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Remarks from IID General Manager Henry Martinez to the MWD Water Planning and Stewardship Committee

Good morning.

I am here on behalf of the Imperial Irrigation District not so much to speak against this item, although the IID Board of Directors is certainly opposed to the proposal before your committee today and slated to be voted on by the full Metropolitan board tomorrow.

No, I am here to speak in favor of the Drought Contingency Plan, in both basins, and to focus on the importance to all of our agencies and to the Colorado River system that we share in getting it right.

A Lower Basin DCP in which MWD shoulders all of California's water storage contributions at Lake Mead, and assumes all of the attendant risk, may be seen by some as an effective way to motivate IID into participating.

But I can tell you that it is seen in the Imperial Valley as a naked attempt to work around the environmental challenges posed by the Salton Sea.

To be clear, those challenges are in the out-years of the DCP, when, under the driest forecast, the MWD obligation could be almost 2 million acre-feet, and it is not irrational to believe there will be a public clamor, if not an outright demand, to find that water in the Imperial Valley.

That is when people are going to question whether it was such a good idea for the Lower Basin DCP not to wait for the Salton Sea.

There is also nothing irrational or outrageous in IID's call for a federal match in support of the state's 10-year Salton Sea Management Plan. From our perspective, such a federal commitment is the single biggest impediment to a Lower Basin DCP that does what IID and all other Colorado River contractors need for it to do, which is to reduce the risk of reaching critical elevations at Lake Mead.

The way to arrive at a resilient and durable Drought Contingency Plan is for the parties to work through the Salton Sea issue, not around it. Our two agencies have shown that we can do good things for the river and each other when we take the long view, and that capacity to see past the moment is what's urgently needed now.

We all know the DCP has a deadline, but so does the Salton Sea.

And IID's position is that we shouldn't make either of them wait any longer. Thank you.

General Manager