

Albert Lannon for the Avra Valley Coalition:

With the comment period for the Arizona Dept. of Transportation's Interstate 11 alternative routes through Southern Arizona closing before your next regular meeting, it's past time for you to correct the record which has been seriously misrepresented. The official position of this Board was adopted December 18, 2007 in Resolution 2007-343:

... the Pima County Board of Supervisors opposes the construction of any new highways in or around the County that have the stated purpose of bypassing the existing Interstate 10 as it is believed that the environmental, historic, archaeological and urban form impacts could not be adequately mitigated.

Just a few months ago Supervisor Bronson cited that resolution at an election forum in Picture Rocks stating that her position, and that of the entire Board, was in opposition to any I-11 route through the Avra Valley.

Yet Pima County's position of record with ADOT is just the opposite, with this June 7, 2016, letter to the ADOT I-11 planners from your employee, the County Administrator, and I quote:

"Pima County in 2013 developed a conceptual route for the I-11 Corridor through Avra Valley west of Tucson.... In developing this route we sought to demonstrate that a potential route exists through this undeveloped region rather than employing the existing I-19 and I-10 corridors...." End quote. The record shows that you were not sent a copy of that letter.

Setting aside very serious issues of gross insubordination, of using County resources and money to subvert your adopted policy, we are confused now about just who speaks for the County – this elected board, or Mr. Huckelberry?

If you do not act now, Mr. Huckelberry's misrepresentations stand as the County's official position of record – to sacrifice the communities, jobs, tourist attractions, wildlife and archaeological treasures of the Avra Valley to ADOT's stated I-11 goal of sending jobs across the border.

Your Resolution called for expanding existing transportation corridors. ADOT itself admits that double-decking just six miles of I-10 would do everything they want at 1/3 the cost of a new highway, saving taxpayers nearly \$2 billion.

Act now before it's too late. And please send us a copy of your communication to ADOT by the end of this week or we will be forced to let the many voters who oppose Mr. Huckelberry's highway or ADOT's tweaks know that you have abdicated your responsibilities; that this Board does not mean what it says, that you are unwilling or unable to control your hired hand, that democracy in Pima County is defunct. Please tell us you will correct the record.

RESOLUTION NO. 2007- 343

**A RESOLUTION OF THE PIMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS IN
OPPOSITION TO CONSTRUCTION OF AN INTERSTATE HIGHWAY LINK
THAT BYPASSES TUCSON AND TRAVERSES PRISTINE AND INVALUABLE
SONORAN DESERT AREAS**

WHEREAS, Pima County's landmark Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan identifies 55 rare local species of concern, whose areas of habitat and corridors between habitat areas already are under threat from development; and

WHEREAS, Pima County has established a Sustainability Program that recognizes the detriment of petroleum-fueled car and truck travel to this effort because of their greenhouse-gas and pollutant emissions, and therefore calls for the County to shift its fleet to use alternative fuels; and

WHEREAS, since 1974 Pima County has bought more than 45,000 acres of land and assumed grazing leases on 86,000 acres for open-space and wildlife habitat preservation, and to mitigate impacts from development; and

WHEREAS, Pima County updated its Riparian Mitigation Ordinance in 2005 to avoid and minimize impacts to riparian vegetation along local washes; and

WHEREAS, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) has undertaken the Interstate 10 Phoenix-Tucson Bypass Study to look at alternative routes for new controlled access highways that Interstate 10 cars and trucks could use to bypass the Tucson and Phoenix metropolitan areas; and

WHEREAS, the study has advanced to the point of identifying two alternative routes which impact Pima County; and

WHEREAS, each of the alternatives would degrade the Sonoran Desert, sever wildlife corridors identified by the ADOT-sponsored "Arizona Wildlife Linkages Assessment," impede washes, open new areas to intense residential and commercial development far from existing urban centers, and thus encourage more car and truck travel at time when global warming and air pollution are growing concerns; and

WHEREAS, one of the alternatives would traverse the San Pedro River Valley impacting both Cochise County and Pima County; and

