



## Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection

300 E. University Blvd., Suite 120  
Tucson, Arizona 85705  
p (520) 388-9925 • f (520) 791-7709  
www.sonorandesert.org

February 13, 2014

Arizona Center for Law  
in the Public Interest  
Arizona League of Conservation  
Voters Education Fund  
Arizona Native Plant Society  
Bat Conservation International  
Cascabel Conservation  
Association  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Center for Environmental  
Connections  
Center for Environmental Ethics  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Desert Watch  
Drylands Institute  
Empire Fagan Coalition  
Environmental and Cultural  
Conservation Organization  
Environmental Law Society  
Friends of Cabeza Prieta  
Friends of Ironwood Forest  
Friends of Madera Canyon  
Friends of Saguaro National  
Park  
Friends of Tortolita  
Gates Pass Area Neighborhood  
Association  
Native Seeds/SEARCH  
Neighborhood Coalition of  
Greater Tucson  
Northwest Neighborhoods  
Alliance  
Protect Land and  
Neighborhoods  
Safford Peak Watershed  
Education Team  
Save the Scenic Santa Ritas  
Sierra Club-Grand Canyon  
Chapter  
Sierra Club-Rincon Group  
Silverbell Mountain Alliance  
Sky Island Alliance  
Sky Island Watch  
Society for Ecological  
Restoration  
Sonoran Arthropod  
Studies Institute  
Sonoran Permaculture Guild  
Southwestern Biological  
Institute  
Tortolita Homeowners  
Association  
Tucson Audubon Society  
Tucson Herpetological Society  
Tucson Mountains Association  
Wildlands Network  
Women for Sustainable  
Technologies

Sharon Bronson, Chair  
Pima County Board of Supervisors  
130 W. Congress St. 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Tucson, AZ 85701

**RE: Purchase of Right of Way Across State Trust Land for Base of Wildlife  
Bridge to Cross Oracle Road**

Dear Chair Bronson and Supervisors:

We understand that you will be evaluating the allocation of funds for the purchase of 13 acres of right of way across State Trust Land at the base of the soon-to-be-built wildlife bridge across Oracle Road at your February 18, 2014 meeting. This is a letter of support for the allocation of these general funds for this purpose.

As you know, the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection has been involved with every aspect of the planned wildlife crossings across Oracle Road, with construction now scheduled to start sometime this year. We appreciate Pima County's continued commitment to this project and we are very thankful to have you as a partner in the protection of the Sonoran Desert's wildlife linkages.

The purchase of permanent right of way across State Trust Land at the base of the Oracle Road wildlife bridge is critical to ensuring that this wildlife bridge is functional and attractive for wildlife to move across. These 13 acres of land will provide a valuable buffer to nearby development and increase the amount of intact Sonoran Desert habitat directly adjacent to the wildlife bridge. Given the overall investment of \$11.2 million by the RTA into the two wildlife crossings along Oracle Road, we believe this is a wise use of Pima County funding.

It is also our understanding that Pima County is currently negotiating the sale of a piece of Pima County property directly south of the wildlife bridge. If this sale is completed, a portion of the funds from the sale are proposed to be returned to the general fund to reimburse the county for the cost of the State Trust Land right-of-way. The remainder of the funds will be allocated for future purchase of open space.

However, since the Arizona State Land Department has scheduled the auction of the State Trust Land right of way for March 11, 2014, the County needs to act now to purchase this valuable open space.

Thank you for considering our comments on this potential purchase by the County. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Campbell  
Executive Director