



California
STATE LANDS
Commission

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STATE LANDS COMMISSION GRANTED INTERVENOR STATUS IN TIJUANA RIVER LITIGATION

This action comes at a time when more than six million gallons a day of raw sewage spilling into the Tijuana River

Sacramento, CA – A District Court has granted the California State Lands Commission’s request to join in the state’s litigation to halt the flow of toxic waste and sewage from the Tijuana River to the Pacific Ocean. The Commission formally filed its complaint today.

"Today's filing bolsters our ability to actively defend the state's vested interest in protecting California's pristine coastline, vibrant ecosystems, thriving ports, and public access for all," said State Controller and Commission Chair Betty Yee.

Most recently, more than six million gallons a day of raw sewage have been spilling into the Tijuana River since Monday night, owing to a ruptured pipe. Shorelines from Imperial Beach to Coronado have been closed for several days because of polluted water flushed through the Tijuana River by recent rains. The Mayor of Imperial Beach recently called for an investigation into when the spill occurred.

"Pollution in our coastal waters poses an unacceptable risk to human health and the environment, and it causes economic losses to communities in South San Diego," said Lt. Governor and Commissioner Gavin Newsom. "Today's filing will strengthen the state's case and help hold accountable those who've failed to comply with requirements to treat wastewater and ensure safe water quality."

The almost continuous flow of toxic waste and sewage into the Tijuana River and the Pacific Ocean is a significant threat to public health, two state parks, a national wildlife refuge and the health and vitality of the impacted communities. There have been 376 sewage spills to date. Earlier this year, several public agencies filed litigation against the U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission, the federal agency responsible for addressing pollution traveling across the U.S.-Mexico border, for repeated Clean Water Act violations related to Tijuana River pollution.

The Commission is the exclusive administrator of the State's responsibilities over ungranted sovereign lands in the Tijuana River Watershed and the Pacific Ocean, holding them in trust for the People of California. The Commission has a direct and immediate interest in the outcome of the State's litigation. The past and current spills and discharges into the Tijuana River Watershed and the Pacific Ocean imperil the public's ability to use and enjoy its sovereign lands.

The Commission's participation in the litigation as an intervenor will unite the Commission with the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region, as plaintiffs in the State's lawsuit against the U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission for alleged Clean Water Act violations.

The Commission's complaint, filed today, is [here](#).