WHEREAS, the San Pedro River and its valley constitute one of the most biologically diverse and important ecosystems in North America, which also serves as vitally important flyway for hundreds of unique migratory bird species and is a sensitive aquatic and terrestrial wildlife corridor; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 500 known archaeological sites in the San Pedro River Valley, some dating back as much as 12,000 years and some considered sacred to Native American people; and

WHEREAS, a second identified route runs through the Avra Valley, negatively impacting Tucson Mountain Park, Saguaro National Park, Ironwood National Monument, Bureau of Reclamation's Central Arizona Project Canal mitigation area, and important elements of the County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan by slicing through sensitive areas, severing linkages between important habitat areas, and disturbing an unknown number of archeological sites; and

WHEREAS, the cost of building a new controlled-access highway would be enormous, requiring the acquisition of thousands of acres of new rights of way, expenditures on high and rapidly increasing costs of concrete and asphalt, putting a tremendous burden on taxpayers and future highway users; and

WHEREAS, the production of the millions of tons of concrete and asphalt for this massive construction project would cause significant air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, as would the operation of heavy machinery in the construction process; and

WHEREAS, a new controlled-access highway near or through Pima County on any route, would promote urban sprawl, causing local governments to incur large financial responsibilities for new infrastructure costs and force major changes to existing county land-use and zoning designations; and

WHEREAS, a new controlled-access highway bypass would divert cars and trucks away from existing businesses that are dependent upon commerce generated from traffic on existing highways; and

WHEREAS, the state of Arizona could reduce highway traffic congestion, reduce the cost of highway maintenance, and save on the costs of rights of way purchases and concrete and asphalt production and installation - while reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions - by instead expanding capacity and developing multi-modal transportation facilities in existing transportation corridors to sustainably accommodate projected increases in freight while providing for much-needed passenger rail traffic.

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

1. Opposes the construction of any new highways in or around the County that have the stated purpose of bypassing the existing Interstate 10 as it is believed that the environmental, historic, archeological, and urban form impacts could not be adequately mitigated.
2. Supports the continuation of studies relating to this bypass such that the full costs of mitigation measures can be brought forth.
3. Calls upon the office of Governor Janet Napolitano to direct ADOT to undertake studies related to expanding capacity along Interstate 10 for multiple modes of travel including, but not limited to, freight, passenger cars, transit, intercity passenger rail, and bicycle, and for beautification of the existing corridor.



Interstate 11 Corridor Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement, Nogales to Wickenburg

Spring 2017

WELCOME

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) welcome your input on the corridor alternatives developed as part of the environmental study for the proposed Interstate 11 (I-11) between Nogales and Wickenburg.

Please review and comment on the alternative corridor options for I-11 that will be studied in greater detail in the coming months. These corridor options were developed based on input from prior studies, agency and public scoping meetings, and technical analysis conducted to date.

WHAT IS I-11?

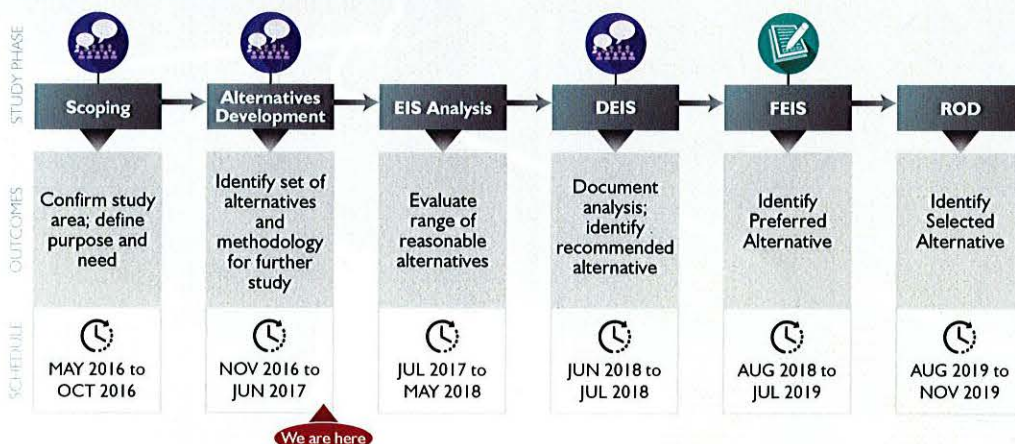
I-11 is envisioned as a continuous high-capacity transportation corridor that has the potential to enhance movement of people and freight, and to facilitate regional connectivity, trade, communications, and technology.

