



Community Engagement Committee Meeting

July 10, 2018 – CA Regional Water Quality Control Board, Palm Desert

Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute (CBI)

Meeting in Brief

- Building Healthy Communities’ (BHC) Environmental Justice (EJ) campaign shared its proposed approach to assist the Committee and State to deepen engagement with communities in the Eastern Coachella Valley in the 10-Year Plan and long range planning for the Salton Sea. The proposal was well received and will be put into action in the coming weeks in coordination with the State and Committee.
- Phil Rosentrater is leaving his position as Committee Chair to chair the newly formed SSMP Water Quality Advisory Committee. Rebecca Terrazas-Baxter, Director of Intergovernmental Relations Director for Imperial County, and Silvia Paz, Director of Building Healthy Communities Eastern Coachella Valley, will co-chair the Committee going forward.
- The State will host community workshops in the fall intended to more intentionally engage local communities in Salton Sea planning and projects. The State will work with the Committee and the BHC EJ campaign to design and roll out the workshops to raise awareness and build capacity for engaging in Salton Sea planning while seeking local input on planning objectives.

[Click here](#) for meeting agenda and materials.

Action Items

Who	What	Timeline
Ryan/CBI	Email draft meeting summary to Committee for review	7/27
All	Email suggested edits to Ryan/CBI on the Draft Community Engagement Committee Charter and/or Meeting Summary	8/3
All	Email Bruce Wilcox if you have additional suggestions for Committee membership. Copy Ryan/CBI (rgolten@cbi.org), Phil Rosentrater/SSA (PRosentrater@ssajpa.org).	8/3
Silvia/ Sahara (BHC)	Circulate proposed engagement study to the Committee for review and comments	7/27
Co-chairs	Meet w/ Bruce, DWR, Burke Rix, and CBI to plan fall workshops and better understand planning parameters and timeframes	8/23
Josh (Burke Rix)	Circulate to Committee for input: workshop format/timeframes and locations, and chart showing 2017 meeting attendance	7/27
Juan de Lara (SSAC)	Circulate Salton Sea presentation as a potential springboard for developing materials with a common, consistent message	7/31

Engagement Committee Updates

- This is the first 2018 meeting of the full Committee, although a working group met twice in the spring to discuss how to improve the State’s engagement with low-income, minority communities consistent with environmental justice principles.

- At the working group's request, the State changed the name of the Committee from 'Outreach' to 'Engagement,' with the intent to focus the SSMP the on meaningful, two-way engagement with impacted communities in Coachella, Imperial, and Riverside counties.
- CBI and Burke Rix worked with the State and Committee Chair to draft a Charter for the Committee, emphasizing the above EJ principles, clarifying the Committee's function in the Salton Sea Management Program, and setting out Committee roles and responsibilities. Committee members should review the Charter and send suggested edits by the end of July.
- Phil Rosentrater announced he is leaving his position as Committee Chair to chair the newly formed SSMP Water Quality Advisory Committee. Bruce Wilcox announced that Rebecca Terrazas-Baxter, Director of Intergovernmental Relations Director for Imperial County, and Silvia Paz, Director of Building Healthy Communities for the Eastern Coachella Valley, will co-chair the Committee going forward. The co-chairs will meet with the State in the upcoming weeks to transition the leadership and plan the Committee's work with the State and other SSMP Advisory Committees going forward.
- The Co-Chairs will look into potentially rotating the meeting location between north and south ends of the Salton Sea, with possible phone-line support from the RCWQB.

Proposed Engagement Approach (BHC EJ Campaign, CNRA and DWR)

BHC is a collaborative bringing together partners in system-change solutions. Its EJ campaign includes Kounkey Design Initiative (KDI), California Institute for Rural Studies (CIRS), Audubon, Sierra Club, Coachella Unincorporated (CU), and Loma Linda University (LLU). The BHC network also includes various EJ groups and non-profits as well as local youth. BHC and the State have discussed ways in which to build on current and past outreach efforts of the State and Comité Cívico del Valle to increase two-way engagement with local communities, particularly in the Eastern Coachella Valley. The State has invited the BHC team to provide recommendations to support this effort.

