

RESOLUTION NO. 2005-124
PIMA COUNTY
RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO MINING EFFORTS IN PIMA COUNTY RESERVES AND
BIOLOGICALLY VALUABLE LANDS

WHEREAS, the Arizona State Land Department is considering an application to renew a mineral lease (Seel Application, Lease 11-003227) that would result in a new calcium carbonate mine (limestone quarry) in the Empire Mountains within the County's Bar V Ranch State grazing lease holdings, and within the drainage of Pima County's proposed Davidson Canyon Preserve; and

WHEREAS, the Arizona State Land Department is considering an application for a Special Land Use Permit (W. H. Henderson/Andrada Quarry Application, Permit # 23-109779) and the Bureau of Land Management is considering a draft plan of operations for three mining claims (W. H. Henderson/Andrada Quarry, portions of GAMACO#1, GAMACO#2 and WRH-PRO-ONE placer mining claims); that would result in renewed mining of calcium carbonate (limestone) at Wentworth and Sahuarita Roads, as well as renewed processing and crushing on adjacent private lands, within Pima County designated Priority Conservation Areas for six Priority Vulnerable Species and adjacent to residential development; and

WHEREAS, the Arizona State Land Department is considering an application to renew mineral leases (Portland Cement Application, Leases 11-035596, 11-035597, 11-079816, 11-079817) that would result in two new limestone quarries on either side of Davidson Canyon and construction of a road across Davidson Canyon, a nominated Unique Waters of the State containing federally endangered species; and

WHEREAS, the Arizona State Land Department is considering an application to renew mineral leases (Portland Cement Application, Lease 11-23880) adjacent to Agua Verde Creek, which is designated as an important riparian area within the County's Conservation Land System and Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Arizona State Land Department is considering an application to renew mineral leases (Phoenix Brickyard Application, Leases 11-908, 11-1022, 11-1456, 11-1457) and an application for new mineral leases (Phoenix Brickyard Application, Leases, 11-98753, 11-98754, 11-98755, 11-98756) that would result in the continued removal of clay adjacent to the County's Cienega Creek Natural Preserve and Unique Waters of the State containing federally endangered species; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Land Management is considering a draft plan of operations for mining claims (Rancho Seco Project and Arizona/Breccia Mines, Plans of Operations 3809 (AZ420) AZA 33072) that would result in mineral exploration on Pima County-owned lands within Rancho Seco - a recent acquisition funded with sale of voter-approved bonds for the purpose of preserving the lands consistent with conservation ranching practices, for the benefit of the public interest; and

WHEREAS, the mining activities listed above are located in Pima County's Conceptual Cienega Valley and Cerro Colorado Reserves as outlined in Pima County's February 2005

Draft II Multi-Species Conservation Plan, with the exception of the W. H. Henderson/Andrada Quarry Application that is located west of the Cienega Valley Reserve within the Cienega Valley watershed in an area of high biological value; and

WHEREAS, the Pima County Board of Supervisors and Arizona Department of Environmental Quality have agreed that the flows of Cienega Creek constitute a Unique Water of the State of Arizona, meriting the state's highest level of protection against the degradation of water quality; and

WHEREAS, the Cienega watershed provides the Tucson Basin with up to 20% of its groundwater underflow; and

WHEREAS, hydrologic studies of Davidson Canyon have indicated its importance as a tributary of surface and groundwater flows to Cienega Creek, supporting the nomination of Davidson Canyon as a Unique Water of the State; and

WHEREAS, these areas have very high biological importance and have therefore been designated Biological Core within the Conservation Land System as adopted by the Pima County Board of Supervisors in December 2001, and as recommended by the Steering Committee for the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan; and

WHEREAS, these parcels have been identified as Habitat Protection Priorities to guide acquisition or preservation of biologically important lands through the 2004 Bond Implementation Plan, as authorized by voters in May 2004; and

WHEREAS, the Cienega Valley received national recognition in 2004 as one of seven "Endangered Cultural Landscapes" in America; and

WHEREAS, these areas are where different peoples have lived for thousands of years resulting in numerous archaeological and historical sites, and culturally significant places that are eligible for listing on the National and State Registers of Historic Places;

WHEREAS, the economy and quality of life of the citizens of Pima County and southern Arizona are heavily dependent upon recreation and tourism and hence on abundant nearby public land; and

WHEREAS, numerous trails listed on the Eastern Pima County Trail System Master Plan pass through the Cienega Valley Reserve, including the Davidson Canyon Trail; and

WHEREAS, these areas are the best areas in Pima County to preserve large open landscapes for ranch conservation, the preservation of scenic views, recreational opportunities, historic and cultural resources, and biological values; and

WHEREAS, almost \$50 million has already been expended by Pima County in acquiring and preserving lands in these unique reserves, of which approximately \$3.6 million ran to the benefit of the State Trust via the acquisition of State Trust lands; and

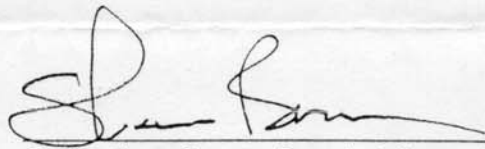
WHEREAS, mining on these lands will permanently preclude many alternative future

uses and revenues from these lands; and

WHEREAS, the long term revenues to the State Trust from future land sales for conservation purposes will far exceed the short term revenues from these mining activities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Pima County opposes new mineral leases, mineral lease renewals, and mining claims in the County's Conceptual Cienega Valley and Cerro Colorado Reserves, as well as those that would negatively impact the Reserves by degrading the biological and economic values of lands adjacent to the reserves.

Passed by the Board of Supervisors of Pima County, this 7th day of June, 2005.



Chair, Pima County Board of Supervisors

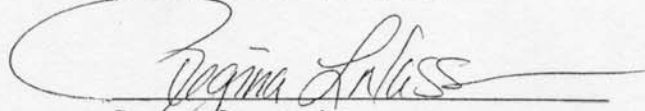
JUN 07 2005

ATTEST:



Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Deputy County Attorney