

1 adversely affected by either geothermal fluid spills or the  
2 extraction of surface water for geothermal operations.  
3 Offshore development could cause hydrologic and water quality  
4 deterioration in the Salton Sea. Aquatic resources adversely  
5 affected would be the sedentary species (pileworms and other  
6 invertebrates), the fishes, and algae species and resident  
7 fauna of the Salton Sea.

8 Statement of Facts: Fifty-four percent of the expanded  
9 KGRA will be in the offshore portion of the Salton Sea  
10 Anomaly. (MEIR, p. 2.2-1). The offshore is subject to the  
11 same impacts as onshore facilities; in addition, construction  
12 of islands, piers, and causeways and structures which reach  
13 high above the water level will have negative effects on  
14 rafting, feeding and aquatic habitat. (MEIR, p. 3.6-45).  
15 These impacts would be the loss of rafting areas would be  
16 partially offset by the creation of new habitat as fish and  
17 invertebrates are attracted to the newly construction islands,  
18 piers and causeways. Safety hazards may arise from the  
19 proximity of recreational users and offshore geothermal  
20 personnel, as well as boat and barge activity; however, the  
21 loss of recreational use will be partially offset by enhanced  
22 fishing if access is allowed along piers and causeways.

23 Since the Salton Sea and its rivers and wetlands are  
24 important wildlife habitat, special efforts should be made  
25 to prevent damage by spills of geothermal fluids. The MEIR  
26 (p. 3.6-51) states that geothermal wells or power plants  
27 near drains leading to the Salton Sea should be diked and  
28 fitted with blowout preventers. Also, mitigation measures

1 required to reduce the surface water quality degradation  
2 from geothermal fluid spills are equally applicable to  
3 reducing the potential for impact from these spills on  
4 aquatic resources. Selection of dredging periods for causeway  
5 construction should be responsive to the need to minimize impacts  
6 to habitat and disturbance to water-associated avitians  
7 and to prevent increasing suspended sediments among other  
8 considerations (MEIR, p. 3.6-51). Studies of aquatic ecosystems  
9 may be necessary prior to siting offshore structures (MEIR,  
10 p. 3.6-52).

11 The County, to the extent feasible for specific projects,  
12 may require limiting offshore exploratory and development  
13 activities to identified environmentally safe technologies  
14 and activities, the monitoring and study of identified  
15 impacts and development of appropriate mitigation measures  
16 to be required as specific conditions on future permits, and  
17 that priority consideration be given to placing offshore  
18 powerlines underground or underwater in the vicinity of  
19 major avian flight areas. Any geothermal production project  
20 within this zone which proposes to use significant quantities  
21 of surface water for project operations should be specifically  
22 evaluated for its impact on aquatic resources, and any  
23 comprehensive water management program undertaken for the  
24 Salton Sea, as recommended in the MEIR (p. 3.6-51), should  
25 specifically evaluate the potential impacts from water  
26 levels and salinity to aquatic resources.

27 Imperial County will consider and may require all these  
28 mitigation measures of each geothermal production project

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1 proposed within this zone unless the subsequent, project-  
2 specific environmental document prepared for each project  
3 identifies mitigation measures which may be more appropriate  
4 or identifies that the impact is not significant and mitigation  
5 is not appropriate.

6 Finding: Imperial County will require for or incorporate  
7 into each site-specific project proposed within this zone  
8 changes or alterations which mitigate or avoid the significant  
9 environmental effects identified hereinabove.

10 CULTURAL RESOURCES

11 In General

12 / Each site-specific project will have changes or alterations  
13 incorporated into it to mitigate its cultural impacts.  
14 Therefore geothermal development in the expanded G-Zone  
15 will not have a significantly adverse effect on the cultural  
16 environment in Imperial County.

17 22. Significant Effect: The MEIR (p. 3.7-3) identifies  
18 that geothermal production project development within this  
19 zone could result in destruction of archaeological resources.

20 Statement of Facts: The MEIR (p. 3.7-4) states that  
21 archaeological sites should be preserved and protected  
22 primarily by avoidance. If this cannot be accomplished, the  
23 MEIR also states that site-specific archaeological investigations  
24 should be required. Imperial County has required the following  
25 of other geothermal production projects within the County:  
26 a site-specific cultural resource survey in any area where  
27 there is a potential for the discovery of archeological  
28 resources; if any unusual specimens of bone, stone, or

1 ceramic are discovered during construction, all construction  
2 affecting the discovery site shall cease until a qualified  
3 archaeologist, retained by the project permittee, reviews  
4 the specimens; and the recommendations of the archaeologist  
5 shall be complied with prior to resuming construction.

