



The Board of Supervisors  
Pima County

October 16, 2016

Dear Supervisors

Re: October 18 BOS meeting, Consent Calendar 8. Cortaro-Marana Irrigation District, Metropolitan Domestic Water Improvement District, Bureau of Reclamation, to provide for the Tres Rios WRF Effluent Interconnect Pipeline Project, no cost

The Tucson Mountains Association opposes the plan to divert up to 7,000 acre feet annually of effluent from Pima County's Tres Rios Water Reclamation Facility to a Groundwater Savings Facility. This diversion would seriously impact riparian habitat along the Santa Cruz River. Pima County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan places great emphasis on the value of riparian habitat. Supporting this proposed diversion would be in opposition to the County's principles as laid out in the SDCP.

The Santa Cruz River is a major natural feature of Pima County. It provides important critical habitat for many species. Moreover, wildlife corridors along major washes and protected land, including the Sweetwater Preserve and the Saguaro National Park, connect to the Santa Cruz River. The River and the land adjacent it to provide a spine of connection between these different corridors, making it critical to regional connectivity in addition to the unique habitat resources that only rivers provide. Unfortunately, much of the Santa Cruz River is in pitiful shape. It needs restoration not more stress.

We appreciate that water is always subject to competing often worthy uses. However, environmental uses should not be ignored. In many cases, the damage can be long lasting and difficult to reverse. Therefore, we urge the Board of Supervisors to oppose this plan.

Sincerely

Peter Chesson  
President  
Tucson Mountains Association