

Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan Newsletter

“To ensure the long-term survival of the full spectrum of plants and animals that are indigenous to Pima County through maintaining or improving the ecosystem structures and functions necessary for their survival.”

April 2009

Pima County Natural Resources (NR) has joined with the University of Arizona to confirm use of Tucson Mountain Park by mountain lions and collect DNA samples, and document use of biological corridors around Starr Pass Resort by resident wildlife. View a Powerpoint presentation of wildlife photographs from the study at



<http://www.pima.gov/nrpr/parks/tmp/index.htm>

Pima County signed an agreement with owners of the Marley Ranch. At over 115,000 acres of deeded lands and State grazing lease lands, the Marley one of the largest working ranches in southern Arizona. The acquisition will be completed in three phases over at least eight years. Phase 1 has resulted in acquisition of ~6,800 acres of fee title land.

Additional comments received from the environmental, ranch and business communities are posted on the [draft Pima County MSCP Responses](#) to the comments and revisions to the draft permit application are underway.

US Fish and Wildlife Service has awarded funds to Pima County for wildlife waters at A7 and 6 Bar ranches. Another USFWS grant will fund artificial roosts and



stabilizing soil caves at the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve for the Mexican long-tongued bat. Arizona Game and Fish Department has awarded funds for wildlife water at Rancho Seco.

A controlled burn by U. S. Forest Service is planned for the Redington area. A portion will overlap A7 Ranch. NR staff will monitor the changes in vegetation for several years post-burn. NR is also starting pygmy-owl surveys on the Steven's property, and has compiled annual range monitoring data summaries, which are sent to all ranch partners and cooperating agencies.

Pima County and others have created the Southern Arizona Buffelgrass Coordination Center (SABCC). The Center will help coordinate mapping data, treatment activities and research on a regional scale. SABCC is seeking an experienced and entrepreneurially-oriented Executive Director to launch its operations. A detailed position description is available at www.buffelgrass.org. Applications should be sent by email to rbrusca@desertmuseum.org.

The Regional Flood Control District added over 100 acres along Molino Wash, Brawley Wash and Sopori Wash to those available for long-term protection under the MSCP. One of these is a deed-restricted donation of land. The rest were acquired using the District tax levy.

In April, over 4,500 people participated in [environmental education](#) programs in County Parks. Join in the fun at <http://www.pima.gov/nrpr/educ/enviro.htm>