THE STUDY PROCESS

ADOT and FHWA are in the process of preparing the I-11 Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Under NEPA, federal lead agencies such as the FHWA are required to consider impacts of a proposed transportation corridor on social, cultural, natural and economic resources.

The environmental review process under NEPA also provides an opportunity for you to be involved in the decision-making. It helps you understand what is being proposed; allows you to offer your thoughts on alternative ways to accomplish what is being proposed; and seeks your comments on the potential environmental effects and possible mitigation required for the various alternatives.

I-11 TIER 1 EIS SCHEDULE



Public Meetings



Public Review Period

EIS - Environmental Impact Statement
DEIS - Draft EIS

FEIS - Final EIS
ROD - Record of Decision

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

Attend a public meeting to review study information and provide comments. View public meeting materials and provide comments online at:



I11study.com/Arizona

To inquire about the study, please reach out to the study team:



I-11ADOTStudy@hdrinc.com



1-844-544-8049
(bilingual)



Interstate 11 Tier 1 EIS
Study Team
c/o ADOT
Communications
1655 W. Jackson St.
Mail Drop 126F
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Please submit comments by **Friday, June 2, 2017** so that the project team can include your comment in the meeting summary.

ADOT

DEVELOPMENT OF CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES

Alternative corridor options were developed through a systematic process based on concepts from prior studies, input received during the public and agency scoping meetings, as well as various topographical, environmental and other technical planning information that identified opportunities and constraints. These numerous alternatives were evaluated to provide a reasonable range of Build Corridor Alternatives, essentially a shortlist of alternatives. The next step is to advance the Build Corridor Alternatives, along with a No-Build Alternative (i.e., a do-nothing option), into a Tier 1 EIS - a detailed environmental analysis to recommend a preferred alternative for the I-11 Corridor. An Alternative Selection Report (ASR) is underway, as an early step, to document this process and will include input received from agency and public comments.



Prior Studies



Agency Scoping



Public Scoping



Technical Analysis



REASONABLE RANGE OF BUILD CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES FOR TIER 1 EIS ANALYSIS

The Build Corridor Alternatives are broken into shorter options to help identify specific issues along the 280-mile corridor from Nogales to Wickenburg. They are assigned an alphabetical letter to define one corridor option from another. The shorter corridor options will be combined to create end-to-end alternatives that will be compared in the Tier 1 EIS against a No-Build Alternative, which represents a benchmark against which to evaluate potential impacts.

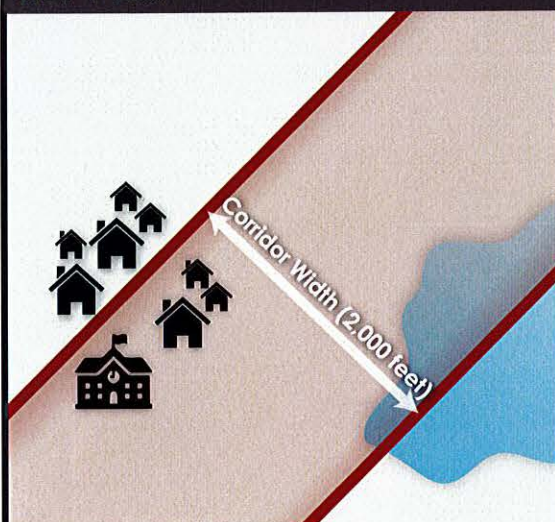


TIER 1 VS TIER 2 LEVEL OF DETAIL

In the upcoming phase of this study, a Tier 1 EIS will be conducted to understand the potential impacts associated with each corridor alternative.

