

State cuts are both good and bad for the Salton Sea



Recommend

0 Share 1 (3)

By ELIZABETH VARIN
Imperial Valley Press Staff Writer
2:28 a.m. PDT, May 29, 2011

Cuts from the state look to have a local impact, but some officials are saying a piece of the state budget puzzle will help rather than hurt.

Gov. [Jerry Brown](#)'s proposed efforts to close the multibillion-dollar state deficit includes changes that could shift the state's focus on restoration of the Salton Sea.

Topics

- [Petroleum Industry](#)
- [Gardens and Parks](#)
- [Tourism and Leisure](#)

[See more topics »](#)

Brown's May budget revise includes closing some state parks throughout the state, including the Salton Sea State Recreation Area, along with [eliminating](#) 43 boards and commissions.

- one of which is the recently-created Salton Sea Restoration Council.

Council elimination "a favor"

"(The elimination of the council is) an indication that the state has given up on its responsibility to restore the sea or do any of the [work](#) there," said county Supervisor Gary Wyatt. "It's not necessarily a bad thing."

The state had to decide whether to get on task or get out of the way so that locals can work on it, he said.

Imperial Irrigation District Director Jim Hanks agreed.

"I think they did us a favor," he said.

"We've known all along it's going to be up to us locally to find a solution," he added.

The council was created by former Sen. Denise Moreno Ducheny, and would bring together state and local agencies seek a restoration solution and funding.

However, it could put more constraints on what the Salton Sea Authority is trying to do with the sea, Hanks said.

Millions of dollars have already been set aside through two state propositions for restoration at the Salton Sea, said Silvia Paz, senior field representative for Assemblyman V. Manuel Pérez's office, at a Salton Sea Authority meeting last week. That funding would likely not come through with the council's [elimination](#) if there is no other oversight structure.

Because of the elimination of the council, Assemblyman Pérez, D-Coachella, is considering an alternative structure to keep that money available for restoration measures, Paz said. A new position could be created, a deputy director for the state Department of Natural Resources that would be in charge of the Salton Sea.

State park could be impacted

The state park elimination seems like it will have more of an impact with those going to the Salton Sea for recreation, said Salton Sea Authority [Executive Director](#) Michael O'Connor.

The authority is asking the state to look at options like public-private partnerships to keep the park going, he said.

There may be more hope out there as the Salton Sea park may not be closed because of federal funding it receives.

Sixteen of the 70 state parks targeted for closure receive federal funding under the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which collects royalties from offshore drilling to buy parklands and wildlife refuges, The Associated Press reported.

The fund requires state parks that have received the money to remain open or, if closed, that a park of equal size is opened nearby.

Jon Jarvis, director of the National Park Service in [Washington, D.C.](#), said the funding is a grant to the state, and operates like a contract.

"It is linked directly to the deed of these lands. It says the state makes a commitment to provide these places for public use in perpetuity. To not do that is essentially a breach of that contract," Jarvis said.

Local News



Whooping cough vaccination clinic held to avoid last-minute rush



NAF dedicates POW/MIA memorial, honors squadron



Students get wet while learning about water

Group suspected in stabbing attack



Fallen soldier, veterans honored at El Centro Memorial Day Ceremony



Brawley's Sophia Carrillo off to study in the U.K. and Europe under Fulbright



El Centro metropolitan area records highest April unemployment rate

1:36 p.m.

Desert Oasis High School graduation tonight

Immigration adds 1,300 beds for SoCal detainees

Poetry club to meet in Calexico

Border wait times

Two vehicles sets on fire, arson suspected

If the state were to close parks that receive the federal grants, the National Park Service could declare the state ineligible for future funding under the law.

Staff Writer Elizabeth Varin can be reached at evarin@ivpressonline.com or 760-337-3441.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Copyright © 2011, Imperial Valley Press



Recommend

2

0

Share 1

(3)

Poll

Adelante Valle

Valley Women

A new study links cell phone use with possible brain cancer risk. What do you think?

- Very concerned
- Slightly concerned
- Not worried at all
- Disagree with study

Vote

« Previous Story

More News

Next Story »



Residents have a love affair with the Salton Sea



Westmorland World War II veterans recall the war

Comments (3)

[Add / View comments](#) | [Discussion FAQ](#)

Captain Justicia at 8:01 PM May 29, 2011

Nobody other than Imperial and Riverside residents know that the Salton Sea even exists. Even if they are made aware, it will be the least of their worries. Only by embarrassing the state (hard to do) or by bringing in the major news sources will something be done. hsfoot is correct in this case.

hsfootballfan at 5:14 PM May 29, 2011

Like I said earlier in another post. The effort to save the sea is going to have to be done locally.

Valleyite at 7:57 AM May 29, 2011

If the State winds up being able to rid itself of the Salton Sea State Park, what happens to the land? Does it become available for the public to purchase? Given the poor market conditions and the undesirable location, it could still be for sale ten years from now.

Photo Galleries



IC Health Dept Immunization



Brawley Memorial Day Service



Memorial Day Ceremony in El Centro



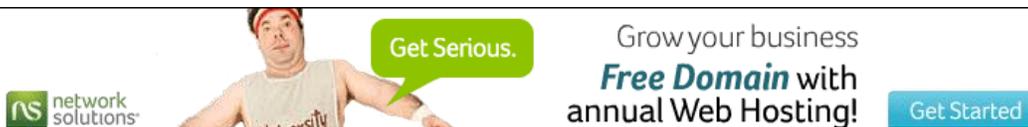
Holtville home run derby



Holtville memorial softball tournament



World War 2 Veterans - Westmorland



network solutions

Get Serious.

Grow your business
Free Domain with
annual Web Hosting!

Get Started

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Terms of Service](#) |

A Schurz Communications website, powered by Tribune Digital