6 Imperial County will consider and may require all these  
7 mitigation measures of each geothermal production project  
8 proposed within this one unless the subsequent, project-  
9 specific environmental document prepared for each project  
10 identifies mitigation measures which may be more appropriate  
11 or identifies that the impact is not significant and mitigation  
12 is not appropriate.

13 Finding: Imperial County will require for or incorporate  
14 into each site-specific project proposed within this zone  
15 changes or alterations which mitigate or avoid the significant  
16 environmental effects identified hereinabove.

17 LAND USE

18 In General

19 Each site-specific project will have changes or alterations  
20 incorporated into it to mitigate its land use impacts.  
21 Therefore geothermal development in the expanded G-Zone will  
22 not have a significant adverse effect on land use in Imperial  
23 County.

24 23. Significant Effect: The MEIR (p. 3.8-45) identifies  
25 that geothermal production project development within the  
26 zone could result in direct impacts to agriculture through  
27 the displacement of a small amount of agricultural land, and  
28 also in indirect impacts to agriculture via the disruption

1 of farming activities from electric and fluid transmission  
2 line installation, traffic, and other operations.

3 Statement of Facts: The Geothermal Element to the  
4 General Plan of Imperial County states that "the County  
5 shall require that production facilities be sited in a  
6 manner designed to lessen impact on agriculture. Slant  
7 drilling may be required in irrigated areas when appropriate.  
8 Liquid transmission lines shall utilize existing easements  
9 or right of way whenever possible." While a loss of arable  
10 land cannot be completely avoided (MEIR, p. 3.8-41), careful  
11 power plant siting, directional drilling and pipeline design  
12 can reduce land consumption and minimize interference with  
13 agricultural activity (MEIR, p. 3.8-59). Transmission line  
14 construction should also be coordinated with local planning  
15 and irrigation schedules. Crop production should be allowed  
16 within right-of-way, and transmission lines should follow  
17 roads and canals when possible (MEIR, p. 3.8-58). In addition  
18 to the above, the MEIR (p. 3.8-58) identified other mitigation  
19 measures which Imperial County has required of other geothermal  
20 production projects within the County to minimize the impact  
21 of geothermal development activities on agricultural operations.  
22 These include transmission line siting and construction to  
23 avoid complication of the aerial application of agricultural  
24 materials and other agricultural activities, measures to  
25 avoid land subsidence which could disrupt the network of  
26 irrigation and drainage systems, measures to minimize the  
27 possibility of blowouts and geothermal fluid spills, and  
28 measures to minimize cooling tower drift. Imperial County

1 will consider and may require all these mitigation measures  
2 of each geothermal production project proposed within this  
3 zone unless the subsequent, project-specific environmental  
4 document prepared for each project identifies mitigation  
5 measures which may be more appropriate or identifies that  
6 the impact is not significant and mitigation is not appropriate.

7 Finding: Imperial County will require for or incorporate  
8 into each site-specific project proposed within this zone  
9 changes or alterations which mitigate or avoid the significant  
10 environmental effects identified hereinabove.

11 24. Significant Effect: The MEIR (p. 3.8-43) indicates  
12 that unrestricted geothermal development within the zone  
13 could conflict with the goal of the Imperial County General  
14 Plan Conservation Element to protect significant mineral  
15 resources.

16 Statement of Facts: The MEIR (p. 3.8-43) indicates  
17 that the Conservation Element designates certain lands in  
18 the extreme northeast corner of the zone as having potential  
19 for sand and gravel resources. The MEIR (p. 3.857) also  
20 indicates that the potential conflict between protection of  
21 these resources and development of the geothermal resources  
22 can be mitigated by avoiding the siting of geothermal facilities  
23 on these lands. Imperial County will require site-specific,  
24 review of geothermal projects for interference with sand and  
25 gravel extraction.

26 Finding: Imperial County will require for or incorporate  
27 into each site-specific project proposed within this zone  
28 changes or alterations which mitigate or avoid the significant

1 environmental effects identified hereinabove.

