January 18, 2019

Francisco Guzman  
California Water Plan Update 2018  
Strategic Water Planning Branch  
Statewide Integrated Water Management  
California Department of Water Resources  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Via email: cwpcom@water.ca.gov

RE: California Water Plan Update 2018 Omits Salton Sea

Dear Mr. Guzman:

On behalf of Alianza Coachella Valley, Audubon California, Defenders of Wildlife, Environmental Defense Fund, Pacific Institute, and Sierra Club, we write to offer our comments on a glaring omission in the Public Review Draft of the California Water Plan Update 2018 with respect to the Salton Sea.

California’s Salton Sea obligations are not referenced in this update, at all. This significant oversight must be rectified. Table 4-1 “State Funds Needed to Implement the Recommended Actions” lists the capital costs of ‘Goal 3 Restore Critical Ecosystem Functions’ as $957 million through 2028. DWR’s own estimated cost for Salton Sea projects in that time period is $420 million (2017$) – almost half of the total amount listed in the table. Given WaterFix/EcoRestore costs, this suggests that the update ignores Salton Sea costs entirely.
The State of California, the Natural Resources Agency, and DWR itself have all made the Salton Sea a priority, memorialized in the State Water Resources Board’s November, 2017 ORDER WR 2017-0134 (attached). That prioritization needs to be reflected in the update.

Thank you for your attention to this omission. We look forward to seeing it corrected in the next draft of the California Water Plan.

Sincerely,

Michael Cohen
Senior Associate
Pacific Institute

Kimberley Delfino
California Program Director
Defenders of Wildlife

Pablo Garza
CA Political Director, Ecosystems
Environmental Defense Fund

Michael Lynes
Director of Public Policy
Audubon California

Silvia Paz
Executive Director
Alianza Coachella Valley

Joan Taylor
Co-Chair, California/Nevada Desert Committee
Sierra Club

Attachment – SWRCB ORDER WR 2017-0134

Cc: Kristopher Tjernell, DWR
Vivien Maisonneuve, DWR Salton Sea Program
Felicia Marcus, SWRCB
Bruce Wilcox, CNRA