In the late 1970s approximately 1 million AF of Colorado River water entered the Salton Sea as agricultural return flow.

In 1984 SWRCB determined (Decision 1600) water loss could be prevented through reasonable conservation measures; IID developed comprehensive water conservation plan.

In 1988 SWRCB set a long-term conservation goal at 367,900 AF (WRO 88-20), endorsed the idea of conserved water transfer from IID to MWD, and acknowledged unavoidable adverse impacts to the Salton Sea.
California’s Growing Water Needs

Colorado River Apportionments (million acre-feet)

- 0.05
- 1.04
- 0.3
- 1.71
- 3.86
- 0.05
- 2.8
- 0.84

February 1991
QSA Negotiations

- By late 1998 discussions regarding the quantification of water rights evolved into negotiations on future transfers/exchanges.
- In 2000 Colorado River Board of CA endorsed soft landing for the Cal 4.4 plan to offset reliance on surplus AZ/NV water.
- Water Authority and IID petition SWRCB in 2002 for change in place of use and point of diversion.
- Unfunded Salton Sea mitigation emerged as watershed issue.
To resolve Salton Sea issues SWRCB requires extensive “mitigation” of the QSA transfers.

Legislation memorialized funding commitments amongst parties.

State financial obligation to cover mitigation costs in excess of QSA funding limit is an unconditional contractual obligation.

State’s “Restoration” of the Salton Sea a separate issue from mitigation but the two can complement each other.

With these environmental responsibilities assigned via contracts and law, the QSA was finalized in 2003.
$156 million spent to date
$136 million planned through 2036
Permanent air quality projects on the ground; expected to be largest expense going forward
EIR/EIS Mitigation and Monitoring Program

1. Access Control
2. Research and Monitoring
3. Emissions Credits
4. Emission Control Measures
18 Years Later – What Went Right/Wrong?

- Mitigation vs. Restoration
- Impact of Natural Desert Environment
- 2007 Preferred Alternative
- Minimal Habitat Creation and Habitat Projects
- Federal Engagement
- Salton Sea Mitigation Water
- QSA JPA Coordination
- Stipulated Order
- Funding Availability