2 25. Significant Effect: The MEIR (p. 3.8-49) identifies  
3 that geothermal development within the zone has the potential  
4 for creating adverse impacts on recreational activities by  
5 changing the ambience of the region from rural agricultural  
6 environmental and desert playground to a more urban and  
7 industrialized area, and potentially limiting the recreational  
8 opportunities now available within the area.

9 Statement of Facts: The MEIR (p. 3.8-59) states that  
10 impacts to recreation will be largely avoided by zoning  
11 areas outside the Salton Sea. However, the MEIR also indicates  
12 that certain mitigation measures, such as consolidation of  
13 power lines, wells, plants, and pipelines where feasible to  
14 minimize the disruption of recreational activities and bird  
15 fatalities and slant drilling where appropriate, would  
16 reduce impacts to recreation. The potential impacts to  
17 recreational activities in the area can best be mitigated  
18 through planning and cooperation with the California Department  
19 of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and local  
20 sportsmen clubs (MEIR, p. 3.8-58). The County will comply  
21 with CEQA mandates which require consultation with government  
22 agencies and interested private parties which are potentially  
23 affected by projects approved by the County as a "lead  
24 agency".

25 Imperial County will consider and may require all these  
26 mitigation measures of each geothermal production project  
27 proposed within this zone unless the subsequent, project-  
28 specific environmental document prepared for each project

1 identifies mitigation measures which may be more appropriate  
2 or identifies that the impact is not significant and mitigation  
3 is not appropriate.

4 Finding: Imperial County will require for or incorporate  
5 into each site-specific project proposed within this zone  
6 changes or alterations which mitigate or avoid the significant  
7 environmental effects identified hereinabove.

8 26. Significant Effect: The MEIR identifies some  
9 competing land uses within the G-Zone (MEIR, p. 3.8-42).

10 Statement of Facts: In any situation where different  
11 types of land use coexist within the same zone, conflicts  
12 may occur. In such instances, two solutions are discussed:  
13 either lands designated Preservation, Recreation, Rural  
14 Residential and Open Space could be avoided, by geothermal  
15 development (which may be impractical in geothermal project  
16 areas), or various County land use planning documents could  
17 be revised on a case-by-case basis (MEIR, p. 3.8-57).  
18 Therefore, geothermal projects within the G-Zone will be  
19 required to consider the effects on adjacent land uses and  
20 on the land use planning documents which affect those lands.  
21 The County may then decide how best to mitigate identified  
22 impact.

23 Finding: Imperial County will require for or incorporate  
24 into each site-specific project proposed within this zone  
25 changes or alterations which mitigate or avoid the significant  
26 environmental effects identified hereinabove.

27 27. Significant Effect: The MEIR (p. 3.8-52) identifies  
28 that geothermal development within the zone could significantly

1 impact the urban area in and around the community of Niland.

2 Statement of Facts: Imperial County's "Terms, Conditions,  
3 Standards and Application Procedures for Initial Geothermal  
4 Development" specify that wells (and, presumably, power  
5 plants) must be sited a minimum distance from residences,  
6 schools, hospitals and any other development. The MEIR (p.  
7 3.8-60) also suggests that all power plants be sited greater  
8 than 0.5 miles from the Niland sphere of influence boundary  
9 unless such development is found to be consistent with  
10 County and municipal land use plans, and that class II  
11 standards should be applied to all development within 0.5  
12 mile of urban/residential areas. Only a small portion of  
13 the proposed G-Zone is near urbanized areas. Where proposed  
14 geothermal projects approach these areas, efforts will be  
15 made to site them as far away as feasible. Where this is  
16 impossible, as discussed in the MEIR (p. 3.8-60), additional  
17 mitigation measures will be required.

18 Imperial County will consider and may require all these  
19 mitigation measures of each geothermal production project  
20 proposed within this zone unless the subsequent, project-  
21 specific environmental document prepared for each project  
22 identifies mitigation measures which may be more appropriate  
23 or identifies that the impact is not significant and mitigation  
24 is not appropriate.

25 Finding: Imperial County will require for or incorporate  
26 into each site-specific project proposed within this zone  
27 changes or alterations which mitigate or avoid the significant  
28 environmental effects identified hereinabove.

1           28. Significant Effect: The safety hazard of transporting  
2 solid waste to the existing Class II-1 disposal site, roughly  
3 six miles west of Westmorland, will exist.

