

RESOLUTION 2017 - ____

RESOLUTION OF THE PIMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THE FEDERAL ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

The Board of Supervisors of Pima County, Arizona finds:

1. The Pima County government exists to enhance the health, safety, and quality of life for all residents - now and in the future - as determined by law and community interests; and
2. Since 1973 the bi-partisan federal Endangered Species Act (ESA; 16 U.S.C. §1531 et. seq.) signed by President Richard Nixon, has provided the vision and the framework to protect not just individual species, but the healthy landscapes upon which all life depends; and
3. The ESA has saved over 99 percent of the species protected under the ESA from extinction; and
4. That approximately 90 percent of the voting public supports the ESA; and
5. Due to the success of the ESA, species such as the bald eagle, Aplomado falcon, California condor, grizzly bears, and whooping crane have been brought back from the brink of extinction; and
6. Pima County is home to such threatened and endangered species as the Southwest willow flycatcher, lesser long-nosed bat, desert pupfish, Gila topminnow, and Pima pineapple cactus; and
7. In 1998, the Pima County Board of Supervisors passed Resolution No. 1998-250 to uphold the ESA through regional multi-species habitat conservation planning, and to work with the Department of Interior to develop the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan which works toward the recovery of listed species, the conservation of habitat and species throughout the regional ecosystem, and seek sufficiently broad and predictable regulatory assurances in order to achieve conservation goals while meeting the economic needs of the community; and
8. In 2005, the Pima County Board of Supervisors passed Resolution No. 2005-210 relating to the environment and endangered species, upholding and affirming the principles of the Endangered Species Act and requesting that the Congress of the United States retain the protections of such Act in order to protect endangered species of the Sonoran Desert; and

9. The stated biological goal of the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan is 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; and
10. The ESA contains multiple provisions that offer flexibility in complying with the ESA, including provisions like habitat conservation plans and Section 10 permits that allow landowners and non-federal jurisdictions like Pima County to work cooperatively with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to minimize adverse impacts to listed species and avoid penalties or legal liabilities for their cooperation; and
11. In July 2016, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued Pima County a Section 10 permit under the ESA for the Multi Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) that culminated years of study and effort by Pima County, participating partners, and a diverse set of stakeholders to develop a more efficient local mechanism for compliance with the ESA; and
12. In addition to ESA compliance, the MSCP is a key aspect in accomplishing the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan's biological goal; and
13. Pima County has purchased or otherwise secured 230,000 acres of lands largely through voter-supported open space bonds that can serve as mitigation for the MSCP, providing habitat for the full suite of native species covered by the MSCP, endangered or otherwise; and
14. Compliance with the ESA contributes directly and indirectly to our economy in numerous ways, such as outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism, agriculture, modern medicine, industry, and ecosystem services, which purify water, control climate, recycle nutrients, and protect against flooding; and
15. In 2015, outdoor recreation and ecotourism significantly contributed to the \$2.24 billion in direct spending, 24,060 jobs, \$115.4 million in state tax revenue, and \$81.9 million in local tax receipts generated by visitors to Pima County that resulted in a reduction of each Pima County household's tax burden by \$490. (Visit Tucson Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism Report 2017).
16. The ESA ensures all these benefits and some as yet unknown, not only now, but for future generations.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Pima County Board of Supervisors:

1. Strongly supports the landmark federal Endangered Species Act and its purpose, application, and enforcement, and to provide adequate funding; and
2. Authorizes and directs the County Administrator and appropriate staff to effect this resolution and urge the United States of America through the Secretary of Interior and Arizona's Congressional delegation to retain the full text and authorities of the 1973 Endangered Species Act.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Arizona Congressional Delegation.

Passed, adopted and approved, this ____ day of _____, 2017.

Sharon Bronson, Chair, Pima County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

Julie Castañeda, Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Andrew Flagg, County Attorney