



Dear California State Water Board,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the current state of the Salton Sea. My name is Giovanni Arechavaleta and I am the Campaign Director/Biologist of The EcoMedia Compass, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization raising positive public awareness and solutions for the Salton Sea through its Save Our Sea! Campaign. In the year that I've campaigned for the sea, I have learned how important it is to so many people throughout California and across the world. This lake is much more than just an agricultural sump to me and to so many. It's a place of unimaginable natural beauty, and more importantly, home to millions of people and animals. Something must be done now to implement the restoration and revitalization of not only the Salton Sea but the Salton Sea region.

I completely fell in love with the sea's stunning natural wonder and wildlife diversity as so many people do when they first discover it. It's a truly captivating experience to see such a vast body of water in the middle of the desert and even more captivating once you discover its rich history and forgotten stories connecting all the communities around it. Here, you can pause, and see time slowly spread itself across still waters only inches below gliding pelican wings. The wind seems to softly usher sunny memories through fields of flowering desert scrub. And with every sunrise and sunset, the mountain silhouettes playfully bounce ever-changing hues of light beyond the sky. My favorite thing about the Salton Sea is its ever changing sunrises and sunsets. The skies are never the same and always stunning. The region also provides crucial wetland habitat to millions of birds and wildlife. We cannot allow one of the largest wetlands in the state to diminish and join the list of wetland habitats that have been destroyed (over 90% in the state).

If nothing is done soon to conserve, restore, and revitalize the area it will be a tragic loss not only for our state but for the nation. Once more popular than Yosemite National Park, California's largest lake deserves to be listed, thought of, and cared for as an endangered and valuable region. This is not only a regional issue, but also a complex circumstance that encompasses environmental justice, water rights, public health risks, regional economy, underrepresented communities, and renewable energy opportunities cannot be ignored. I feel, as so many do, that it's our responsibility as a state to help the communities and landscapes that are most in need. The natural resources, renewable energy sources, and innovative green technology already exist to create a thriving and efficient economy and sustain the sea's ecosystem. And I can go on and on about how valuable the sea is, how environmentally important it is, how much potential it has, or even how many millions of people care about it but I think there has been enough talk about this place and not enough action. As a native Californian and concerned citizen, I urge you to reconsider the Quantification Settlement Agreement and seriously act on

the state's responsibility to take care of the Salton Sea region and the people and wildlife that call it home. Thank you for your time and I hope you can join us in shouting Save Our Sea!

My heartfelt gratitude,

Giovanni Arechavaleta