4           29. Significant Effect: The MEIR (p. 3.8-52) identifies  
5 that the increased traffic on surface streets and local  
6 highways during development, construction, and operation of  
7 geothermal facilities will constitute a significant, but to  
8 a large degree temporary, adverse impact on transportation  
9 and traffic in and around the area of the zone.

10           Statement of Facts: Imperial County has required the  
11 following mitigation measures identified in the MEIR (p.  
12 3.8-61) of other geothermal production projects within the  
13 County: onsite parking facilities; a proper escort with  
14 warning signs during the transportation of oversized equipment  
15 to minimize the impacts on transportation and traffic. In  
16 addition, the MEIR (p. 3.8-60) suggested that car-pooling of  
17 drilling and construction crews, staggering work shifts to  
18 mitigate concentrations of traffic, and railroad transport  
19 of the heaviest and largest power plant components, could be  
20 required if appropriate, to mitigate traffic and transportation  
21 impacts.

22           Imperial County will consider and may require all these  
23 mitigation measures of each geothermal production project  
24 proposed within this zone unless the subsequent, project-  
25 specific environmental document prepared for each project  
26 identifies mitigation measures which may be more appropriate  
27 or identifies that the impact is not significant and mitigation  
28 is not appropriate.

1 Finding: Imperial County will require for or incorporate  
2 into each site-specific project proposed within this zone  
3 changes or alterations which mitigate or avoid the significant  
4 environmental effects identified hereinabove.

5 Statement of Facts: Future plans for improving State  
6 Routes 86 and 111 would reduce potential accident hazards.  
7 Until that takes place, the potential hazard caused by left-  
8 turning trucks to the IT disposal site on State Route 86 has  
9 been mitigated by construction of a left turn pocket at the  
10 intersection (MEIR, p. 3.8-60, 61). Improvements to State  
11 Routes 86 and 111, identified in the MEIR (p. 3.8-60), are  
12 within the responsibility and jurisdiction of the California  
13 Transportation Agency (Caltrans). Caltrans can and should  
14 undertake these actions, in consultation with Imperial  
15 County, which could significantly reduce traffic and transportation  
16 impacts from geothermal developments within the zone.

17 Finding: Changes or alterations required to mitigate  
18 or avoid the significant environmental effects identified  
19 hereinabove are within the responsibility and jurisdiction  
20 of another public agency (Caltrans), and such changes can  
21 and should be adopted, to the extent of its responsibility  
22 and jurisdiction, by such other agency.

23 SOCIOECONOMICS

24 In General

25 Each site-specific project will have changes or alterations  
26 incorporated into it to mitigate its socioeconomic impacts.  
27 Therefore geothermal development in the expanded G-Zone will  
28 not have significantly adverse socioeconomic impact in

1 Imperial County.

2 30. Effect/Statement of Facts/Findings: The MEIR  
3 points out that geothermal production projects will have the  
4 effect of increasing population (MEIR, 3.9-22). The relocating  
5 population, however, would not represent a significant  
6 population addition to the Imperial Valley because it would  
7 be relatively small, occur over a 32-year development period  
8 and would be dispersed throughout the Valley (MEIR, pp. 3.9-  
9 22, 25).

10 31. Effect/Statement of Facts/Findings: The MEIR  
11 points out that geothermal production projects will have the  
12 effect of increasing employment (MEIR, p. 3.9-25). No  
13 significant adverse employment impacts are anticipated,  
14 however (MEIR, p. 3.9-47). Indeed, increased employment is  
15 viewed as a very positive effect of geothermal development.  
16 No mitigation is desirable.

17 32. Significant Effect: The MEIR (p. 3.9-27) identifies  
18 that geothermal development in and around the zone could  
19 produce a short-term demand for temporary housing, that the  
20 existing accommodations would be inadequate to satisfy.

21 Statement of Facts: If development occurs at a too  
22 rapid pace, some provisions should be made for housing for  
23 construction crews. The MEIR (p. 3.9-47) indicates that  
24 development of temporary housing, such as a trailer park or  
25 camp to house the construction workers, or arrangements with  
26 local hotel operators for long-term leases for adequate  
27 rooms, should be considered.

28 Imperial County will consider and may require all these

1 mitigation measures of each geothermal production project  
2 proposed within this zone unless the subsequent, project-  
3 specific environmental document prepared for each project  
4 identifies mitigation measures which may be more appropriate  
5 or identifies that the impact is not significant and mitigation  
6 is not appropriate.

