



Dr. Sylvia M. Lee, Supervisor, District 3

## MEMORANDUM

To: Melissa Manriquez, Clerk of the Board  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

Date: May 13, 2024

Re: Item for the May 21, 2024 Agenda  
Addendum

From: Dr. Sylvia M. Lee *Sylvia M. Lee*  
District 3 Supervisor  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

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Please place the following item on the Agenda Addendum for the Board of Supervisors meeting on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

RESOLUTION\_NO. 2024-\_\_ of the Pima County Board of Supervisors supporting expansion of the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge.

Thank you.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-\_\_**

**RESOLUTION OF THE PIMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
SUPPORTING EXPANSION OF THE CABEZA PRIETA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**

WHEREAS, the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge is an 860,010-acre Refuge in western Pima County that is part of the Sonoran Desert Biosphere Region and provides critical habitat for Sonoran Desert wildlife and protection of invaluable cultural resources and wilderness values; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Land Management manages the Cuerda de Leña, a 58,500-acre Area of Critical Environmental Concern, which lies adjacent to the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge and south of Ajo, and

WHEREAS, those lands have been subject to activities such as “boondock” camping and unauthorized off-road vehicle use that have degraded the area’s natural and cultural resources; and

WHEREAS, a proposal is now before the Secretary of the Interior to transfer these Bureau of Land Management lands to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to become part of the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge and concurrently withdrawal mineral rights for the same lands; and

WHEREAS, transferring these lands to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would add important protections for cherished resources and further the goals of Pima County’s Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan; and

WHEREAS, the proposed transfer includes conveying the 40-acre, culturally-significant site known as Do'ag Vecho Properties to the Tohono O'odham Nation; and

WHEREAS, the Tohono O'odham Nation’s Legislative Council approved two resolutions in 2023 supporting transfer of lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to expand the Refuge, and conveying the Do'ag Vecho Properties to the Tohono O'odham Nation; and

WHEREAS, the transfer also has broad-based support from Ajo Chamber of Commerce, International Sonoran Desert Alliance, and members of the Ajo community.

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

1. Supports expansion of the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge to include transfer of the Cuerda de Leña lands to the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge and the Do'ag Vecho Properties to the Tohono O'odham Nation;
2. Calls on Arizona’s Congressional delegation to encourage the Secretary of the Interior initiate the required National Environmental Policy Act process; and
3. Directs the County Administrator to continue providing County expertise and resources in support of this expansion, and to transmit this Resolution to the Secretary of the Interior.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Pima County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



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Deputy County Attorney