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ADMINISTRATION

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504
http://feinstein.senate.gov

May 18, 2017

Ms. Jorianne Jernberg, Director
Water Infrastructure and Finance Program
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Ms. Jernberg:

I write to express my support for the State of California's Salton Sea Management Program (SSMP) April 10, 2017 Letter of Interest seeking financing under the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA).

Since the early 2000s, inflows to the Salton Sea, California's largest lake located in Imperial and Riverside counties, have been decreasing due to drought, climate change, decreases in water inflow from Mexico, and agricultural-to-urban water transfers, resulting in significant negative public health, agricultural, ecological, cultural, and economic impacts. In December 2017, the Sea will no longer receive stabilizing mitigation water and those negative impacts are expected to greatly accelerate, leading to substantial public health and ecological costs.

California is seeking $79 million for Salton Sea management activities that are critically necessary to mitigate negative impacts throughout the region. If granted, WIFIA financing will facilitate the construction of the Salton Sea infrastructure backbone, a foundational water distribution and treatment infrastructure system necessary for the creation of wetland habitat components of the State's SSMP Phase 1 Plan. These activities are also important to advance federal drought contingency planning efforts directed at stabilizing the Colorado River system.

WIFIA financing would facilitate the aggressive implementation of this critical water infrastructure project, protect the public health and environment, and facilitate federal drought planning discussions at a pivotal juncture in the decades long effort to manage and restore the Salton Sea.

Thank you for your consideration of this important project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Alexis Segal (alexis_segal@feinstein.senate.gov) in my Washington, D.C. office.

Sincerely,

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

DF/rw