The impacts will be assessed within a 2,000 foot wide corridor, even though the actual I-11 facility will be a much narrower footprint (e.g., approximately 400 feet for a new freeway). While the Tier 1 EIS will determine a preferred alternative for the general corridor, a Tier 2 environmental study would be required to identify the precise alignment and footprint for the future I-11 Corridor.

Tier 1 EIS

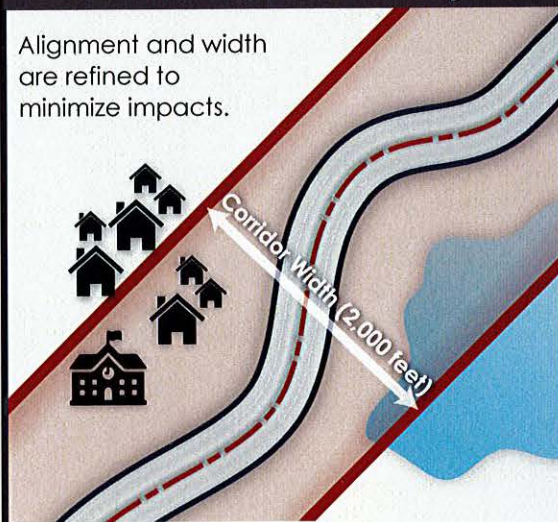


Evaluates wide corridors in multiple locations, at a program level, within which a new transportation facility could be located.

Outcome: Select a single corridor within which an alignment would be identified during Tier 2.

Tier 2 Environmental Study

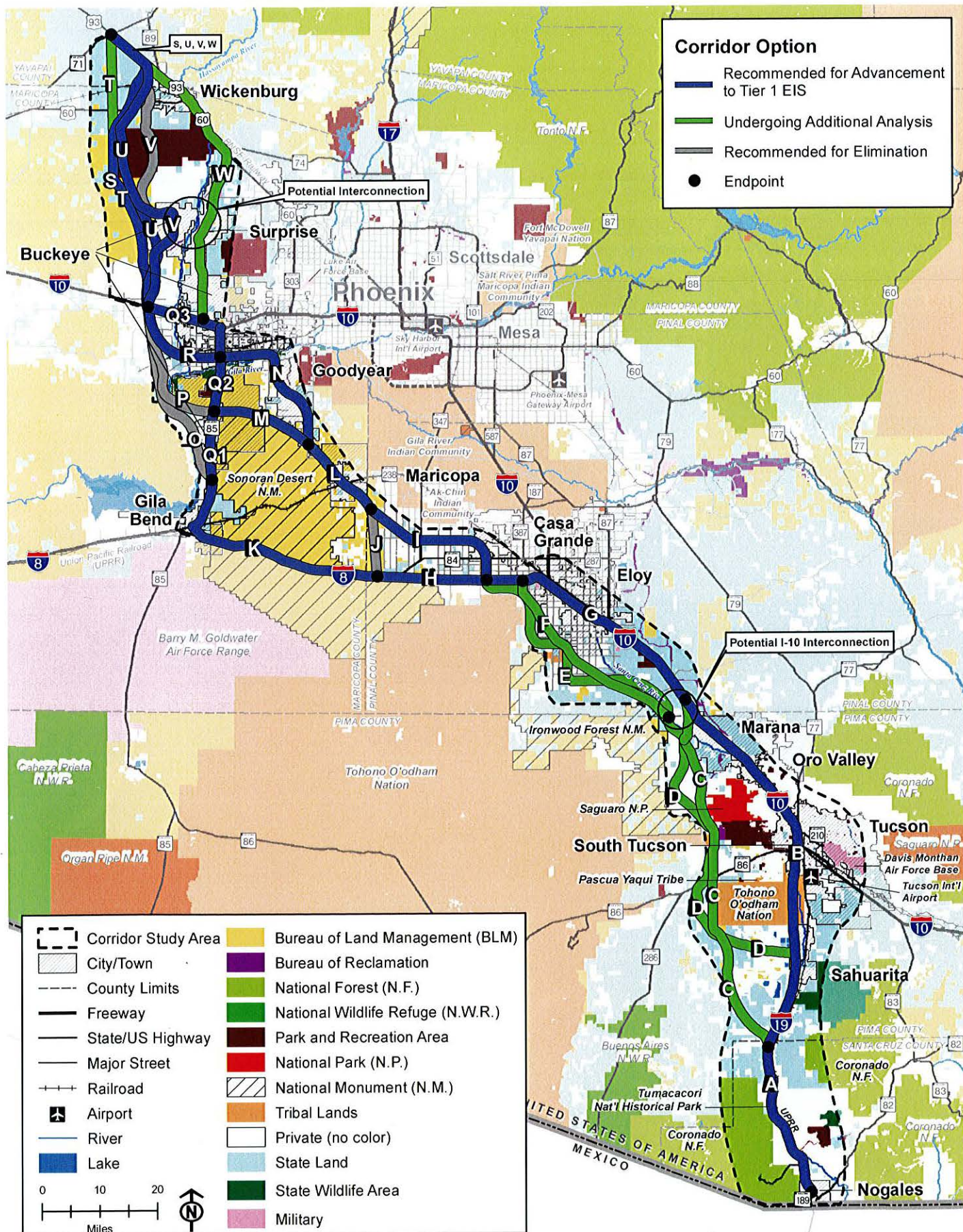
Alignment and width are refined to minimize impacts.



