



# DECLARATION Of CONCERNED SCIENTISTS AND ENVIRONMENTALISTS OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY

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## A CALL FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE SALTON SEA BASIN AND SAN DIEGO COUNTY

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**WHEREAS** the Salton Sea and its environs constitute a unique natural resource of regional, statewide, national and international significance and support an extraordinary diversity of migratory and resident bird species, including many endangered and threatened species, and are an important recreational and economic asset for the region;

**WHEREAS** the Salton Sea ecosystem and the environmental quality of Imperial and Coachella valleys are threatened by water transfers proposed as part of the California 4.4 Plan to reduce California's draw of Colorado River water to its annual legal entitlement of 4.4 million acre feet by the year 2015;

**WHEREAS** San Diego County is recognized as a hotspot of biological diversity of global significance, supporting over 380 rare and sensitive species, more than 40 of which are listed as federally threatened or endangered;

**WHEREAS** the principal causes of species imperilment in the San Diego region are the direct destruction, fragmentation and degradation of habitat caused by population growth and sprawl development; and

**WHEREAS** the population growth, sprawl, and increased input of wastewaters into our coastal environment induced by the proposed water transfer further threaten San Diego's wealth of natural resources;

**NOW THEREFORE**, on behalf of the best long-term interests of the citizens of San Diego and California,

**BE IT HEREBY DECLARED** by the undersigned, on this 4<sup>th</sup> day of July 2002, that:

- **It has not been established** that the proposed water transfer is necessary to meet the California 4.4 Plan objectives, given the many options available to San Diego County for water reclamation, water conservation, desalination, and lowering its rate of population growth;
  - **A thorough analysis of all options** should be developed immediately and used as a basis for exploration by California of other means by which it could meet its obligations under the 4.4 Plan in better accord with principles of sustainability;
  - **If the water transfer is to occur** it must be conducted in full compliance with state and federal environmental laws, and must fully analyze direct, indirect and cumulative impacts in the Salton Sea Basin, in the lower Colorado River Basin, and in San Diego County;
  - **The water transfer must not** result in the significant reduction of inflows to the Salton Sea, must not degrade the air quality in the region surrounding the Salton Sea, must not result in significant adverse socioeconomic impacts, and must not undermine efforts or preclude the opportunity to eventually restore the Salton Sea; and finally,
  - **The appropriate parties and agencies must fully mitigate** negative impacts to the bird and fishery resources of the Salton Sea, must address growth-inducing impacts in San Diego County by avoiding or mitigating negative impacts to its natural environment that may result from these transfers, and must commit to basing all future regional planning on the principles of sustainability.
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