

Salton Sea Long-Range Plan

Appendix H: Independent Review Panel Water Import Feasibility Analysis (released September 2022)



SALTON SEA MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



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Acronyms

IRP	Independent Review Panel
RFI	Request for Information
SSMP	Salton Sea Management Program
UCSC	University of California, Santa Cruz

Appendix H: Independent Review Panel Feasibility Analysis

The Salton Sea Management Program (SSMP) established an Independent Review Panel (IRP) to review concepts for water importation to the Salton Sea for its long-term restoration. The SSMP contracted with the University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) to establish the Panel and provide research and analytical support. UCSC has contracted Kennedy Jenks Consulting and other specialty subcontractors to serve as a support team to an Independent Review Panel to provide research and analysis. The Independent Review Panel was led by Panel Chair, Dr. Rominder Suri, Professor and Chair of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Temple University. Dr. Suri is founding director of Temple University's National Science Foundation-funded Water, Environment, and Technology Center.

1.1. Background and Purpose

On December 8, 2017, the California Natural Resources Agency issued a Request for Information (RFI) to assist the Salton Sea Management Program (SSMP) in identifying approaches to water importation to meet the long-range goals of the SSMP. The IRP was tasked to review the eleven submissions to the RFI and solicit additional ideas for water importation. On August 13, 2021, the chair of the IRP issued an updated RFI to invite:

- Parties that did not participate in the 2017 RFI to make a submission;
- The eleven original participants to update their submissions if they so wish; and
- Both new and original submitters to make a presentation to the Panel on their submission.

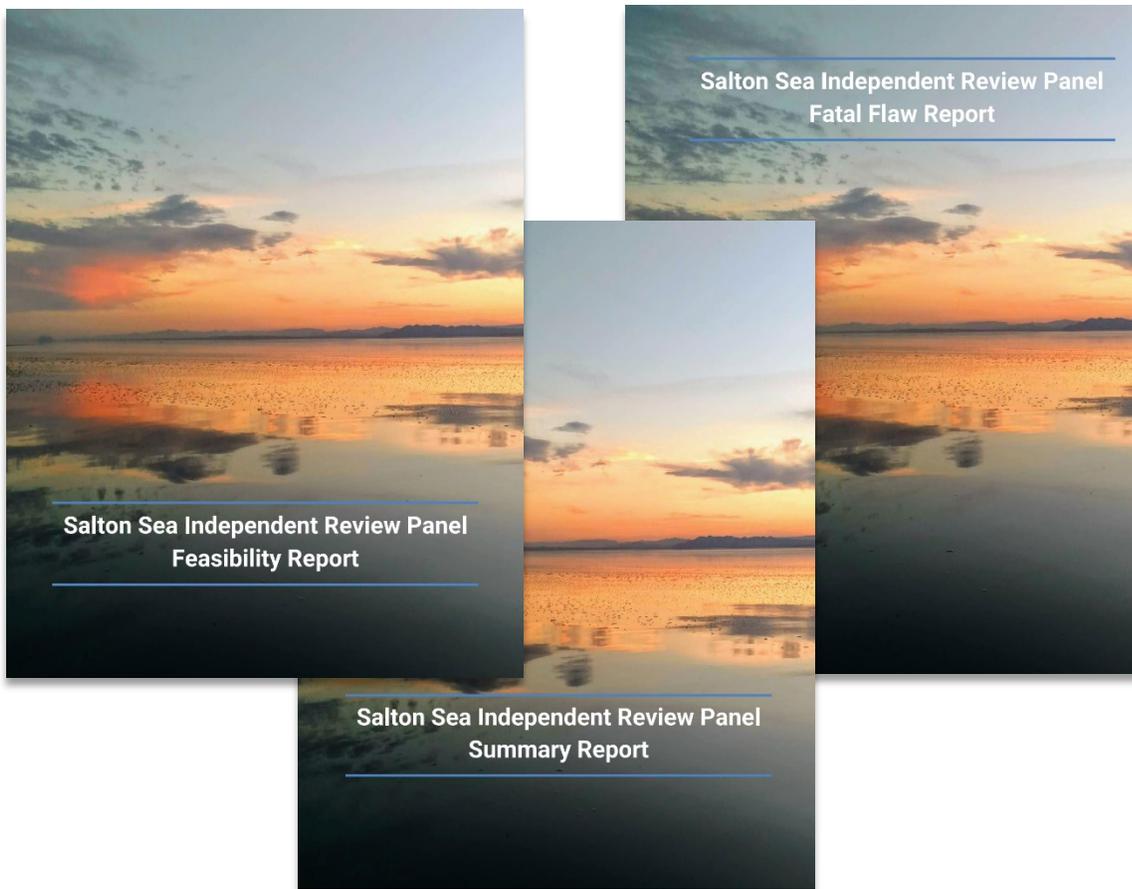
The August 2021 RFI is posted here: [RFI-final.pdf \(ca.gov\)](#)

1.2. Source Material

As mentioned, on two occasions (2017 and 2021), the SSMP and Panel issued public RFIs asking for water-importation-based approaches to restore the Salton Sea. A total of 18 concepts were received. They were reviewed by the Panel with the assistance of a research and analysis support team. The review process includes the following steps:

- Screening of the 18 responses for compliance with RFI requirements.
- A fatal flaw analysis of the remaining submissions.
- Detailed feasibility studies compiled in a Feasibility Report.
- A Summary Report describing the review process, outcomes of the screening and feasibility analyses, and possible next steps.

The Screening process removed five responses from consideration due to non-conformance with the RFI. A Fatal Flaw Report served as a first substantive review of the remaining 13 responses.



The IRP was tasked with independently defining a set of fatal flaws. It did so based on IRP members' expertise and the IRP's research on the region. Because the process of defining fatal flaws occurred after the submission of responses to the RFI, submitters were not informed in advance what the fatal flaw criteria would be. All responses passed through an initial fatal flaw review, and each respondent was given an opportunity to address any fatal flaw identified by the IRP. Ten respondents provided additional material.

Responses to the two RFIs that provided background information to the IRP are available for review at the following locations:

- Responses to the 2017 RFI: [2018 Salton Sea Water Importation Proposals – Salton Sea Management Program \(ca.gov\)](#)
- Responses to the 2021 RFI: [2021 Salton Sea Water Importation Proposals – Salton Sea Management Program \(ca.gov\)](#)

1.3. Findings of the IRP

Throughout the process, IRP held several public meetings and produced the following series of reports:

- Fatal Flaw Report, released July 2022: [Salton-Sea-Independent-Review-Panel-Fatal-Flaw-Report.pdf \(ucsc.edu\)](#)

Appendix H: Independent Review Panel Feasibility Analysis

- Feasibility Report, released September 2022: [Feasibility_Report_9-29-22_Final.pdf \(ca.gov\)](#)
- Summary Report, released September 2022: [Summary_Report_9-29-22_Final \(ca.gov\)](#)

An overview of the IRP process including qualifications of the panelists and links to all the above documents is available at: [Water Importation Independent Review Panel – Salton Sea Management Program \(ca.gov\)](#)

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