



Office of Governor
Edmund G. Brown Jr.

HOME ABOUT MULTIMEDIA NEWSROOM APPOINTMENTS CONTACT ISSUES

Amber Alert | Save our Water | Energy Upgrade California

Search



GOVERNOR BROWN SIGNS LEGISLATION, ANNOUNCES NEW ACTIONS TO PROTECT SALTON SEA

10-9-2015

SACRAMENTO – As water levels in the Salton Sea continue to drop, exposing thousands of acres of barren shoreline, California Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. today announced action on legislation – AB 1095 by Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia (D-Coachella) – and a series of measures to help protect Salton Sea habitat and air quality in nearby communities.

“The Salton Sea has a long and storied history in California and with these key restoration projects, the state is helping protect air quality, while maintaining a viable water supply in the region,” said Governor Brown.

The Salton Sea, a man-made lake 125 miles southeast of Los Angeles, was created in 1905. Since then, water levels have steadily declined, leaving thousands of previously submerged acres exposed, increasing the risk of dust storms.

The actions announced today are the product of recommendations from the Salton Sea Task Force and include:

- Restoring up to 12,000 acres of shoreline habitat over the next five years.
- Restoring up to 25,000 acres of additional exposed shoreline starting in 2020.
- Convening a scientific advisory committee to ensure that the best available science guides the habitat restoration efforts.

The California Natural Resources Agency will move forward with these actions in the months ahead and will also work with Colorado River officials to accelerate planning, permitting and construction. With the Governor’s signature on AB 1095, the administration will identify for the Legislature “shovel-ready” restoration projects at the Salton Sea that are in either the final planning, environmental review or permitting phase by March.

The Salton Sea Task Force was established by the administration in May and includes experts from the California Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Agencies. The task force held 16 community meetings and sought input from tribal leaders, federal agencies, local water districts, local leaders and other public and private stakeholders with an interest in the Salton Sea to produce its recommendations. Last month, Governor Brown appointed Bruce Wilcox assistant secretary for Salton Sea policy at the Natural Resources Agency to oversee habitat restoration efforts along the shoreline.

Additional details regarding the administration’s actions to protect the Salton Sea are available [here](#).

For full text of the bill, visit: <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov>

###

Latest News



Governor Brown Declares State of Emergency in San Bernardino County 12-18-2015



Governor Brown Announces Appointments 12-18-2015



Governor Brown’s Press Office 2016 Credentialing Information 12-18-2015



Governor Brown Announces Appointments 12-14-2015



Governor Brown Issues Statement on Global Climate Pact 12-12-2015



Photo Release: Day 5: UN Climate Change Conference: Governor Brown, German Government Announce 43 New Signatories to Under 2 MOU Climate Pact 12-09-2015



Photo Release: Day 4: UN Climate Change Conference: Governor Brown Highlights Bold Subnational Action at COP 21 Events 12-08-2015



Photo Release: Day 3: UN Climate Change Conference: Governor Brown Meets with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, Partners with Chinese, French National Governments 12-07-2015



Governor Brown Issues Proclamation Declaring Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day 12-06-2015



Photo Release: Day 2: UN Climate Change Conference: Governor Brown, Ambassador Hartley Welcome 15 New Signatories to Under 2 MOU Climate Pact 12-06-2015



Salton Sea Task Force Agency Actions

The implementation of sustainable habitat and air quality management and mitigation at the Salton Sea through a Salton Sea Management Program is critical for the protection of regional air quality, natural resources at the sea, and the management of a stable Colorado River Supply for California. The Salton Sea Task Force recognizes the contributions of the local leadership, plans, and initiatives that have informed the Task Force process. Following meetings with key stakeholders, the Task Force finds that implementation of a successful Salton Sea Management Program depends on the following three principles: 1) strong state, federal, and local partnerships; 2) clear and achievable milestones with state-directed plans to achieve them; and 3) committed participation from all stakeholders who share the goals of protecting air quality, reducing habitat impacts, and maintaining a secure Colorado River Water Supply. These three factors will drive decision-making on a short- and a medium-term plan while leveraging fiscal and technical resources to deliver projects in an expedited manner.

The Natural Resources Agency will take the following actions over an accelerated timeline:

- **Begin immediate implementation and further development of Salton Sea management plan**
 - The plan will prioritize actions that respond to air quality and natural resources impacts while incorporating opportunities for regional economic development, including recreational and renewable opportunities that benefit implementation of the plan.
 - A science advisory committee will be utilized to provide scientific expertise into plan development.
 - Colorado River stakeholders will be asked to assist with the development of the plan. The Salton Sea Authority and its members will be asked to help facilitate local involvement.

- **Improve public outreach and local partnership**
 - Air quality and environmental impacts of a reduced Salton Sea will be felt foremost by the residents of the region. The state will provide a meaningful public forum to discuss Salton Sea issues locally and to develop future plans and actions.

- **Accelerate project implementation and delivery**
 - The state will work with Salton Sea, Colorado River partners to accelerate planning, state and federal permitting and construction.

- **Meet a short-term goal of 9,000-12,000 acres of habitat creation and dust suppression projects at the sea**
 - Projects to meet short-term goals will be achievable with available funding.
 - Short-term projects will address dust suppression and natural resources needs while laying the foundation for a long-term Salton Sea management framework.
 - Projects will be staged to address the expected progression of playa exposure and designed to provide access corridors for renewable energy development on those lands.

- **Set medium-term goal of 18,000-25,000 acres of habitat creation and dust suppression projects at the sea**
 - Funding plans to meet medium-term goals will need to be developed by the state with Salton Sea and Colorado River partners.

Ensure Oversight by Regulatory Agencies:

- The State Water Resources Control Board will regularly monitor and assess progress on the implementation of the Salton Sea Management Program, including the development of management plans and funding options, and any potential action by the State Board.
- The State Water Resources Control Board will periodically hold public workshops as part of its monitoring and assessment function.
- The State Water Resources Control Board will work with the Colorado River Regional Water Board and the Administration to improve water quality and upstream co-benefits in the New River and the Alamo River.
- The California Air Resources Board will coordinate with local partners to address air quality impacts from the Salton Sea, work with Imperial and South Coast air districts to monitor air quality, and provide technical and scientific expertise to ensure effective mitigation of dust impacts from exposed playa.

Consider opportunities for increasing renewable energy development at and around the Salton Sea:

- As part of the implementation of the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015 (SB 350), the California Energy Commission and the Public Utilities Commission will evaluate how renewables at and around the Salton Sea will further the goals of the integrated resources plans, including a balanced resource mix and the minimization of localized air pollutants.
- Within the next year, as part of planning to meet the 2030 greenhouse gas goals, the Public Utilities Commission, the Energy Commission and the Independent System Operator will consider renewable energy opportunities at and around the Salton Sea and the region, and any additional transmission that may be needed for the near term or long term.