



The Board of Supervisors  
Pima County

December 10, 2016

Dear Supervisors

**RE: Board of Supervisor's December 13th Agenda Item:  
Intergovernmental Agreement for the Tres Rios Water  
Reclamation Facility Effluent Interconnect Pipeline Project**

The Tucson Mountains Association continues to be concerned about the proposed diversion of effluent water from Pima County's Tres Rios Water Reclamation Facility to a Groundwater Savings Facility. It is our view that the County should be moving over time to restore flows for the length of the Santa Cruz River in Pima County, given the critical role of riparian vegetation in local ecosystems, and the recognition of this fact in the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan. In addition, our letter of October 16, attached, discusses in detail the critical role of the Santa Cruz River in regional habitat connectivity.

A five mile section of the Santa Cruz River would be adversely affected by the diversion. The originally proposed diversion of up to 7,000 acre feet annually would have been devastating to the restored riparian vegetation, according to BOR's report. Although a lesser diversion of only 2,200 acre feet is current mooted, sunseting in 2019, it would nevertheless be step in the wrong direction, and seems pointless if a larger diversion is not actually intended in the future. The Community Water Coalition notes in its letter that there is a willingness among "multiple partners to work together to protect riparian habitat and associated native species and enhance our river system while achieving maximum recharge credit." We urge the County to accept the Community Water Coalition's offer 'to facilitate a process with the various jurisdictions and stakeholders to encourage community participation in a shared "river management plan."

It is our view that no diversion of effluent currently allocated to the Santa Cruz River should occur, but if there is to be a diversion it should only be under the very strict and limited conditions in CWC's letter of December 9, 2016.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Chesson".

Peter Chesson  
President  
Tucson Mountains Association