7 Finding: Imperial County will require for or incorporate  
8 into each site-specific project proposed within this zone  
9 changes or alterations which mitigate or avoid the significant  
10 environmental effects identified hereinabove.

11 33. Significant Effect: The MEIR (p. 3.9-32) indicates  
12 that geothermal development within the zone may have a  
13 significant impact on the Niland Fire District's ability to  
14 provide protection from natural hazards.

15 Statement of Facts: The MEIR (p. 3.9-48) states that  
16 each geothermal facility proposed within the zone should be  
17 reviewed on a project-by-project basis to determine whether:  
18 the Niland Fire District has adequate capacity to assume  
19 total responsibility; necessary funding could be provided to  
20 equip the Niland Fire District as required; joint responsibility  
21 could be shared by several fire districts; or the private  
22 developer could assume responsibility and provide patrols  
23 for developments according to state and county standards.  
24 Alternatively, the MEIR stated that consideration should be  
25 given to establishing a special assessment district.

26 Imperial County will consider and may require all these  
27 mitigation measures of each geothermal production project  
28 proposed within this zone unless the subsequent, project-

1 specific environmental document prepared for each project  
2 identifies mitigation measures which may be more appropriate  
3 or identifies that the impact is not significant and mitigation  
4 is not appropriate. \* - -

5 Finding: Imperial County will require for or incorporate  
6 into each site-specific project proposed within this zone  
7 changes or alterations which mitigate or avoid the significant  
8 environmental effects identified hereinabove.

9 34. Significant Effect/Statement of Facts/Findings:

10 The MEIR indicates that geothermal production projects will  
11 increase property tax receipts by the County (p. 3.9-32).  
12 Property tax revenues derived from the assessed value of the  
13 completed geothermal facilities constitute a long term  
14 positive fiscal impact of the proposed G-Zone (MEIR, 3.9-  
15 32). No mitigation is desirable.

16 VISUAL RESOURCES.

17 35. Significant Effect: The MEIR (p. 3.10-1) identifies  
18 that the development of 29 plants and well fields within the  
19 Geothermal Zone, coupled with anticipated development to the  
20 west, could greatly change the visual and aesthetic character  
21 of the area.

22 Statement of Facts: Imperial County has required most  
23 of the following mitigation measures identified in the MEIR  
24 (p. 3.10-13) of other geothermal projects within the County:  
25 that all expansion loops in geothermal fluid lines be horizontal  
26 except where design constraints require otherwise; that  
27 shrubs, trees and ground cover be planted and maintained to  
28 complement the appearance of the project in accordance with

1 a landscaping plan approved by the County; that all lights  
2 be directed or shielded as to as to confine any direct rays  
3 to the site and be muted to the maximum extent consistent  
4 with safety and operational necessity; that geothermal  
5 development facilities be painted or wrapped with nonreflective  
6 colors to blend in as much as possible with the surrounding  
7 terrain to the extent consistent with safety and operational  
8 necessity; and that electric transmission lines be designed  
9 and constructed so as to minimize visual impacts.

10 Imperial County will consider and may require all these  
11 mitigation measures of each geothermal production project  
12 proposed within this zone unless the subsequent, project-  
13 specific environmental document prepared for each project  
14 identifies mitigation measures which may be more appropriate  
15 or identifies that the impact is not significant and mitigation  
16 is not appropriate.

17 Finding: Imperial County will require for or incorporate  
18 into each site-specific project proposed within this zone  
19 changes or alterations which mitigate or avoid the significant  
20 environmental effects identified hereinabove.

21 C. FINDINGS REGARDING  
22 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES  
23 TO REZONING

24 In addition to the above findings and mitigation measures,  
25 the Board reviewed six basic alternatives to the proposed  
26 rezoning. They were:

27 Alternative 1. No Project (MEIR, pp. 7-1).

28 Since the existing G-Zone encompasses about 26,000

1 acres (including approximately 6,000 acres lying north, west  
2 and south of the community of Niland recently added to the  
3 pre-existing zone), there still could be substantial geothermal  
4 development even if this project of rezoning to 111,444  
5 acres were not approved. The effect of non-approval could  
6 reduce some of the expected impacts to boating, recreation,  
7 waterfowl, and aquatic biology on the Salton Sea. But by  
8 the same token, it is possible that the no project alternative  
9 could result in increased pressures for development within  
10 the existing G-Zone in order to more fully tap the heat  
11 stored in the reservoir. Similarly, even without an enlargement  
12 of the zone, geothermal developers could attempt to obtain  
13 approval in the larger area on a case-by-case basis, thus  
14 defeating the purpose of the Master EIR approach.