BHC and KDI shared this approach with the Committee. Committee members agreed that meaningful engagement should include, among other things:

- Helping connect local communities with what's happening at the Sea and solicit their input on planning and design priorities at critical junctions
- Prior to community workshops, communicate the purpose and why it might be important for local residents, and lay the groundwork so people understand the technical concepts and are prepared to participate meaningfully
- Understand State parameters and milestones in project planning and work with the State to identify opportunities for local communities in Salton Sea projects
- Provide clear expectations of how local input will be considered in the State's planning efforts, with a subsequent explanation of how input was in fact considered and/or used.

BHC will circulate its written proposal with the Committee. It outlines a 3-4 month process to study existing needs and develop recommendations to the State for a meaningful community engagement plan that is closely integrated into the overall Salton Sea Management Program. Many Committee members will be interviewed as part of the process. Questions will help probe what engagement should look like and how partners can contribute to these efforts on multiple scales (e.g., IID including workshop information on customer's monthly bills). The engagement effort would be integrated into, and would help inform, both the 10-Year Plan and the State's long-range planning for the Sea. The BHC proposal is supported by independent funding.

Discussion included the following:

- Committee members were enthusiastic about the proposed approach and expressed interest in being updated about, and as involved as possible in, BHC's study and recommendations.
- Members noted that Comité Cívico del Valle's (CCV) outreach campaign this past year, under contract with the State, has helped educate many local communities, laying the groundwork for more meaningful engagement. This has also spurred exciting new efforts, such as a new student formed group at Imperial Valley College called "IVC Save the Salton Sea Group".
- It's important for the community to understand realistic parameters from the State, including what types of projects may be suitable to incorporating recreational amenities.
- Committee members emphasized the distinct needs of different communities, and that engagement efforts will need to be adjusted accordingly. The BHC effort will also need to be coordinated with the outreach work of CCV, both substantively and geographically.
- The State acknowledged the need to implement immediate 10-Year-Plan projects such as SCH, while building in a process for local input on projects a year or more down the line. The State also discussed the possibility of requiring a public engagement component of design-build contracts in the future. The State will explore this with BHC in the upcoming study.
- In order to focus local input on concrete 10-Year Plan projects (where that's the focus) and not become side tracked with long-term solutions, it's useful to differentiate between timeframes, e.g., 10-Year concepts vs. longer-term solutions.

State Updates

- Imperial County and Riverside County have signed a non-binding MOU for the Perimeter Lake, which has long been a potential long-term project. The State is also meeting with Tetra Tech and the County on the North Lake Plan and how to pull together the County and State separate but similar North Lake plans.
- Earl Withycombe from the California Air Resources Board suggested that windblown dust is likely to be an issue raised at upcoming community workshops and is obviously a major local concern. It would be useful for IID could prepare a short presentation to answer questions about this, based on its 2016-17 study that was published two weeks ago. Emmanuel Martinez suggested IID would provide a presentation to address this. The State recommended that Earl also include new findings in the presentation.

Upcoming Community Workshops

The State has intended to hold workshops in the fall to give the public an opportunity to provide input on the 10-Year Plan projects and offer preliminary input on interests and priorities for in the Long-Range Plan. The State wants the Committee's input on how to best engage the public at these workshops and how to address both 10-Year and long-range planning goals.

Unlike past the State's workshops, the State plans to have a more dynamic, participatory open-house style format, with hands-on exhibits for each for each of the 10-Year Plan projects that the State has identified as being best suited to incorporate community or recreational facing amenities. The intent is to get a better understanding of how the different communities value the Sea and what kind of opportunities would be beneficial. Attendees would get a more detailed understanding of the projects, be able to use post-its on the exhibit diagrams/maps, and ask one-on-one questions. One of the exhibits would focus solely on long-range planning, soliciting input on the criteria that would inform a long-range solution. (This would not include specific water import proposals per se.) Brief updates on the 10-Year Plan, especially the Riverside/Imperial County MOU, North Lake plans, and

recent air quality study, would be summarized in a short presentation at the beginning of the workshops.