Evaluates design concepts for specific alignments within the corridor, such as 400 feet for a typical freeway alignment.

Outcome: Select an alignment and enable permitting for that alignment.

RESULTS OF ALTERNATIVES SCREENING



WE ASKED, YOU ANSWERED: SCOPING SUMMARY

Public scoping for the project occurred in June 2016. Scoping is an early, important step in the environmental review process. During scoping, the public and agencies have an opportunity to share their ideas and concerns, which help determine the "scope" or range of issues to be addressed in the environmental document. For more information, the Scoping Summary Report is located on the study website (i11study.com/Arizona).

More than 800 community members participated in the public scoping process. Six meetings were held throughout the corridor and comments were provided through various forms:



Meetings



Voicemail



Emails & Letters



Comment Form



Online Survey

Comment Form and Online Survey Results (657 responses)

Question 1

The top two most important transportation problems experienced today or anticipated in the future that I-11 could address include:



1. Relieving regional congestion; improving travel time and reliability

2. Improving freight travel and reliability, reducing bottlenecks on existing highways



Question 3

Top three human environmental factors to consider:

1. Land use



2. Neighborhoods, diverse communities, and residences



3. Public parks and recreation



Question 2

When asked to consider what I-11 should be or accommodate, the highest ranking response was:

Enhancing or expanding existing highways and freeways



Question 4

Top three natural environmental factors to consider:

1. Water resources



2. Biological resources



3. Air quality



THE PURPOSE AND NEED FOR I-11

Defining the Purpose and Need for a project is a fundamental part of the NEPA process and provides the basis for identifying, evaluating, and screening corridor alternatives; it is one of the key components in determining and selecting a Preferred Corridor Alternative for I-11.

► THE PURPOSE The overall purpose of the I-11 Corridor is to:

- Provide a high priority, high capacity, access-controlled, transportation corridor;
- Support improved regional mobility for people, goods, and homeland security;
- Connect major metropolitan areas and markets in the Intermountain West with Mexico and Canada; and
- Enhance access to the high capacity transportation network to support economic vitality.



► THE NEED The problems, issues, and opportunities that support the need for a proposed transportation facility are:

Population and employment growth



Congestion and travel time reliability



Access to economic activity centers



Homeland security and national defense



The full Purpose and Need Statement is available on the study website (i11study.com/Arizona).



Interstate 11 Corridor Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement, Nogales to Wickenburg

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