15 In either event, it is clear that both approval and  
16 non-approval will result in geothermal development in some  
17 of the area. Non-approval will not accomplish the goal of  
18 timely development of the large geothermal resource at the  
19 Salton Sea KGRA.

20 Alternative 2. Different Boundaries (MEIR, p. 7-2).

21 (a) Exclusion of offshore areas. This alternative  
22 would have little direct effect on any geothermal plants  
23 before 1990, because no offshore power plants are even  
24 anticipated until about that time. It would reduce the  
25 impact of development on the Sea, and allow for possible  
26 future development offshore when plans become firmer and  
27 solutions to identified problems have been better formulated.  
28 However, it would also foreclose the tapping of a large

1 portion of the geothermal reservoir which underlies portions  
2 of the Salton Sea and it is possible that this alternative  
3 would impair planning for the future orderly development of  
4 this reservoir by geothermal developers and thus delay the  
5 creation of offshore geothermal technology. Thus, a variety  
6 of opportunities for water quality, biological, and recreational  
7 enhancement might be lost by adopting this alternative.

8 (b) Selective expansion (into areas to be developed in  
9 the next 10-20 years). Figure 2.5-3 of the MEIR identifies  
10 seven such areas. This would permit the current plans of  
11 developers to be realized while limiting growth in areas not  
12 known to contain resources. However, it does not allow the  
13 flexibility necessary to developers who may discover resources  
14 in the non-G-Zone area. It prevents smooth planning. And,  
15 the goals of selective expansion can more easily, fairly and  
16 precisely be accomplished by the case-by-case consideration  
17 of each proposed project rather than blanket exclusions such  
18 as this alternative offers.

19 (c) Expansion into new KGRA area. Roughly 5120 acres  
20 of the Salton Sea KGRA were not included in this MEIR because  
21 they were added to the KGRA by the United States Geological  
22 Survey after the study began. Additional studies on this  
23 land would be necessary before it could be added to the G-  
24 Zone.

25 (d) Remove part of existing G-Overlay Zone. This  
26 could reduce impacts on some sensitive areas such as avian  
27 flyways and buffer zones, but would also remove some very  
28 promising development areas. Permit conditions can adequately

1 protect the biological and land use values while allowing  
2 development to proceed.

3 Alternative 3. Different Development Scenarios (MEIR,  
4 p. 7-4).

5 (a) Ultimate development--worst case. If 4000 MW were  
6 developed instead of 1400 MW, most of the impacts would be  
7 2-3 times greater. However, greater efforts could be made  
8 to keep impacts at an absolute minimum for each individual  
9 project, thus keeping the aggregate impact to an acceptable  
10 level.

11 (b) Different rate of development. The MEIR postulated  
12 three different growth rates: slow, medium and fast. The  
13 MEIR studies the medium rate most intensively, but all three  
14 have similar impacts in the next few years, and all three  
15 are major projects within 30 years. The same general impacts  
16 would probably eventually occur, regardless of the rate of  
17 growth. Adoption of this alternative would not prevent the  
18 impacts.

19 Alternative 4. Support System Alternatives -- Transmission  
20 Lines and Switching Facilities (MEIR, p. 7-11).

21 (a) Direct transmission via small lines. This alternative  
22 would result in more lines and more construction and operation  
23 impact than the other alternatives under consideration.

24 (b) Direct transmission via a combination of small-  
25 and mid-sized lines. The impacts would be similar to (a)  
26 above, but slightly reduced. The impacts would still be  
27 greater than the selected program.

28 /

1 (c) Direct transmission to a centralized switchyard.  
2 This option would reduce the number of transmission lines  
3 and decrease the overall environmental disruption. It is  
4 also consistent with the energy conservation goals of the  
5 California Energy Commission by minimizing transmission line  
6 losses. Utilities will work with IID on determining the  
7 most efficient transmission system as the area develops.  
8 Until plant locations are known, final plans for this alternative  
9 cannot be completed.

