

Introduction

I am speaking on behalf of 25% of the Farmer/Landowners in the Imperial Valley who are members of the Imperial Group and many other Farmer/Landowners who subscribe to the ideas we will be setting forth today. We are also speaking on behalf of our employees who we estimate have 30,000 jobs in the Imperial Valley because of farming. Many of them commute from Mexico. We have all worked together for the last 100 years to create the Imperial and Mexicali Valleys and plan to work together for the next 100 years to create prosperous and culturally significant Valleys over the next 100 years.

We applaud the new Administration for opening up the current EIR process on the Salton Sea to all interested parties on both sides of the border, and look forward to participating in that process.

We have also talked and continue to talk many of the Latino interests on both sides of the border and because of this effort have developed a much better understanding of their aspirations for the future. Based on our conversations the Latino Community on both sides of the border want the following:

- A>Economic Opportunity for the Region
- B>The Pollution stopped in Calexico
- C>No lining of the All-American Canal
- D>Appropriate respect for the environment in Mexico.

Any recommendation made by the State should recognize the concerns of the Latino Community on both sides of the Border.

The Farmer/Owners have a simple agenda:

A>The protection of their water rights so the Farmer/Landowners and the community can receive the full value now and in the future of the water on which have relied in spending over 2 billion dollars developing this agricultural resource over the last 100 years.

B>The restoration of the Salton Sea so it becomes an environmental and economic asset to the Imperial and the Mexicali Valleys and ultimately for the State of California.

C>Only after the first two issues are resolved do the Farmer/Landowners have any interest in considering water transfers and these transfers cannot result in any following of the land in Imperial or Mexicali Valleys and appropriate compensation must be paid for any transfers.

To this end the Farmer//Landowner have discussed the issues with their employees and all segments of the community. The Farm/Landowners have also gone out and engaged technical people from across the world with experience with similar issues. Today we will give you a sampling of the results of the research. Because of time we have prepared a limited public presentation but we have prepared for each of you a binder on their comments with background material. We appreciate this opportunity to be heard and we have allowed these individuals complete freedom to do their research and make recommendations we only ask you give these individuals a full and complete hearing.

Jim Kelley is the former Dean of Science at San Francisco State and former President of the California Academy of Science. He is an oceanographer by trade. He has a deep abiding personal and professional interest in the ecology of the San Francisco Bay and the Mexican Deltas. Jim will discuss the ecology of the Salton Sea and the Mexican Delta.

Rinus Vandeven is Chief Operating Officer of Bean Stuyvesant and the spokesman for the Consortium of the B/S and Dutra Industries that has been working with the Imperial Group. Rinus will discuss in detail the results of the year the Consortium has spent to develop a Restoration Plan for the Salton Sea. Even though Rinus and members of the Consortium have built projects of similar and larger size around the world over the last 100 years, it is has been refreshing to work with them because they have a totally open approach and have been responsive to our concerns for our community.

Dave Hornbeck is Professor Emeritus of Geography at California State University at Northridge. For many of you who attended College in California and took a Geography course you were required to read his book, Historical Geography of California. Dave will speak on the history of the Coachella, Imperial and Mexicali Valleys and give you some ideas of what he thinks the area will look like 75 years from now.

Ali Shahroody of Stetson Engineers. Stetson Engineers is one of West's foremost water resources engineering firms. Mr. Shahroody will not be speaking today because of time constraints, but we have enclosed his written comments in the binder on what analysis has to be made in order to determine an appropriate baseline over the next 75 years and how the Cascade Plan and other plans should be evaluated.

Heidi Kuhn and her family farm land, grow cattle and manufacture cheese and employ over 300 people. Heidi will discuss the aspirations of Farmer/Landowners for the future of Imperial Valley and she would like to leave you with this unsolicited thought that was sent to the Imperial Group by a landowner along the Salton Sea:

Could you please send us a copy of the Cascade Concept Map for the Salton Sea? My husband and I have property around the perimeter of the Salton Sea and are interested to know the scope of this plan versus the North Lake Alternative. We are very much interested in becoming active in a role to support an organization and a plan that is committed to expediting the progress of restoring such a beautiful and potentially valuable area for all.

There is very little in-depth information available to the general public except that study after study have been conducted over the course of decades. It is now time to act for the benefit of everyone in the Imperial Valley. This is a third world problem in a nation that has sufficient ingenuity and resources available to act on a problem of this magnitude without blinking an eye!