The State will incorporate BHC's analysis and recommendations, and Committee input, into the planning of these workshops. Based on this, the State will bring an updated workshop proposal to the committee for input in late summer. In the meantime, please provide input to Josh Zipperman from Burke Rix on format, timing and logistics for the workshops. (Josh circulated a draft agenda and table outlining possible venues and dates/times for the workshop, along with logistical considerations such as translation.) The State hopes Committee members will help with pre-workshop outreach and engagement efforts including canvassing, social media, community events, and tapping into various community/religious/youth groups.

Discussion and questions included the following:

- Members agreed that the Open House format is more engaging. FIELD recommends potentially having two rounds of meetings at the same venue to establish familiarity and allow the public to come back with clarified ideas and questions. FIELD staff can help with outreach. All committee members should be actively involved.
- BHC agrees the first phase of outreach should be informational, and led by groups with connections in the communities. This could lead to a core group of interested stakeholders who can develop more in-depth understanding before the workshop. While hosting two rounds of workshops would pose a resource challenge for the State, it's possible that community groups can help support this effort. We should consider whether our community groups will be able to lay this groundwork prior to the workshops, or should this round of workshops provide that base level of understanding? If so, it's possible the timeframe for community input could get delayed, but it will be important to see if this is an issue with DWR's project deadlines.
- In terms of locations, Committee members asked Josh to provide a summary of attendance in the last round of community workshops. Josh will circulate this. Note that Mecca and Brawley had low attendance, though better locations could help with turnout.

Public Comments

- Members of Eco-Media Compass emphasized the need to strategically use the Salton Sea budget, with a focus on increased water to the Sea. They additionally highlighted the need for coordination in the ECV and requested that the responses to the State's RFI be visually shared with local residents.

Meeting Attendees

Several community, Tribal, and agency stakeholders attended the meeting, in addition to the following Committee members and state staff liaisons.

State of California

Bruce Wilcox, Assistant Secretary for the Salton Sea
Vivien Maisonneuve, DWR

Members Attending (some by phone)

Present			
✓	Patricia	Cooper	Riverside County
✓	Maria	Davydova	RWQCB

✓ ALT	Juan	De Lara	Salton Sea Action Committee (SSAC)
✓ ALT	Lauren	Elachi	Kounkuey Design Initiative
	Debi	Elton	Sea and Desert Interpretive Center
	Diana	Enriquez	Cabazon Band of Mission Indians
	Sarah	Friedman	Sierra Club California
✓ ALT	Miguel	Hernandez	Comité Cívico del Valle (CCV)
✓ ALT	Sahara	Huazano	Building Healthy Communities Eastern Coachella Valley
	Genevieve	Johnson	Bureau of Reclamation Lower Colorado Region
✓	Philip	Johnson	Salton Sea Authority
✓	Emmanuel	Martinez	Imperial Irrigation District
✓	Patricia	Meister	Sea and Desert Interpretive Center
	Kerry	Morrison	EcoMedia Compass
✓	Joe	Mota	FIELD Institute
✓	Luis	Olmedo	Comité Cívico del Valle (CCV)
	Marco	Perez	29 Palms Band of Morongo Indians
✓	Phil	Rosentrater	Salton Sea Authority (Committee Chair – Outgoing)
✓	Silvia	Paz	Building Healthy Communities Coachella Valley (incoming Co-Chair)
	Alex	Rodriguez	DCG Public Affairs
✓	Frank	Ruiz	Audubon California
✓	Altrena	Santillanes	Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
✓	Darren	Simon	SDCWA
	Dennis	Stephen	California State Parks
✓ ALT	Tom	Sephton	EcoMedia Compass
	Drew	Story	UC Riverside
✓	Rebecca	Terrazas-Baxter	County of Imperial (incoming Co-Chair)
✓ ALT	Thomas	Tortez	Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
✓	Jennifer	Toy	Kounkuey Design Initiative (KDI)

State Consultant

Josh Zipperman, Senior Associate, Burke Rix Communications
 Cynthia Orozco, Associate, Burke Rix Communications

Facilitator

CBI Facilitator Ryan Golten, rgolten@cbi.org, 303-880-9521