10 Alternative 5. Offshore Alternatives (MEIR p. 7-15).  
11 Various sections of the MEIR deal with this alternative.  
12 Principal variables are the evolving technologies and the  
13 various types of development which might be proposed. Man-  
14 made islands, dikes and reclamation, or steel or concrete  
15 piers are discussed. Each has advantages and drawbacks, and  
16 cannot be fully evaluated until a specific project is proposed.  
17 Therefore, the merits of this alternative cannot be determined.

18 Alternative 6. Alternative Technologies (MEIR, p. 7-  
19 15).

20 (a) Binary Conversion Cycle. This could be a feasible  
21 technology for use in the Salton Sea G-Zone. It will require  
22 an outside source of cooling water, but will inject 100% of  
23 its produced fluid. This technology reduces air emissions  
24 and the potential for subsidence over a flash plant.

25 (b) Wet-Dry Cooling Towers. These towers conserve  
26 water by cooling with air during cooler night hours, but  
27 they are very costly. If water for cooling becomes a critical  
28 factor, use of these devices, or additional dry components

1 added to existing wet towers, is possible.

2 The Board finds, pursuant to Public Resources Code  
3 Section 21081(c) that, the present impossibility of determining  
4 whether these project alternatives will be necessary to  
5 reduce or eliminate any remaining environmental effects, the  
6 lack of information as to the magnitude of remaining environmental  
7 effects for individual projects, and the future economic and  
8 technological feasibility of the alternative, make it infeasible  
9 for the Board to adopt any of these project alternatives.

10 IV. STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

11 As stated above, the zoning expansion will not in  
12 itself create direct environmental consequences. Consequently,  
13 the County cannot determine whether a Statement of Overriding  
14 Considerations truly is necessary. In any event, overriding  
15 considerations justify the zoning expansion, as indicated  
16 herein.

17 The implementation of the mitigation measures as stated  
18 above in the report of Environmental Impact Findings, or  
19 such other measures as may subsequently be determined to be  
20 appropriate, substantially reduce, mitigate, or avoid nearly  
21 all of the significant, adverse impacts identified in Section  
22 III of the MEIR. However, as stated in the MEIR (p. 4-1),  
23 "Development as planned will result in unavoidable adverse  
24 impacts because complete mitigation is not possible by any  
25 reasonable means." Thus, these required mitigation measures  
26 do not fully mitigate or avoid certain of the adverse impacts  
27 indicated in the MEIR. Section IV of the MEIR describes  
28 these and other unavoidable adverse impacts which will

1 result from geothermal development.

2 Also, the measures necessary to mitigate or avoid  
3 certain significant impacts identified in Section III of the  
4 MEIR cannot or may not be implemented because changes or  
5 alterations which may be required in the project to mitigate  
6 or avoid such impacts are either within the responsibility  
7 or jurisdiction of other agencies or are infeasible due to  
8 economic, social or technological considerations. To the  
9 extent such impacts are not fully mitigated or avoided, the  
10 risk of their occurrence is outweighed by the benefits  
11 (stated in the following paragraphs) that will be derived  
12 from approval of the project.

13 In addition, the MEIR (p. 7-2) states that "It is  
14 possible that the no project alternative could result in  
15 increased pressures for geothermal development within the  
16 existing G-Overlay Zone in order to more fully tap the heat  
17 stored in the reservoir. Thus the potential for adverse  
18 environmental impacts to sensitive areas within the G-Zone  
19 could conceivably intensify if the no project alternative  
20 were implemented."

21 Two issues (#6 - water use, and #19 - wildlife habitat)  
22 were discussed extensively, both in the MEIR and the public  
23 hearings. The impacts related to these issues are not all  
24 necessarily adverse, but rather, are difficult to quantify  
25 because the type and location of geothermal development  
26 which occurs will greatly affect the impacts.

27 Approval of this zoning change does not mean these two  
28 issues are ignored. The Board feels that each of these two

1 issues can best be mitigated by coordinated development.  
2 The Board finds that, considering the benefits which can  
3 accrue to the County, as indicated hereinbelow, this zoning  
4 change should be made. The ensuing geothermal developments  
5 can then be planned carefully to improve the water use (item  
6 #6) and the wildlife habitat (item #19) in Imperial County.

7 Rather than having an unmitigatable adverse impact on  
8 these two items, geothermal development can offer positive  
9 assistance on both. Geothermal development offers many  
10 opportunities for growth, innovation and environmental  
11 enhancement in the County, and this zoning change will help  
12 those improvements to happen.

