped Storage/Gulf Salt Disposal</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 24, Membrane Distillation</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 25, SHMD Piping and Instrumentation</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 26, Diked Areas/Solar Power Generation/Constructed Wetlands</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 27, Freshwater Shoreline/Pumped Storage</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 28, Joint USA/Mexico Solar Power Generation/Pumped Storage</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 29, Conceptual Diagram, Poplar Wetlands for Wastewater Recycling</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 30, Groundwater Pumping for Selenium Management</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 31, Pump Non-River Water at Calexico to Combine With Salton Sea Water</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 32, Venturi Chamber</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 33, Study Ponds</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 34, Disposal of Salts With Injection Wells</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 35, What Bottom Oxygenation Does</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 36, Surface Aeration</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 37, Typical Dike Section, Dumped Embankment</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 38, Typical Cluster</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 39, Thorneco Enzyme-Activated Cellulose Technology</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 40, Hydropower/Filtration System Resort</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 41, Slow Sand Filtration</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 42, Metal Ion Extraction</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>