



## 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

June 16, 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, and Members  
Pima County Board of Supervisors  
130 W. Congress St. 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Tucson, AZ 85701

### RE: Kinder Morgan Sierrita Pipeline Project Mitigation Agreement

Dear Chair Bronson and Supervisors:

The Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection, representing 41 conservation and community groups, does not support the Mitigation Agreement and Agreement for Easements between Pima County, the Pima County Regional Flood Control District, and Sierrita Gas Pipeline, L.L.C. that you will be considering at your June 17, 2014 meeting. We believe that portions of these agreements are inadequate and cannot support the Mitigation Agreement as it is currently written.

Pima County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan (SDCP) is a ground-breaking effort to conserve the most ecologically valuable lands and resources in Pima County. The SDCP addresses several elements of resource conservation, including cultural preservation, open space conservation, protection of mountain parks and natural reserves, ranch conservation, and ecological conservation. One key component of the SDCP is the Maeveen Marie Behan Conservation Lands System (CLS).

The Sierrita Pipeline Project will impact 860 acres of CLS lands, including Important Riparian Areas, Biological Core Management Areas, Multiple Use Management Areas, and Special Species Management Areas. Pima County guidelines recommend various landscape conservation objectives for each of these CLS categories, along with specific mitigation measures and mitigation ratios for impacts to CLS lands. The project will also impact over 200 jurisdictional washes with significant loss of riparian habitat, which will be mitigated via an in-lieu fee of \$3 million from Kinder Morgan.

The Mitigation Agreement that you are considering on June 17<sup>th</sup> proposes that the County accept \$1 million from Kinder Morgan "to purchase lands that could be used to offset permanent habitat losses." CLS guidelines and mitigation ratios recommend that 3,290 acres of mitigation lands be purchased to offset the impacts to 860 acres of CLS lands (see table below). Current land values in the Altar Valley are approximately \$1,500/acre. Thus, Kinder Morgan should be giving the County \$4,935,000 to fully mitigate for impacts to CLS lands. The \$1 million in mitigation monies proposed in the Mitigation Agreement is wholly inadequate, providing

funding to purchase simply 667 acres of CLS lands in the Altar Valley, less than 1:1 mitigation. This amount should be increased to \$4,935,000 to fully compensate the County for the substantial impacts to CLS lands.

CLS Category	Acres of Impact	Mitigation Ratio	Mitigation Acres
IRA	64	4	256
Biological Core	340	4	1360
Multiple Use	75	2	150
SSMA	381	4	1524
<b>Total</b>	<b>860</b>		<b>3290</b>

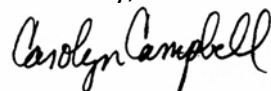
***Acres of Impact and Mitigation Acres for Kinder Morgan Sierrita Pipeline Project***

We also understand that Kinder Morgan has agreed to extend its 5-year Monitoring Plan to 20 years. We appreciate the County's work and analysis in this area and your commitment to ensuring that the pipeline area is monitored for a sufficient length of time. However, we have serious concerns that restoration, or even effective mitigation of impacts, will occur within any timeframe. And while monitoring targets and performance criteria are outlined and reports will be provided, there is no enforcement included should the actions taken not result in acceptable restoration. We encourage the County to include accountability and enforcement measures in the Agreement.

The Coalition thanks the County for working toward an improved Long Term Monitoring Plan as outlined in Exhibit C of the Mitigation Agreement and summarized in the County Administrator's June 17, 2014 memo. We remain, however, disappointed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and even more so with the Kinder Morgan company.

Thank you for considering our comments on the Mitigation Agreement for the Kinder Morgan Sierrita Pipeline Project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Campbell  
Executive Director