13 Therefore, the Board of Supervisors approves the expansion  
14 of the Salton Sea Anomaly G-Zone, based on the following  
15 overriding considerations:

16 1. The MEIR (p. 3.9-25) and the hearing record identify  
17 that significant economic and social benefits can accrue to  
18 the County from the approval of this project. The zoning  
19 expansion is a necessary preliminary step to actual development  
20 of geothermal resources at the Salton Sea. Such development  
21 will ultimately produce major socio-economic benefits within  
22 the County including, but not limited to: increased employment  
23 for residents, in local construction jobs for 10 years and  
24 permanent local operation jobs (MEIR, pp. 3.9-25, 26);  
25 increased property values, increased property tax revenues  
26 and increased local sales and other taxes (MEIR, pp. 3.9-31  
27 to 47), increased demand for locally available goods and  
28 services, and a more diversified industrial base (MEIR, pp.

1 3.9-26, 27).

2 2. The MEIR indicates exclusion of offshore areas  
3 from the zoning expansion could ". . . impair the pursuit of  
4 offshore planning by the geothermal developers and thus  
5 further delay the creation of offshore geothermal technology  
6 and solutions." (MEIR, p. 7-2.) It is therefore essential  
7 to approve the zoning expansion so as to give impetus for  
8 long range planning and development of necessary technologies  
9 and mitigation measures.

10 3. Most of the zoning expansion area is already  
11 designated by the Federal Government as part of the Salton  
12 Sea Known Geothermal Resource Area. Based on earlier completed  
13 environmental review, the Bureau of Land Management currently  
14 is issuing geothermal development leases within the area.  
15 The State Lands Commission has also leased substantial land  
16 for geothermal development within the subject area. It is  
17 therefore critical for the County's zoning to encompass,  
18 among other lands, those areas recognized by the State and  
19 Federal Governments as candidates for geothermal development.  
20 Such zoning by the County is necessary to foster compatible  
21 planning efforts by County, State and Federal Governments.

22 4. The MEIR emphasizes that benefits in productivity  
23 outweigh the environmental impacts: "Full field development  
24 of 1400 MW of geothermal power will represent a significant  
25 mid- to long-term benefit in productivity. Although it is  
26 presently unknown how long the resource will last, and to  
27 what extent it may be considered renewable, projections of a  
28 resource production capability of 1400 MW for at least 30

1 years have been made. While development of the Salton Sea  
2 Anomaly will constitute only a small portion of the nation's  
3 total energy needs, it does represent an important alternate  
4 energy source which could help reduce dependence on foreign  
5 energy sources. The local and regional energy benefits are  
6 clear. In this context, the project is seen as being highly  
7 beneficial." (MEIR, Section VI, page 6-1).

8 5. Impacts, such as loss of agricultural land or  
9 habitat, can best be mitigated by the coordinated development  
10 of geothermal resources. Approving this project will assist  
11 in ensuring that geothermal development can be planned  
12 carefully to improve the environment of the area, ensure the  
13 coordination of geothermal development among State and  
14 Federal agencies, and enhance the coordination of the analysis  
15 and mitigation of adverse impacts that might occur as a  
16 result of geothermal development. There may now exist, or  
17 be in development, technologies which will more effectively  
18 mitigate some of the impacts identified in the MEIR but  
19 which either are not yet sufficiently developed or are  
20 currently too costly to permit their implementation. Approval  
21 of this project will stimulate the development of these  
22 technologies and create a cost-effective market for their  
23 use, and the County has reserved the right to require implementa-  
24 of such technologies when available and feasible.

25 The above resolution was offered by Supervisor SEABOLT,  
26 seconded by Supervisor BUCHER, and passed by the  
27 affirmative roll call vote of the members of the Board of  
28 Supervisors as follows: LEGASPI, BLUME, BUCHER,

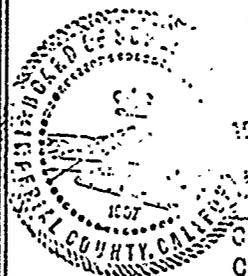
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SEABOLT, CURIEL

The above resolution was adopted at a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Imperial, California, held on this 11th day of December, 1984.

Kathy Jones  
KATHY JONES, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Imperial, State of California.

The Foregoing Instrument is a Correct Copy of the Original on File in this Office



12-19 19 84  
Kathy Jones  
Clerk for the Board of Supervisors  
County of Imperial, State of California