**SCRIPT— WATER DESK**

**TITLE: CALIFORNIA’S VANISHING LAKE**

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|  | **In the Southernmost corner of California, reaching 15 miles across and 35 miles long, the Salton Sea is California’s largest lake.**  **But due to changes in the management of the Colorado River, every day it is shrinking.** |
| Bob Schettler  Imperial Irrigation District | SCENE: Lindsay: What is it that we are looking at here?  Bob: Well we are looking at exposed lakebed that just a few years ago was covered with Salton Sea water. |
| Jessica Humes  Imperial Irrigation District | Our farmers are doing all on-farm conservation measures so they have switched to drip irrigation or sprinkler irrigation vs. flood irrigation. |
| Bob Schettler  Imperial Irrigation District | One of the problems it creates is that when you conserve water on-farm here, it reduces the water that goes into the Salton Sea. |
| Jessica Humes  Imperial Irrigation District | We transfer water outside to San Diego and the metropolitan water district up in LA and with that water transfer, a smaller amount of water that would ultimately end up at the Salton Sea is now going outside of this region. |
|  | **While heading off a water crisis in California’s cities, water managers have inadvertently created an impending environmental disaster at the Salton Sea.** |
| Chris Schoneman  Fish & Wildlife Service | There has been increasing salinity in the water and just a total bottoming out of the fish population. So for the fish eating birds it’s been devastating. |
|  | **Volunteers from the Audubon Society conduct monthly bird surveys here.** |
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| Dan Cooper  Wildlife Biologist | This was a huge wintering area for pelicans. We had upwards of 30,000 birds each winter. Right now, well we’re lucky if we get 20 birds on a count like this. 8 sec. |
|  | Lindsay: what happens to the birds that don’t show up here anymore?  Dan: That’s the question right? What happens if you have 30,000 pelicans that are no longer at a place? Where are they? |
|  | (standup) **The Salton sea may never be what it once was, but if nothing is done to preserve it, the worst is yet to come. For the communities around it and the wildlife that depend on it.**  **Lindsay Fendt, reporting for The Water Desk.** |
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