

# The Salton Sea at a Glance

- The Sea's Basin is closed: there are no outlets
- Surface elevation : 227 feet below sea level
- Surface dimensions: 35 miles long by 15 miles wide; 378 square miles (242,000 acres)
- Average Depth: 30 feet
- Watershed area: 8,000 square miles
- Annual inflow: 1.3 million acre-feet of water from the U.S. and Mexico
- Annual salt load: 4 million tons

## ■ VALUES

- Critical Pacific Flyway site for migratory waterfowl & songbirds
- Highly productive sportfishery
- Habitat for several endangered species
- Repository for agricultural drainage, municipal discharges and floodwaters

## ■ PROBLEM

- Salinity of 44 parts per thousand is 25% higher than ocean water
- Sportfish reproduction threatened by high salinity
- Wildlife values threatened by loss of fishery food base

## ■ SALTON SEA AUTHORITY

- The SSA is a joint powers authority comprised of:
  - Coachella Valley Water District
  - Imperial Irrigation District
  - Imperial County
  - Riverside County
- Other funding agencies:
  - U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
  - California Department of Water Resources
  - Calif. Prop. 204 \$2.5 million to match federal funding
- SSA has matched USBR funding to support studies on:
  - bathymetry (depth map)
  - water movement
  - alternative dike structures

## ■ SOLUTION

- Earthen diking is a proven technology
- Cost estimates range up to \$200 million
- PL 102-575 authorizes \$10 million for Salton Sea investigations by USBR; need a line item in USBR's budget to utilize the full amount for planning and preparation of environmental documents
- No federal money for construction at this time