STATE OF CALIFORNIA - THE NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY

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SEP 30 2009

September 28, 2009

Mr. Ed Virden
Assistant Area Manager
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Yuma Area Office
7301 Calle Agua Salada
Yuma, AZ 85364

Dear Mr. Virden:

This letter is in response to the Bureau of Reclamation's invitation for public review and consideration on the draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) on the proposed Yuma Desalting Plant (YDP) Pilot Run released on August 26, 2009. Upon review of the draft FONSI, the Colorado River Board (CRB) finds that it is in general agreement with the results of the final environmental assessment (EA) found on Reclamation's Yuma Area Office website. The CRB suggests that the following comments be considered as Reclamation prepares the final FONSI.

The draft FONSI did not incorporate a discussion of the cumulative effects of the Proposed Action from several current and planned projects that have the potential to affect common resources as was discussed in the final EA. The final EA finds no significant effects expected with implementation of management and mitigation measures related to biological resources, hazardous materials, air quality, aesthetics, and cultural resources. The CRB recommends the inclusion of additional discussion in the FONSI on the findings of the final EA on the cumulative effects of the Proposed Action.

Under the Resource Analysis Section of the draft FONSI, the CRB suggests including a statement that indicates that the hazardous materials that may be used during the proposed YDP Pilot Run are presently used on-site, and that no previously unused chemicals will be utilized. This was mentioned in the final EA and the CRB believes this additional discussion in the FONSI will further emphasize the Proposed Action's lack of any significant environmental impact.

The CRB supports finalizing the FONSI and implementing the YDP Pilot Run. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (818) 500-1625.

Sincerely,

Gerald R. Zimmerman
Executive Director