

# Upper Santa Cruz and Southern Altar Valley Reserve

- 1 Marley Ranch
- 2 Rancho Seco
- 3 Sopori Ranch
- 4 Canoa Ranch

- Riparian
- Grassland
- Mountains



## Pima Pineapple Cactus

This cactus is federally listed as an endangered species. This Reserve contains a significant number of these increasingly rare plants.

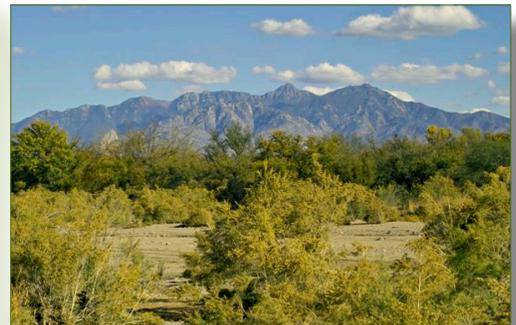


Photo by Mary Scott

## Pronghorn

The southern end of this Reserve is seasonally utilized by the remnant pronghorn herd in the area.

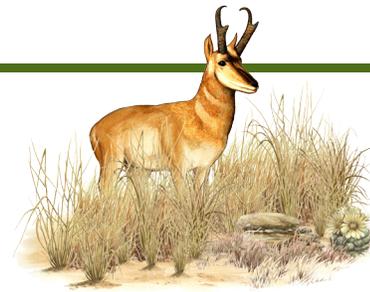
## Santa Cruz County



Sopori Creek. Photo by Joseph Belfere, ACWT

## Sopori Watershed

The Sopori Watershed is a shallow groundwater system, which includes the Sopori Wash and several important springs that support a rich and diverse ecosystem. The Sopori Wash is an important tributary to the Santa Cruz River and has served as the site of numerous human settlements over thousands of years.



## Public Access

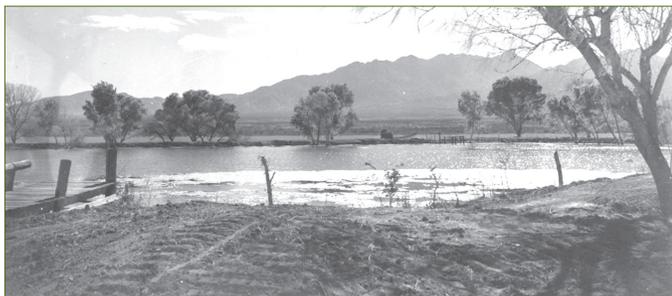
Since taking ownership of the portions of the Sopori Ranch in Pima County, the County has established public access across County lands to State Trust and Coronado National Forest lands to the east for recreational users. This cattle guard replaced fencing on the Sopori Ranch to provide public access.



Photo by John Sullivan

## Historic Ranches

Homesteaders settled much of this area. After the great drought of the late 1800s, most small homesteads were bought and consolidated into large ranches. A large portion of the Reserve was part of the expansive Canoa Ranch holdings consolidated by Levi Manning in the early 1900s. Today, the majority of the ranches purchased by the County are still operated as working ranches under ranch management agreements that enable ranchers to continue sustainable grazing programs in return for their financial stewardship of the ranch infrastructure, vegetation, wildlife, and cultural resources found on the ranches.



Historic Canoa Ranch Pond

The Upper Santa Cruz and Southern Altar Valley Reserve is located generally west of Green Valley and Interstate 19, south of the Sierrita Mountains, and includes both the southern portion of the Altar Valley and the western portion of the Upper Santa Cruz Valley. This reserve also includes Canoa Ranch located east of Interstate 19. This region contains significant intact semi-desert grasslands in between several mountain ranges. The dominant land use in the region is livestock grazing. Urban development is found primarily along the Santa Cruz River and Interstate 19 in and around Green Valley and Sahuarita. More rural development patterns are found around Arivaca and Amado. The region provides both habitat and movement corridors for wildlife, and supports plants such as the Endangered Pima Pineapple Cactus. Drainage into the Altar/Brawley Wash and the Santa Cruz Wash off of the slopes of the various mountain ranges plays an important role in aquifer recharge for the Tucson and Green Valley/Sahuarita metro areas. Historically, this region has been a principal focal point for Native American and Spanish settlements.

Within this reserve, the County owns four ranches including Canoa Ranch, Rancho Seco, portions of the Sopori Ranch, and portions of Marley Ranch and the Scheer property near Arivaca. The reserve is part of a large system of conservation properties including the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge to the west, the Coronado National Forest to the south, and the County's Diamond Bell Ranch to the north.

